To:	Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee	Date:	April 11, 2002
From:	Cathy Volkering Carlile General Manager - Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services	File:	-
Re:	**Parks, Recreation and Culture Community Needs Assessment**		

Staff Recommendation

That the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Community Needs Assessment be adopted as an information tool and that the Parks Recreation and Cultural Services Needs Assessment be considered in future strategic and master planning in Richmond.

Cathy Volkering Carlile
General Manager - Parks, Recreation & Cultural Services

Att. 1

Staff Report

Origin

The Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Division were approved through the 2001 budget process to conduct a Community Needs Assessment. The purpose of the needs assessment was to better understand how well the Division's current level of service is meeting community needs, identify gaps in service and determine priorities for the next five to ten years.

Findings Of Fact

The objectives of the Community Needs Assessment were:

1. To identify current awareness of and participation levels in Parks, Recreation and Cultural services, facilities and programs.

2. To identify unmet needs and determine gaps in services, programs and facilities.

3. To develop strategies for addressing the gaps and better meeting the needs of Richmond residents.

In August 2001, the consulting team of Wilson & June Consultants and PERC were hired to conduct the Community Needs Assessment.

The Needs Assessment process was thorough. It involved a variety of strategies to gather information: a community-wide, statistically valid mail-out survey; facility surveys; 26 focus groups; focus group surveys; staff consultations and an analysis of trends, both societal trends and local trends.

Community partner organizations had several opportunities to provide input into the Survey and Focus Group topics and assisted in identifying and recruiting participants for the focus groups. The various Community Associations hosted neighbourhood Focus Groups. Following the information-gathering phase, a series of Workshops were held to share the learnings from the information-gathering phase, validate the findings and explore solutions.

A Community Futures Conference was held for those citizens and organizations that had participated in the Focus Groups; a Stakeholder Group Workshop was held with our community partner organizations, and a Staff Workshop was held. In excess of 350 citizens and forty city staff participated in the consultation process.

Throughout this process, the consultants adjusted their recommendations and strategies, based on the input from this wide range of stakeholders.

Analysis

The information presented in the Community Needs Assessment (Attachment 1) will provide valuable information for the Parks Recreation and Cultural Services Division and our community partners.

The data and recommendations will assist with the future planning of programs, facilities and services as we strive to ensure that we are meeting the needs of all Richmond residents, within limited resources.

Financial Impact

There is no financial impact from the recommendations provided.

Conclusion

There has been extensive input from a broad cross-section of community stakeholders throughout the Community Needs Assessment. The Needs Assessment identifies community needs and priorities and articulates strategic recommendations for responding to the gaps.

Kate Sparrow
Director, Recreation & Cultural Services

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Richmond Community Needs Assessment 2001:

Prepared for:
City of Richmond Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

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Table of Contents

Some copies of this report may not include the Appendix which is very long and expensive to print. If this copy does not have the Appendix included, readers should note that the appendices are available as a separately bound document from the City.

Appendix I -   Community Wide and Facility Based Survey Information

               Detailed Community Survey Results (Statistical Report)

               Facility Based Survey

Appendix II - Focus Group

               Focus Group Notes (Neighbourhood, Agency and Disconnected)

Executive Summary

This Needs Assessment found that citizens highly value the services and facilities provided by the Recreation and Cultural and Parks Departments and that they perceive the system as well developed and delivering quality services. It also identified citizens' perceptions of needs, gaps, barriers, priorities and opportunities. By building an awareness of these dimensions and using them as a reference point for service delivery, the Division will be well positioned for the future.

Contained in this report are the results from a Community Wide statistically valid survey, a Facility-based survey, twenty-six (26) focus groups with neighbourhoods, partners, community organizations and associations, and focus group surveys. Detailed notes from the focus groups, which provide very rich in depth information, are contained within the Appendix.

The results are consolidated into 36 community needs. These needs are subsequently prioritized to provide the Division with direction as to those needs that are of the highest priority and ought to be addressed in the short term. The report also contains 12 strategic recommendations to help the Division focus its energy on responding to needs assessment learnings.

1. Introduction

Community needs are changing faster than ever before. It is a challenge for municipalities to keep pace with these changes, not only in the provision of services, but in understanding the nature of citizens' needs. What do citizens value, what are their aspirations for their community, what is important about their community, and what are their perspectives and issues? These are questions that shape a process of getting to know citizens and the community better.

The assessment of community needs, values and preferences is critical for a Parks, Recreation and Cultural (PR&C) service delivery system to be relevant, responsive, deliver value and benefits and meet the needs of all residents.

The City of Richmond met this challenge by undertaking a Needs Assessment to identify priorities for Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services over the next five to ten years. They retained the consulting team comprised of Wilson & June Consultants and PERC to develop a process and conduct the assessment of needs for Parks, Recreation and Cultural services.

The objectives of the Needs Assessment, as defined in the Proposal Call are to:

1. identify awareness of and participation levels in Parks, Recreation and Cultural services, facilities and programs.
2. identify unmet needs and determine gaps in services, programs and facilities and;
3. develop strategies for addressing the gaps and better meeting the needs of Richmond residents

These objectives generated the following outcomes for the Richmond Parks, Recreation and Culture Needs Assessment:

- documentation of citizens' needs and priorities
- the compilation of an up-to-date list of the needs of citizens, along with gaps in services, programs and facilities
- a priority listing of the expressed needs
- a set of recommendations outlining the critical actions required to best respond to the information collected

2. Role of Needs Assessments in Planning Processes

Needs Assessments are typically precursors to or components of strategic planning processes such as Master Plans. The focus of this project is on the Needs Assessment only. Diagram 1 depicts the components of the two processes, how the two are interrelated and identifies the results of each of these planning process.

Purpose of Master Plans

Master Plan processes are comprehensive in nature. All aspects of the system (all pieces of the puzzle) are analyzed, with an intended outcome of creating a set of integrated and long-term recommendations for the full delivery system.

The process combines an understanding of community **needs**, societal **trends**, shifts in community **demographics** and **values** with the current service delivery **approach** (e.g., services and facilities provided and their level of use; policies, procedures, operating principles, service delivery methods) with current **resources** (e.g., physical, fiscal and human). This information allows informed decision-making on how and where resources should be allocated in the future.

Purpose of Needs Assessments

Needs Assessments are just one, albeit critical, component of Master Planning processes. And while it is sometimes necessary to conduct the two independently, the information generated by the two processes is vital to each other. The Needs Assessment will identify community needs and priorities, and articulate strategic recommendations for responding to the gaps.

Implications for City of Richmond Parks and Recreation Needs Assessment Process

Given that the Needs Assessment is not designed to research and analyze the full parks and recreation system (e.g., assessment of current services, facilities, fiscal and human resources), this report presents "strategic recommendations" as opposed to more specific "how to" recommendations.

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Diagram 1

Corporate Plan

Master Plan
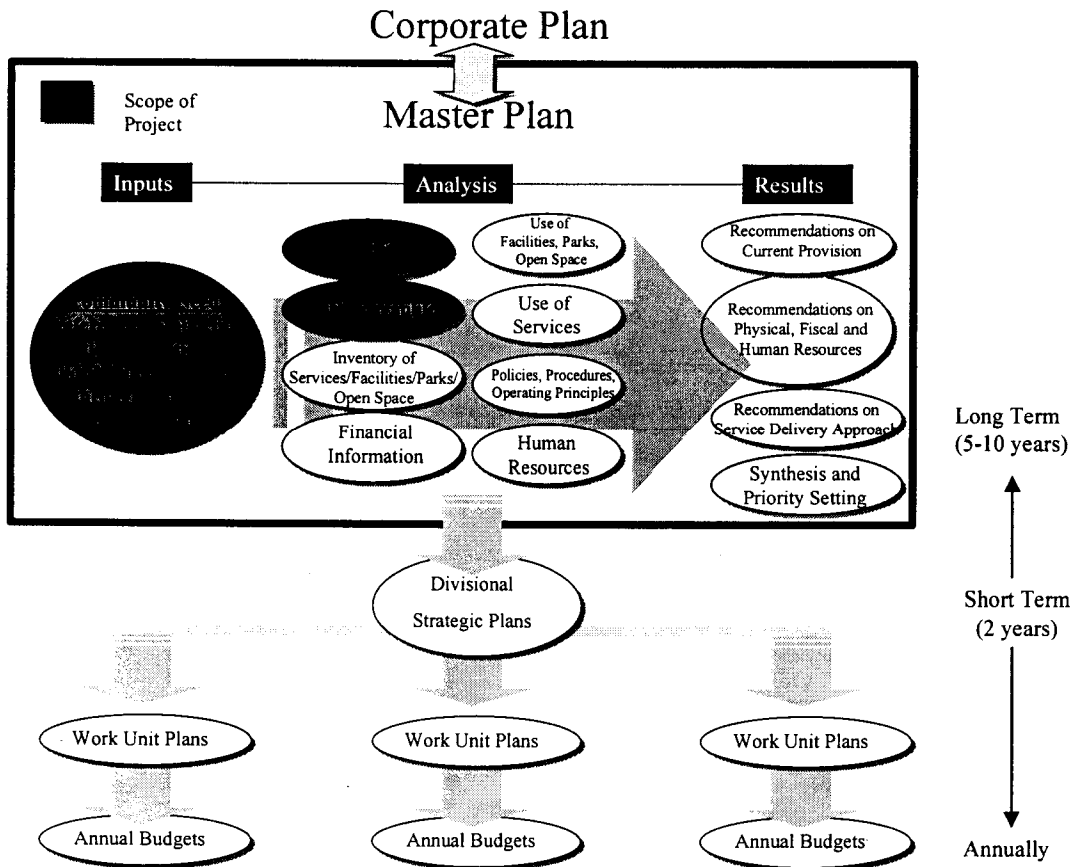
3. **Conceptual Framework for Richmond Needs Assessment Process**

Community Needs Assessments are both a process and a method. Learning through the process is just as important as the final results. It can also build a common vision, encourage partnership cohesion, and create a sense of involvement, pride and support for community initiatives. Through the process Associations and community stakeholders gain a much deeper understanding of the perspectives and needs of citizens and can respond accordingly in service delivery.

The Consultants have taken a "Knowledge Management" approach (See Diagram 2) – one that is based on the importance and power of turning data to information, information to knowledge and finally knowledge to wisdom. A key success factor of any Needs Assessment is to ensure that the data collected is translated into clearly articulated, relevant and practical strategies.

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At the base level is the foundation of the organization—a strong culture of benefits driven practices and approaches. Richmond Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services has a strong grounding in benefits and is well recognized for its innovative benefits based practices.

Diagram 2

Next is the data found both within and outside the organization. The data for this Needs Assessment is comprised of a community wide survey, facility surveys, focus groups surveys, focus groups and an analysis of trends. A detailed description of each of these components is presented in the next section.

The Needs Assessment data is organized and clustered around relevant themes (See list of needs). It is synthesized and presented in a way that moves it from data to information. At this stage, a picture of the needs and preferences of the community emerges.

Transforming information to knowledge requires distilling all the information gathered into the most meaningful pieces. In order to accomplish this task and to identify priorities, the Consultants applied the following filters:

1) Societal Trends
2) Community Trends
3) Community Wide Survey
4) Consultants professional expertise and
5) Incorporating the magnitude of a theme (number of times a theme was raised in the different focus groups)

Wisdom is the utilization of accumulated knowledge. It is linking areas of knowledge together to create the capacity for action. It blends data, information and knowledge with creative thinking, experience and intuition. This is where the strategies and recommendations are acted upon based on the wisdom generated through moving up the knowledge management ladder. Several techniques were implemented to create "wisdom".

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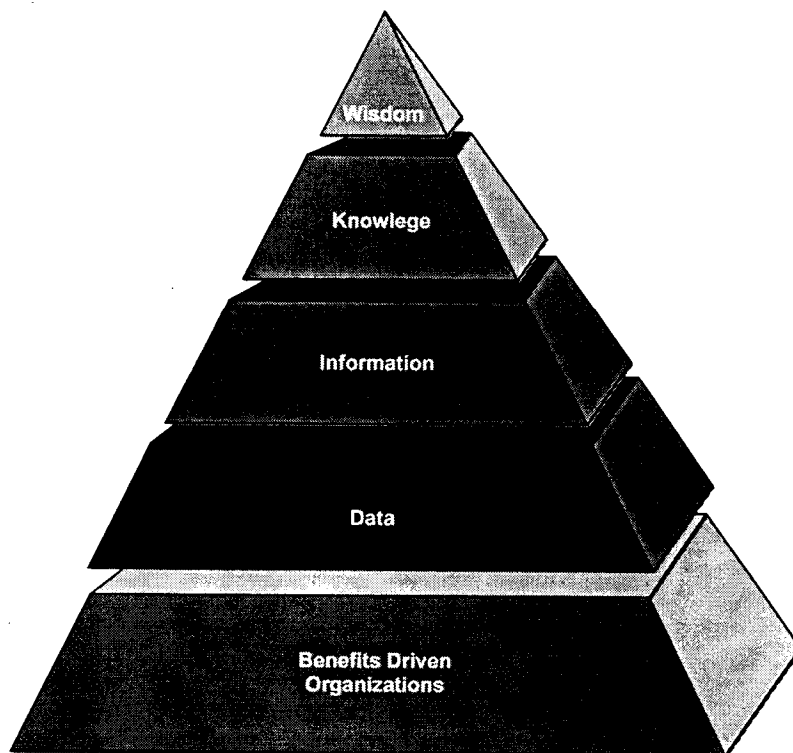
As described in the next section, a Community Futures Conference was held to update citizens on findings and recommendations. This forum helped to validate the information, identify missing information, gather feedback on the priority needs, and engage the community in responding to the Consultants interpretation of the data. A similar process was conducted with Stakeholders and Staff.

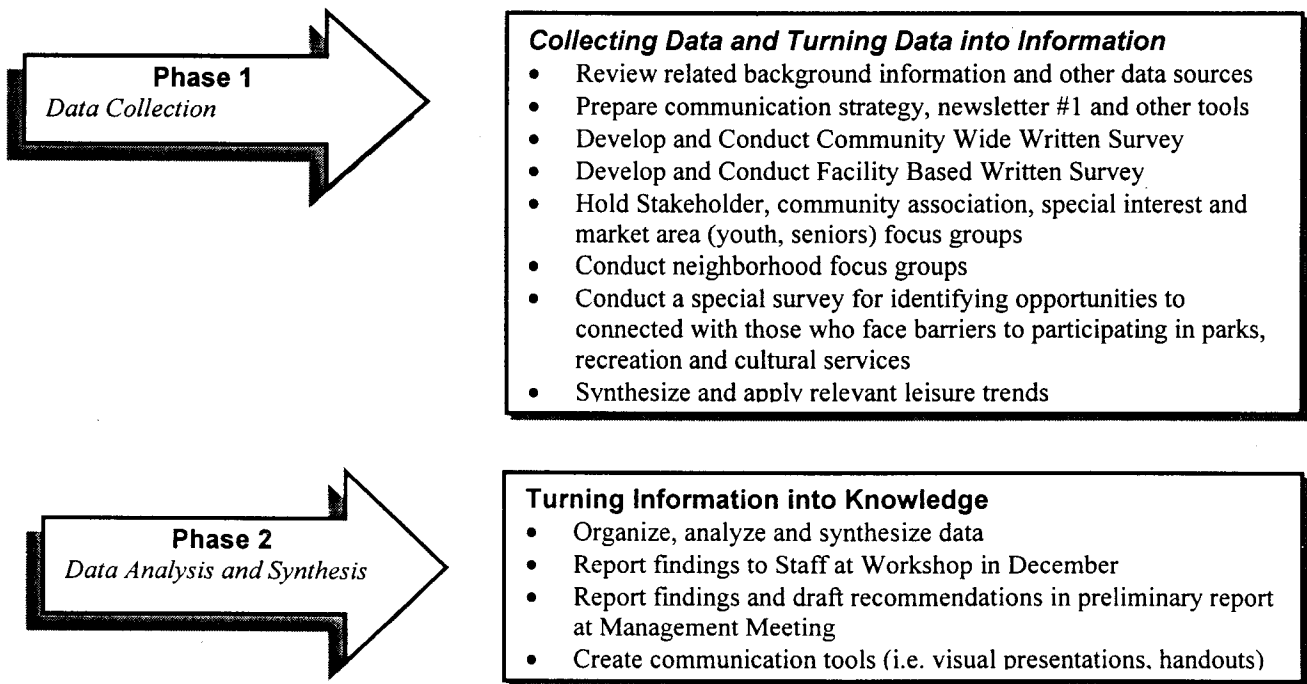An important component in the transition from knowledge to wisdom is to create the capacity for action. One approach to create capacity for action is by creating an implementation strategy for the ongoing assessment of community needs. This report recommends that one be developed in concert with staff to honour internal expertise, integrate the information in a practical manner, and build buy-in by staff.

4. Needs Assessment Process

The process collected both quantitative (statistical valid) and qualitative information through a community-wide survey, facility survey, focus group survey and focus groups.

The diagram below indicates the steps undertaken to complete the project within the parameters of the knowledge model presented in the previous section.

Phase 1
Data Collection

Collecting Data and Turning Data into Information
- Review related background information and other data sources
- Prepare communication strategy, newsletter #1 and other tools
- Develop and Conduct Community Wide Written Survey
- Develop and Conduct Facility Based Written Survey
- Hold Stakeholder, community association, special interest and market area (youth, seniors) focus groups
- Conduct neighborhood focus groups
- Conduct a special survey for identifying opportunities to connected with those who face barriers to participating in parks, recreation and cultural services
- Synthesize and apply relevant leisure trends

Phase 2
Data Analysis and Synthesis

Turning Information into Knowledge
- Organize, analyze and synthesize data
- Report findings to Staff at Workshop in December
- Report findings and draft recommendations in preliminary report at Management Meeting
- Create communication tools (i.e. visual presentations, handouts)

Phase 3 and 4
Exploring Solutions Establishing Priorities, and Building Capacity

Transforming Knowledge into Wisdom
- Workshops with staff, citizens and partners and stakeholders to present findings and method used, to validate information and to seek insight into solutions.
- Create communication tools (powerpoint presentation/handouts
- Prepare final report
- Workshop to build a strategy for ongoing assessment
- Communicate the results (i.e. post on web site, articles in newspapers, using existing communication structures within facilities/association)

Key Components

Community Wide Survey

In the fall of 2001, a mail survey of 1,000 Richmond residents was conducted in order to determine attitudes, preferences, priorities, expectations and satisfaction about parks, recreation and cultural services. In addition, the survey gathered information regarding facility use and participation in recreation and cultural programs.

The data was broken down by age, household characteristics, and postal code to provide additional insights into differences (See Appendix I for postal code map)

The survey methodology involved the following tasks:

- Compiling a comprehensive list of residents and address provided by Dominion Directory
- Selecting a random sample of 1,000 residents from the database
- Preparing a questionnaire in consultation with the Project Steering Committee
- Printing the survey in English and Chinese, and inviting Chinese-speaking respondents to contact the City to receive a Chinese version
- Mailing the survey to each of the residents in the sample, along with a personal letter signed by the Mayor, and a self-addressed stamped envelope
- Sending a reminder notice to those who had not responded to the initial mail-out
- Entering and analyzing the data

Facility Surveys

The purpose of the facility surveys was to derive additional information and to provide another opportunity for residents to participate. The facility survey was the same as the community wide survey except it was printed in a different colour. It was distributed to all community centres, libraries, the cultural centre, Richmond Centre Mall, and SUCCESS. The results were analyzed separately from the community wide survey. This ensured the statistical validity of the Community Wide Survey was not compromised. Interestingly, the community wide survey generated similar responses as the facility survey.

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Focus Groups

Dialogue sessions were held with the following twenty-six (26) groups between October and December. The purpose of the focus group sessions was to augment the quantitative data with additional qualitative detail. Equally important was the opportunity to engage citizens in the process and hear from them first hand about their thoughts and opinions of current services and future opportunities. The issues explored include:

- Needs associated with each group/neighbourhood
- The expectations of the role that parks, recreation and culture plays in the lives of citizens
- Benefits derived through participation
- General awareness of, expectations for and satisfaction with the Division's services
- Insight into which segments of the community's needs are not being met
- Barriers to participation and gaps in service
- Advice on how to foster volunteerism
- And top priorities for the short term

The groups are listed below:

- Allied Agencies (RCMP, Health, etc)
- Multi-Cultural Agencies
- Citizens who are experiencing significant barriers to participation
- People with disabilities
- Indoor Sports Organizations
- Outdoor Sports Organizations
- Sports User Groups
- Visual and Performing Artists
- Arts Organizations
- Heritage
- Health and Wellness Organizations
- Seniors
- Youth
- Parks
- Neighbourhood based – City Centre (2 meetings), Steveston, Thompson, West Richmond, East Richmond, Sea Island, South Arm, Hamilton, and Steveston
- Associations

Focus Group Surveys

Three additional surveys were created to gather additional data from 1) neighbourhood citizens, 2) community organizations and partners, and 3) agencies that worked with those citizens who have difficulty accessing recreation services.

Neighbourhood surveys were distributed at the neighbourhood focus groups to explore additional areas that could not be covered in the focus groups due to time constraints. These areas were:

- Perceived quality of the local facilities
- Feedback on the cost of local services
- Kinds of leisure activities, facilities, and open spaces that citizens utilize within their local community, outside their local community and in the region
- Reasons that citizens choose to recreate outside of Richmond
- Degree of involvement in the community and desire to be more involved

At the focus groups conducted with the community agencies, a survey was distributed to find out additional information on the following:

- The specific mandate of each organization
- Their membership and trends
- Feedback on the City's parks, recreation and cultural services and facilities

A special set of questions was prepared to help create a better understanding of the opportunities and capacities of those citizens who don't traditionally access recreation and cultural services. The survey delved into their concept of free time, what they like to do and why, barriers to participation and perceived skills and abilities. The questions were a vehicle for seeking new entry points for engaging them in recreation services. Representatives from 2 key agencies supporting these populations asked these questions of the clients/citizens/people that they serve.

In addition to the information gathered per se, the sessions fostered an even stronger relationship between the Division and the citizens of Richmond. Citizens valued being asked their opinions and felt their needs were forming the basis for a foundational piece of work

Staff Meeting, Community Futures Conference and Stakeholders Workshop

A forum for three (3) target audiences (staff, citizens/partners and stakeholders) was hosted to share the project learnings, validate the findings and explore solutions.

5. Societal Trends

This section outlines the 10 trends that will have the most impact on the parks and recreation industry over the next decade.

1) Aging Population

The post-war baby boomers are now turning 50. The world has always adapted to the needs and wants of this large segment of the population, giving the group the "Me generation" label. Many baby boomers refuse to believe they are seniors and are very active, which likely means less demand for seniors centres in the future.

2) Widening gap between the "haves" and "have nots".

The gap between those that have resources and those that do not is polarizing our society. The "have nots" are becoming more marginalized and less able to access services. Sixty per cent of wealth is controlled by those who are over 50 – and this is accelerating dramatically. The parks and recreation industry cannot continue to treat seniors as disadvantaged (by offering discounts for example) and must come up with strategies to change this pattern. There will be more focus on ability to pay as a barrier to participation.

3) Increasing diversity.

Society is becoming more diverse, both in terms of ethnic backgrounds and culture and abilities. There are more people with special needs now than in the past. Parks, Recreation and Cultural services need to embrace and serve all members of society and departments need to recognize serving a population as a whole will not reflect the diversity of needs existing in communities today. Even teens should not be classified as one segment. According to Michael Adams, president of Environics, teens can be broken into four very distinct groups, all requiring different approaches and services.

4) Experiential Hedonism

The pursuit of pleasure – and stimulation of the senses: this is what people are after. Quick, "one-off" experiences are becoming more popular than long term commitments. This trend is an example of how the social values of Canadians are changing. Packaging services in smaller and shorter pieces is required for Parks, Recreation and Cultural departments to continue to be relevant.

5) Spiritual Quest – or what is life all about?

This is the trend that is driving the eco-tourism movement, extreme activities and adventure challenges. People are looking for meaning in their lives and are searching for answers by re-connecting with nature or facing extreme challenges, such as climbing a mountain or running a marathon. The result is more interest in the environment, passive park experiences, cultural activities, yoga, meditation and aroma therapy.

Wilson & June Consultants
PERC

6) Declining trust in (big) institutions.

In the past, community members were generally content to elect a government to represent their needs and to make the right decisions. Individuals are much more knowledgeable about a wide variety of issues today and do not trust government to act in their best interests. People are demanding input into all decisions that affect them. Parks, Recreation and Culture Departments have to figure out how to get this public input and how to handle the cadre of people who "act against anything". Ironically society wants more input but has less time to contribute.

7) Structured to Informal (activity).

Organized team sports are in decline. In Alberta where comprehensive surveys have been undertaken, for example, over the past 20 years, households involved in hockey have gone from 40 per cent to 18 per cent. And, twice as many Canadians own inline skates as own ice skates. This represents a preference for unstructured activity, such as that offered by trails. People will look for choice and flexibility in their leisure experiences.

8) Declining volunteers.

As reported in the last issue of PROFile, the 2000 Statistics Canada survey on volunteerism reported a dramatic decline in volunteer hours in Canada. From 1997 to 2000, Canada lost one million volunteers and 53 million volunteer hours. Parks, Recreation and Culture departments will need to be creative in how volunteers are used and cared for. Offering shorter and more defined volunteer experiences is one strategy to consider.

9) Activity levels in children declining.

In 1998, one-third of Canadian children did not have the minimum amount of activity required to sustain basic health. In 2000, two-thirds do not have sufficient activity for basic health. Communities must find a way to re-engage kids because if this trend of inactivity (from 1/3 to 2/3 in thirteen years) continues, the pressure on health care will be disastrous. Parks, Recreation and Cultural services have a tremendous role to play in addressing this trend.

10) Facilities

Certain kinds of parks and recreation facilities are in decline, while others are becoming more popular.

| In decline:	Safer bets:
arenas	pools (including leisure pools)
curling rinks	theatres
seniors' centres	Yoga studios, health and wellness centres
sports fields	trails, natural areas/gardens/interpretive areas

6. Community Context

Socio-demographic Trends

In this section key aspects of the demographic make-up of the community are described as well as some of the local trends that have been identified through the 1996 Census Information, various City reports, and a series of strategic planning sessions held for recreation and culture staff. To make this section easier to reference, it is presented in point form.

Population Distribution

- Richmond's population is projected to increase from 159,772 in 2001 to around 212,200 in 2010
- Between 1991 and 1996, Richmond's population grew by an average of 3.5 annually; and it has the highest growth rate among the inner municipalities of the lower mainland
- While the population is aging Richmond has fewer seniors than other municipalities in the inner core of the lower mainland
- 11% of Richmond's population is over 65 and 27% of the population is under 19
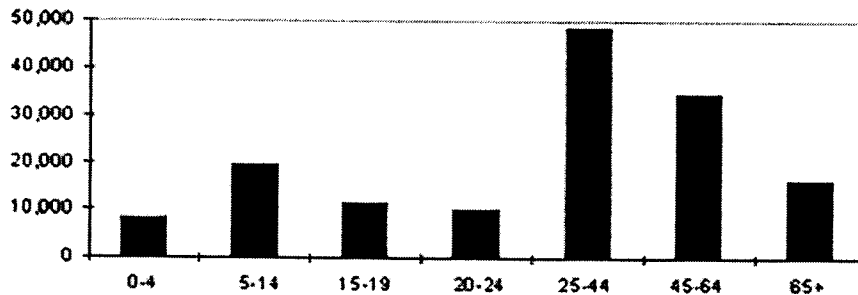
Ethnic Origin

- Richmond's population reflects the fact that Canada is a nation of immigrants. About half of Richmond residents are Canadian by birth and half are immigrants
- Of Richmond's total population, 33% are Chinese, 7% are South Asian (i.e., East Indian, Pakistani, Punjabi, Sri Lankan) and 3% are Filipino
- Recent immigrants (those who have arrived between 1991 and 1996) represent 43% of all immigrants.

Language

- Home language represents the language spoken most often at home. Ninety-seven percent of residents speak only one language at home: 52% report speaking English most often, 30% speak Chinese, 3% speak Punjabi and 2% speak Tagalog most often
- Between the 1991 and 1996 Census, there was a significant decline in the proportion of residents who identified English as their mother tongue, 69% in 1991 and 52% in 1996

Education

- 59% of Richmond's population has some form of post-secondary education. The graph below shows the distribution by type of education
- the percentage of people with a university degree in Richmond has increased from 14% in 1991 to 18% in 1996
- Growing number of home schooling

Households

- There are 50,925 households in Richmond, with almost the same quantity of single family dwellings as multi-family dwellings
- 70% of Richmond residents own their own home

Families

- Out of the total of 50,925 households 40,570 are families. 38% are two person families, 24% are three person families and 27% are four, while 11% are five or more person families
- As noted in the graph below, Lone parents and common law couples are most likely to have small families. Most lone parent families are headed by women.
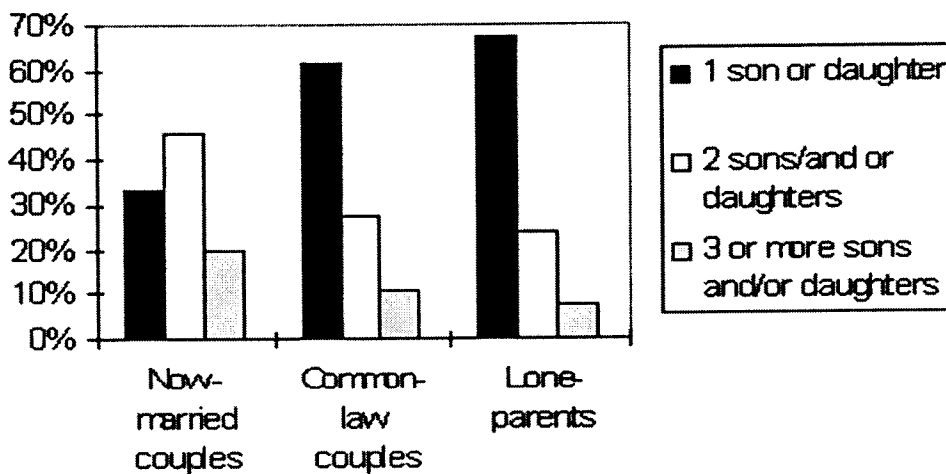
Marital Status and Family size

- 12% of Richmond's families are lone parent families, headed mainly by women

Other Community Trends and Implications for Recreation and Cultural Services

In the previous section, the trends that appear to impact the community of Richmond were outlined. This section suggests the implications of these trends for the provision of Recreation and Cultural Services within Richmond.

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Population Growth

- It is anticipated that the Richmond's population growth rate will slow down. This may impact the resources available to invest in indoor and outdoor facilities through taxes, user fees, and Development Cost Charges (DCC's).

Diversity

- Richmond's population will continue to be diverse.
- Sizeable groups of visible minorities are located in most planning areas, except for Gilmore and Sea Island. West Cambie has the highest concentration of ethnic minorities with Blundell, Broadmoor, City Centre, Seafair, and Steveston's populations having over 1/3 of residents from a minority ethnic background.
- People of Chinese decent are found throughout Richmond, although the majority live in either City Centre or West Richmond.
- More recent immigrants live on the West Side
- This ethnic mix provides ample opportunity for the development of cultural events and celebrations; the need for programs and services reflecting the unique characteristics of the various cultures; and it opens the door for new immigrants to learn about the local culture.
- Responding to the needs of a diverse population presents many challenges. Effective communication, assisting residents through complex processes such as registration and instruction and ensuring the make-up of staff is representative of this diversity are three of the most significant.
- Barriers such as language may be preventing participation and needs to be considered in service delivery, especially given the trend away from English as the language spoken most often at home.
- Cultural differences leads to demand for different sports (e.g., badminton and table tennis). Very few visible minorities participate in hockey and other rink sports, for example.

Families

- An increase in "home schooling" and "kids at home alone" are trends that supports the need for community centres to play a role in offering opportunities for socialization and for staff to mentor children
- Increasing pressures on families is clearly evident. Poverty, single parent families, and demands on family time are other family related trends that are on the increase.
- The number of families without extended families is on the increase and therefore there is a trend towards greater isolation.
- Parks, Recreation and Cultural services are critical in mitigating the implications of these trends

Seniors

- Currently 11% of the population is classified as a senior. By 2021, this is projected to increase to 22%. As is the case throughout North America, this is leading to an increased emphasis on health and leisure industries.
- Many seniors will choose to live in City Centre to be close to support services, facilities and transportation.
- All seniors needs are not the same, which means service delivery must be customized to seniors of different ages.
- Seniors are staying in their own homes longer, want to stay fit and healthy and be active in their community. Therefore, accessibility will be an important issue for Parks, Recreation and Cultural services and facilities (e.g. accommodating scooters).

Youth

- Youth comprise a significant proportion of the population (12%). There is a greater awareness of the social cost of failing to invest in children and youth. Research confirms that recreation makes a significant impact on healthy and competent development of children and youth. While society in general is aging, Richmond has a significant proportion of youth living in the community. The Division is well known for its innovative work in youth services and this will need to continue in the future. For example, Youth need financial resources and work experience – perhaps an opportunity for part time work or more volunteer opportunities targeting youth could be offered.

Adults

- A decline in the adult population (from 30% down to 25% by 2021) combined with an aging population will negatively impact ice rental and field rental bookings for adults in the future.

Income

- The gap between the have and have nots is increasing. Therefore the reliance on public recreation in Richmond will likely increase, especially if the Department continues to commit to providing services for all, regardless of income.

Housing and Communication

- Housing densities are increasing and less time is being made for social interaction and "over the fence" conversations. It may be that word of mouth as form of communication is being undermined.

Transportation

- Public transit is a significant barrier in accessing facilities and services throughout the community. There is a need to ensure that services are located and planned with accessibility as a foundational consideration.

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Labour Force

- The labour force is shifting from traditional places of employment to home based businesses and telecommuting. One half of Richmond residents work in Richmond. As well the trend is for more local employment opportunities for Richmond residents especially in the service oriented sectors, partially driven by rapid growth of the airport. Offering leisure services close to home will grow in importance.

Other trends

- The quest for personal health is growing as individuals and families focus on **prevention** rather than use of the health care system; Parks, Recreation and Cultural services help to ensure this happens.
- Connecting with others and creating a **sense of community** is important to people today.
- Two thirds of Canada's population is **not active**; it is anticipated that this is probably true in Richmond.
- **Lifelong learning** plays an important role in the lives of Richmond residents.
- The Division must ensure that recreation services are **accessible** to people of all ages, ability, income, culture and geographic location within the community.
- There is an increasing awareness of Parks, Recreation and Culture as a major contributor to the **economic viability** of the community (e.g., tourism, special events, attracting new residents). This prompts the need for staff training in the area of "super host" and in being ambassadors for the City.
- Increasing demand for the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services division to be part of an overall effort to address broader **societal issues** – creating a sense of community, safety, security and quality of life.
- Greater expectation that the Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Division be part of an overall **integrated** service delivery model – one that enables all community based sectors to work together to provide coordinated services, meeting community needs and leveraging declining resources.
- Due to the economic climate of B.C., citizens are demanding public recreation to be more **efficient, effective and accountable.** Collaboration will be essential and duplication of services will need to be eliminated.
- Growing use of **technology** in Richmond creates an opportunity for the Division to provide coaching, educational programs and mentoring over the Internet.
- An increase emphasis on **health and wellness** pursuits and preventative models will broaden the role the Division plays in the community.
- Citizens want to be engaged in **decision-making**.
- The **connection with nature** is getting stronger, leading to a greater use of parks, open spaces and trails, and a greater demand for awareness, education, and interpretation of the natural environment.

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- There is a greater expectation for activities and facilities to be **environmentally friendly** which may impact on use of chemicals and other operational systems.
- A greater concern for **safety** may impact the way indoor and outdoor facilities are designed and operated in the future.
- **Costs** are on the rise such as utilities, supplies from the states (decline of the Canadian dollar) and staffing.
- Aging parks, recreation and culture facility **infrastructure** is putting pressure on capital budgets and will continue to do so in the future.
- The proportion of the overall City's **budget** allocated to Parks, Recreation and Culture is declining.
- Increasing cost recovery ratio's by increasing **fees** is difficult as participation rates may be affected.
- **Volunteerism** is declining. It is more difficult to get new volunteers, existing volunteers are feeling burned out, and there is an increase in the number of older volunteers. The roles that volunteers can play could be broadened to facility tour guides and greeters, for example.
- The gap between **have and have-nots** and know and know-nots is increasing in terms of technology (access to Internet for example). The Division should continue with the subsidy program, free family programs, and low cost programs. Not all segments of the population can easily access technology dictating the need for providing other options for access to computers.
- The Changing/aging **workforce** impacts the way services need to be delivered. There is a trend to more part-time workers which could lead to a larger pool of part time staff and volunteers.
- The societal trend for feeling **time poor**, changes in hours of work and increasing family demands will dictate the need for different service structures (e.g., number of sessions, programs versus drop-in opportunities, types of program). A renewed focus on promoting all of the benefits of participating in parks, recreation and cultural services will be important in encouraging participation.

7. Results

Community and Facility Based Survey Highlights

The following presents a summary and comparison of the community wide (statistically) and facility based survey results. The detailed statistical report is presented in Appendix I.

- Residents generally expressed a **high level of satisfaction** with current parks, recreation and cultural services (In the community survey, 84% of the respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied. In the walk-in survey, 89% were either satisfied or very satisfied.)

- Very large number of Richmond residents feel that their household and the community **benefit** from parks, recreation and cultural services. In the community survey, 94% of the respondents suggested that their household benefit from these services and 98% suggested that the community benefits. In the walk-in survey, 97% suggested that their household benefits from these services, and 99% of the households.

- There is **significant use of indoor and outdoor facilities**. In the community survey, 92% of the respondents indicated that they had used outdoor spaces in the past 12 months, and 93% had used indoor facilities in that period of time. In the walk-in survey, 96% of the respondents indicated that they had used outdoor spaces in the past 12 months, and 91% had used indoor facilities.

- The **facilities** used by the largest number of respondents in both surveys were walking and jogging paths, libraries, community centres, indoor swimming pools, ice arenas and fitness centres.

- **Local newspapers** and the Recreation and Cultural Guide are used by the largest numbers of residents to learn about parks, recreation and cultural opportunities. Younger families are more likely to make use of the Guide than older residents.

- Sixty-nine percent of the respondents to the community survey, and eighty percent of the respondents to the walk-in survey indicated a **need for new and improved parks and outdoor facilities**. Respondents to both surveys placed greater emphasis on facilities **for quiet and informal use**.

- Sixty-one percent of the respondents to the community survey, and 78% of the respondents to the walk-in survey indicated a need for **new and improved recreation and cultural facilities**. Facilities at the top of each list included indoor swimming pools, youth centres, seniors centres, community centres and fitness centres.

- Respondents to both surveys suggested that the greatest need, in terms of recreation and cultural program opportunities was in the area of **youth and seniors**.

- Support for **tax or rent increases** to help improve and / or expand parks, recreation and cultural services, support is not quite as high. Forty-nine percent of the respondents to the community survey, and 33% of the respondents to the walk-in survey indicated that they did not support any increases. In both surveys, the greatest support - 35% in the community survey, and 41% in the walk-in survey - was for an increase of $10 to $20 per year.

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- Large numbers of respondents (59% or more) support **increased corporate sponsorships and increased commercial advertising** to reduce operating costs for parks, recreation and cultural services, and less than (30% or less) favour increases in program fees, rental charges and admission fees.

- A **lack of time** is the reason most frequently mentioned that limits respondents' participation in leisure time activities. Money was mentioned by 18% of the respondents to the community survey, and by 29% of those responding to the walk-in survey.

- Respondents to both surveys cited the friendliness of people, safe neighbourhoods, trust in their neighbour and places to meet and socialize as things that make it easy to **interact with their neighbours**. A lack of common interests, a lack of time to socialize and a lack of friendliness were most often mentioned as reasons limiting interaction and connections.

- Currently, 41% of the respondents to the community survey, and 78% of those responding to the walk-in survey indicated that they were involved or very **involved in the community**. In the future, 50% of the community survey respondents, and 43% of those responding to the walk-in survey, would like to be either more, or
much more involved.

Map 1

Community Wide Survey

In the fall of 2001, a mail out / mail return survey of 1,000 Richmond residents was conducted in order to determine attitudes about parks, recreation and cultural services, as well as to gather information regarding the use of facilities and participation in recreation and cultural programs.

Eighteen of the surveys were returned as undeliverable, indicating that the person to whom the letter was addressed was no longer at this address. A total of 481 surveys were completed and returned - 49.9% of the original sample.

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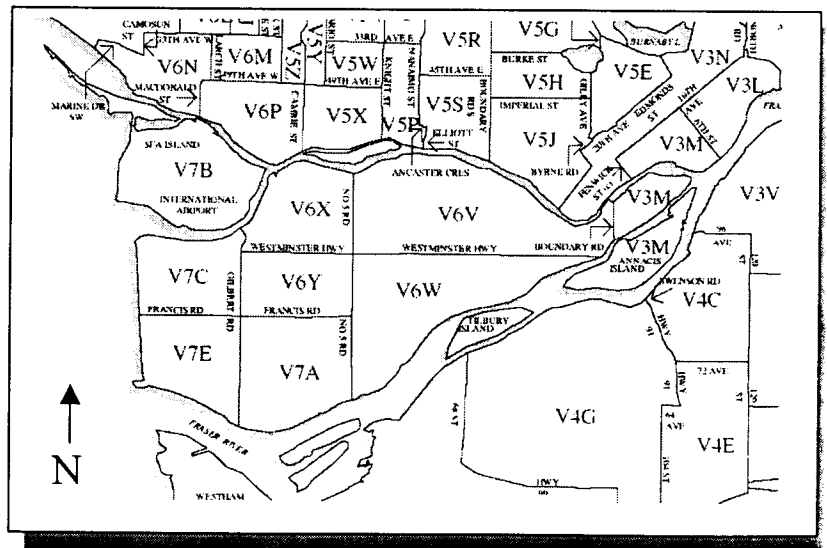
This represents a 95% level of confidence, +/- 4.5% - well within industry standards for this type of survey - and means that if the survey were conducted 20 times, the results would be similar 19 times out of 20.

The following information provides a summary of each of the questions asked of the respondents.

1.   *Likes and Dislikes*

Figure One indicates what residents like best about living in Richmond.

Figure One
Reasons Residents Like Living In Richmond

REASON	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
The Setting	64
Parks and Open Spaces	62
My Neighbourhood	55
Library Services	45
Recreational Opportunities	41
Community Spirit	21
Health Services	19
Educational Services	19
Arts and Cultural Opportunities	18
Social Support Services	13

Highlights
- Residents in the V7E area were more likely than others to suggest that they like their neighbourhood best
- Residents of V7E and V7C suggested that they liked the setting the best
- Residents of V6X were less likely to rate arts and cultural opportunities highly
- Single parents rated recreation opportunities, community spirit, the parks and open space, and the setting best
- Residents over the age of 65 were less likely to rate recreation opportunities highly

2. *Use of Parks, Natural Areas, Playgrounds and Public Trails*

Ninety-two percent of the respondents indicated that they had used outdoor spaces in Richmond in the past year. *Figure Two* indicates the types of outdoor spaces residents of Richmond use.

Figure Two
Use Of Parks, Natural Areas, Playgrounds And Public Trails

IF YES, WHAT TYPE OF USE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Walking / Jogging / Cycling	88
Picnics, Socializing / Relaxing	48
Playing in a Children's Playground	41
Informal Outdoor Sports	22
Organized Outdoor Sports	21
Walking my Pet	21
Learning About the Outdoors	11

Highlights

- Single parents were more likely to make use of playgrounds and areas for picnics and socializing than other residents
- Older residents were less likely to use areas for sports, as were residents of V6X and V7A
- Households with no dependent children were less likely to use facilities with playgrounds and other active facilities

3. *Use of Indoor Facilities*

Ninety-three percent of the respondents indicated that they had used one or more of Richmond's public indoor facilities in the past year. *Figure Three* shows which facilities respondents had used.

Figure Three
Use Of Indoor Facilities

IF YES, WHICH FACILITY(IES)	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Libraries	83
Indoor Swimming Pool	63
Community Centre	53
Ice Arena	32
Fitness Centre	28
Gateway Theatre	24
A School outside of school hours	23
Outdoor Swimming Pool	19
Museums / Heritage Sites	18
Public Art Gallery	14
Seniors Centre	9
Arts and Crafts Studio	8

Highlights

- Libraries were well used by all demographic groups, with slightly less use by those who are aged 65 and older
- Respondents between the age of 35 and 54, and those with dependent children were more likely to use pools and ice arenas, while those who are 55 or over were less likely to use these facilities
- Residents of V6V were more likely than others to use indoor pools while residents of V7A were less likely to do so
- Community centres were used less by respondents over the age of 55, and significantly more by households with dependent children
- The Gateway Theatre is used more by adults over the age of 55, and less by couples with dependent children
- Fitness centres were used less by adults over the age of 55

4. How Respondents Find Out About Services

Figure Four indicates how survey respondents learn about parks, recreation and cultural services and opportunities in Richmond.

Figure Four
Sources of Information

SOURCE	PERCENTAGE WHO USE IT
Local Newspapers	62
Recreation and Cultural Guide	58
Word-of-Mouth	56
Flyers through Schools	15
City Website	10
Cable Television	7

Highlights

- Residents are most likely to learn about parks, recreation and cultural opportunities through local newspapers, the Recreation and Cultural Guide, and word-of-mouth
- Residents of V6Y are less likely than other areas to learn about services through the newspaper and the Guide, as are those with no dependent children

5. *Need for New and Improved Parks and Outdoor Areas*

Sixty-nine percent of the respondents indicated that new or improved parks or outdoor recreation areas are needed in the community. *Figure Five* provides an overview of the facilities needed for "active" uses.

Figure Five
Need For New / Improved Outdoor Facilities For Active Uses

OUTDOOR SPACES NEEDED	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Walking / Running Tracks	42
Water Spray Parks	35
Playgrounds	28
Sports Fields / Diamonds	22
Golf Courses	21
Youth / Skate Parks	20
Outdoor Basketball Courts	18
Lawn Bowling	8

Highlights

- Younger families were more likely to express the need for facilities such as water parks and sports fields
- Older respondents were more likely to express the need for golf courses and lawn bowling facilities

Figure Six provides an overview of the facilities needed for "quiet and informal" uses.

Figure Six
Need For New / Improved Outdoor Facilities For Informal Uses

OUTDOOR SPACES NEEDED	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Walking Paths / Trails	62
Natural Open Spaces	50
Access to Waterfront	49
Community / Neighbourhood Parks	45
Community Garden Plots	28

Highlights

- Respondents over the age of 55 were more likely to suggest the need for community garden plots
- Access to water appears to be less important to residents over the age of 65, and to residents of V7E
- Natural open space was less important to those between 35 and 54, as well as to those living in V6X and V6Y, and more important to those between 55 and 64
- Walking paths were less important to those between 25 and 34, and to residents of V6V

6. Need For New / Improved Recreation And Cultural Facilities

Overall, 61% of the respondents expressed the need for new or improved recreation and cultural facilities.

Figure Seven indicates the level of support for a variety of facilities.

Figure Seven
Need For New / Improved Recreation / Cultural Facilities

FACILITY	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Indoor Swimming Pools	31
Youth Centres	31
Seniors Facilities	26
Child Care Facilities	24
Community Centres	23
Fitness Facilities	22
Museums	18
Outdoor Swimming Pools	15
Arts and Cultural Facilities	15
Ice Arena	12

Highlights

- Older adults, generally, suggested less need for new or improved facilities than younger adults
- Respondents between 35 and 64 were more interested in youth centres than other age groups, and there was more interest among residents of V6V and V7A than those in other areas
- People over the age of 55 and those with no dependent children expressed a need for seniors facilities
- Fewer respondents with no dependent children identified community centres as a need

7. *Parks, Recreation And Cultural Opportunities And Services*

Figure Eight shows whether or not respondents feel that are enough opportunities / services in Richmond.

Figure Eight
Parks, Recreation and Cultural Opportunities And Services

OPPORTUNITY / SERVICE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS		
	ENOUGH	NOT ENOUGH	DON'T KNOW
Performing Arts	39	24	37
Visual Arts / Crafts	38	22	40
Recreational Sports	50	31	19
Competitive Sports	42	31	27
Social Activities	41	31	28
Special Events / Festivals	41	40	19
Fitness Activities	54	23	23
Outdoor Activities	50	33	17
Heritage / Museum Services	44	27	30
Multicultual Services	44	28	28

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Highlights

- Older respondents, and those with no dependent children were more likely to feel there are enough opportunities in the performing arts and visual arts - however, residents in V6V and V7C were more likely to suggest that there were not enough visual arts opportunities
- Couples with no dependent children generally felt that there were enough sports opportunities; respondents living in V6V and V7C indicated were less likely to suggest that there were enough opportunities in this area
- Single parents with dependent children suggested that there were not enough social activities and fitness opportunities

8.   Age Groups Served

Figure Nine indicates which age groups respondents feel are best served in terms of parks, recreation and cultural services.

Figure Nine
Activities and Services

AGE GROUPS	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS		
	ENOUGH	NOT ENOUGH	DON'T KNOW
Up to 5 years	41	21	38
6 - 12 years	42	24	33
13 - 18 years	31	37	32
19 - 34 years	37	28	35
35 - 54 years	43	27	30
55 - 64 years	35	23	43
65 - 74 years	33	21	46
Over 75 years	30	17	52

Highlights

- General responses to questions regarding recreation opportunities were quite consistent for all demographic groups
- There was an indication, however, that more opportunities were needed for 13 to 18 year olds, and among single parents, for 19 to 34 year olds

9.   *Benefits of Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services*

In total, 94% of the respondents feel that their "household" benefits from parks, recreation and cultural facilities. *Figure Ten* provides an indication of how the respondents rated those benefits.

Figure Ten
Household Benefits

BENEFIT	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
A great deal	54
Somewhat	43
Very little	3

Highlights

- Responses regarding benefits to "households" were consistently high for all demographic categories.

Ninety-eight percent of the respondents feel that the "community" benefits from these same services. *Figure Eleven* provides an overview of how the respondents rated the benefits.

Figure Eleven
Community Benefits

BENEFIT	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
A great deal	70
Somewhat	29
Very little	1

Highlights

- Responses regarding benefits to the "community" were consistently high for all demographic categories

10. Satisfaction with Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

Eighty-four percent of the respondents indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with parks, recreation and cultural services in Richmond. Thirteen percent expressed no opinion, and only 3 percent expressed dissatisfaction.

High levels of satisfaction were expressed for library services, as well as the aquatic facilities, Garry Point, Minoru Park, community centres, the dyke, sportsfields and children's playgrounds.

Lower levels of satisfaction were expressed for culture and the arts, the museum, and several specific park features. A number of respondents also indicated concerns with local aquatic facilities.

11. Financing Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services

Figure Twelve shows the property tax (or rent if a renter) the respondents would support to help improve and / or expand parks, recreation and cultural services and spaces in Richmond.

Figure Twelve
Support For Tax / Rent Increases

INCREASE	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
None - no tax increase	49
$20 to $40 per year	35
$41 to $60 per year	9
$61 to $80 per year	2
$81 to $100 per year	4
More than $100 per year	1

Highlights
- Respondents over the age of 65 were more likely than other age groups to express support for no increase in taxation or rent
- Support for an annual increase of $20 to $40 was lower for older adults and higher for single parents with dependent children

Figure Thirteen indicates how survey respondents feel that operating costs for parks, recreation and cultural services can be reduced.

Figure Thirteen
Support for Reductions In Operating Costs

REDUCTION	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Increase corporate sponsorship	71
Increase commercial advertising	62
Implement user fees for sport fields	28
Increase rental charges for facilities	23
Increase fees for programs	18
Increase admission fees	16
Reduce hours of facility operations	15
Implement pay parking in parks and facilities	9

Highlights

- Increased corporate sponsorships and commercial advertising were generally supported by all demographic categories, with the exception of those over the age of 65 - support was somewhat higher among single parents
- The implementation of user fees for sports fields received lower support from those between the ages of 35 and 54, and from those who were 65 and over
- There was generally low support by all demographic groups for reduced hours of facility operations

12. Limits To Participation

Figure Fourteen provides an overview of those things that limit respondents' participation in leisure time activities.

Figure Fourteen
Factors Affecting Participation In Leisure Activities

FACTOR	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Lack of time	50
Money / cost	18
Lack of information / communication	17
Programs / facility schedules	16
Lack of interest	10
Language barriers	8
Lack of childcare	6
Lack of transportation	5
Programs don't reflect my culture	5
Physical barriers / disability	4
Don't feel welcome	4

Highlights

- Twenty-four percent of the respondents indicated that nothing limits their participation
- A lack of time was more of a limitation for respondents between the age of 35 and 54 year of age, and less of a concern for single adults with dependent children and those who are older than 55
- The cost of programs appears to be more of an impediment for single parents than for other demographic categories

13. The Neighbourhood - Interaction And Connections

Figure Fifteen indicates those things that make it easy to interact or connect with neighbours.

Figure Fifteen
Things That Make Interaction / Connections Easy

CONSIDERATION	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
People are friendly	66
Neighbourhood is safe	57
Trust in our neighbours	46
Places to meet / socialize	45
Common interests	29
People make time to socialize	18
Lots of things to do	17
People celebrate cultural differences	16

Highlights

- Single parents were somewhat less likely to find friendliness to be a positive factor in terms of connecting with neighbours
- Respondents over the age of 65, and those residing in V6V were less likely to feel safe in their neighbourhoods, while residents of V6X and V7C were more likely to feel safe
- Trust in their neighbours was lower among residents of V6X and V6Y than other areas in the community
- Places to meet and socialize was lower in terms of connectedness among single parents

Figure Sixteen indicates those things that make it difficult to interact or connect with neighbours.

Figure Sixteen
Things That Make Interaction / Connections Difficult

CONSIDERATION	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
People don't make time to socialize	43
No common interests	36
People are not friendly	29
People don't celebrate cultural differences	19
Little or no trust in our neighbours	18
Neighbourhood is not safe	16
Little of nothing to do	14
No places to meet or socialize	14

Highlights

- Respondents who were 34 or younger, and who lived in V6X and V7C, were more inclined to suggest that people don't take time to socialize - residents of V6X were less likely to suggest this
- Those over the age of 65 were more likely to suggest that there are no common interests
- More residents of V6V suggested a lack a friendliness as an impediment to connecting with neighbours, while people living in V7A and those over 65 years of age were less likely to suggest this

14. Involvement In The Community

Figure Seventeen shows how involved respondents feel the members of their household are currently in the community.

Figure Seventeen
Current Level Of Involvement In The Community

LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Very Involved	6
Involved	35
Not very involved	48
Not involved at all	11

Highlights

- Thirty-five to fifty-four year olds, as well as couples and single parents with dependent children were more likely to be feel that they are more involved than other demographic groups, as were those with no dependent children
- Residents of V6V were more likely to feel that they are involved, and residents of V6Y were less likely to be involved

Figure Eighteen shows how involved residents would like their household to be in the future.

Figure Eighteen
Future Level in the Community

LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT	PERCENTAGE OF RESPONDENTS
Much more involved	6
More involved	44
About the same level of involvement	46
Less involved	2
Much less involved	1

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Highlights
- Twenty-five to fifty-four year old respondents , as well as couples and single parents with dependent children were more likely to feel they would be more involved in the community in the future - respondents with no dependent children were less like to have the same level of involvement
- Residents of V6V expressed a greater likelihood of involvement, and residents of V6Y suggested that they would likely be less involved

15.   The Sample

The characteristics of the survey respondents were as follows:

Gender
- 50% of the respondents were female
- 50% of the respondents were male

Age
- 3% of the respondents were under 25 years old
- 12% of the respondents were 25-34 years old
- 55% of the respondents were 35-54 years old
- 14% of the respondents were 55-64 years old
- 16% of the respondents were 65 years or older

Type of Household
- 43% of the respondents were couples with dependent children
- 27% of the respondents were couples with no dependent children
- 25% of the respondents were one or more single adults sharing a residence
- 5% of the respondents were single parents with dependent children

Area of Residence
- 7% of the respondents live in V6V
- 11% of the respondents live in V6X
- 21% of the respondents live in V6Y
- 15% of the respondents live in V7A
- 20% of the respondents live in V7C
- 27% of the respondents live in V7E

Language spoken in the Home
- 69.7% of the respondents speak English
- .8% of the respondents speak French
- 7.2% of the respondents speak Mandarin
- 18.6% of the respondents speak Cantonese
- .2% of the respondents speak Punjabi

Facility Based (Walk-in) Survey

In the fall of 2001, a survey identical to the mail out / mail return survey was distributed to various public locations in Richmond for residents whose names had not been selected as part of the random sample to pick up and complete. Two hundred and seven completed surveys were returned and analyzed. As note previously, this survey was not random and therefore was not statistically representative the opinions and preferences of the larger community. The highlights from this survey were noted in a previous section entitled Survey Highlights. Since it is not statistically representative and to save on space we have included the findings in Appendix I.

Detailed Focus Group Information

As mentioned in the previous section, twenty-six (26) sessions were held with neighbourhood, partners, citizens, associations and community agencies to augment the quantitative data gathered from the community wide survey. Due to the shear volume of information, the major themes that emerged from these sessions have been highlighted as part of the list of needs in the next section. Detailed notes and focus group survey results are presented in Appendix II.

8. List of Needs

This section provides list of the needs expressed by citizens throughout the needs assessment process. Gaps in services, programs and facilities are also identified. The list of needs is presented below. It is a compilation of data collected from the Community Wide Survey, Facility Survey, and Focus Groups. In the next section, these needs will be prioritized using a filtering process developed by the Consultants.

A Need made the list if it came from more than one source and if improved services are required to better meet one or more legitimate public objectives. It is important to note that just because one person identified a need (via the survey or in a focus group), it did not automatically make the list. Suggestions for improvements are noted with each need; some suggestions are currently being implemented but more work is needed.

Each of the needs is summarized under one of six categories. Within each category the needs are listed in no particular order nor are they mutually exclusive. The sources for each need are referenced. Any suggestions proposed by citizens through the survey and focus groups is noted in italics. This information has been included to add some more substance around the description of the need. It is not intended to appear to imply the suggestions are viable nor pre-empt an in depth discussion around all potential solutions. The viability and strategy for each should be considered in the context of further information (financial/physical/human resources, usage, etc.) and technical analysis. This typically occurs through a Master Planning process.

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1. Foundational Needs (Using Existing Resources or by Reallocating Resources) – The outcome of addressing this category of needs is that services in general will be more equitably and appropriately accessed by citizens. Service level standards per se will not be increased. This category of needs is comprised of two types. The first type are those that must be addressed because they are fundamental to a public leisure service system. The second type are those that can be accomplished operationally through fine-tuning and reallocating existing resources as opposed to requiring new resources. And, no capital costs are associated with this type of need. Since these needs are foundational they have not been prioritized – they simply must be met.

2. Resources At Risk of Being Permanently Lost – The need listed in this category relates to preserving heritage resources. Preservation will require capital investment; if the investment is not made the heritage resource will be lost forever. The historical significance is what separates this need from other types of facilities (e.g., a pool). Since the resource is at risk of being permanently lost, this need must be addressed and is not prioritized. The outcome is a unique, irreplaceable community resource protected for future generations.

3. Service Enhancement Needs Requiring Operating Budget Investment – The needs presented in this category will require some investment of operating dollars but no capital investment. In the absence of a Master Plan and more comprehensive information, the Division will need to evaluate alternate ways to address the priority needs within the context of the availability of resources and a cost benefit analysis. Since resources are required to address this category, the needs have been prioritized in the next section to show which are most highly supported by the Community Wide Survey, Focus Groups, and by local and societal trends. The outcome of addressing this group of needs is a higher level of service.

4. Service Enhancement Needs Requiring Both Operating and Capital Investment – Needs within this category require both operating and capital investment. The priority listing will provide guidance to future planning. (Please note solutions are not included as they would be typically developed within a Master Planning Process where more information is available).

5. Suggested Approaches – Listed in this category are ideas that were proposed through the Survey and Focus groups which are not true "needs" per se. Instead, they reflect a way of doing business, are tactical in nature or advocate an approach that the Division could find effective. The outcome of meeting these needs is enhanced service levels.

6. Needs that are outside the scope of Municipal Government – This category encompasses those needs that are not within the mandate of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Division nor the City of Richmond.

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Category 1—Foundational Needs (can be responded to by using existing resources or reallocating resources)

> 1. Foundational Needs Using Existing Resources or by Reallocating Resources – The outcome of addressing this category of needs is that services in general will be more equitably and appropriately accessed by citizens. Service level standards per se will not be increased. This category of needs is comprised of two types. The first type are those that must be addressed because they are fundamental to a public leisure service system. The second type are those that can be accomplished operationally through fine-tuning and reallocating existing resources as opposed to requiring new resources. And, no capital costs are associated with this type of needs. Since these needs are foundational they have not been prioritized – they simply must be met.

1. **Celebrate and Share between Different Cultures** - The Community Wide Survey showed that the 4th highest ranking barrier to neighbourhood interaction was that people don't celebrate cultural differences. Through the focus groups this need and the desire to "mix" between cultures was consistently expressed as being extremely important to citizens. The importance of providing a safe a welcoming environment for people to get to know each other, learn about other cultures and make new social connections was underscored. They also felt that strategies needed to be neighbourhood based. Source: Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups

   Suggestions included neighbourhood based special events, which could focus on food, dance or other cultural aspects.

2. **Engage citizens with barriers to participation in leisure and community life** - The public survey shows that individuals living alone and couples without dependent children are significantly less likely to use many of the outdoor and indoor leisure services available in Richmond. And, through the Focus Groups it became apparent that many segments of the population were not finding ways to feel connected with their local community (e.g., young teen moms, people from different cultures, low income families, people with mental, physical and psychological barriers). This inequity in service provision could become an increasing concern. Appropriate ways to connect with the disconnected need to be found as well as ways for them to participate in services and programs. Source: Community Wide Survey, Focus Groups and Special survey created by the Consultants and conducted by agencies who work with the disconnected

   Suggestions included having a food bank at the community centre where staff sit and eat with participants, regularly offer and advertise free programs/ demo programs, have programs for adults when children are participating, have child care to support parent participation, go to where they are versus making them come to the community centres and have equipment demonstrations and facility open houses.

3. **Integrate programs and services for able bodied participants into programs for those with disabilities** – For those who face physical and mental disabilities the need to integrate the community at large into their community was important. Notwithstanding, this group still felt some segregated opportunities and specialized equipment were needed in order to build confidence and to target specific challenges. They felt that programs for other segments (specifically seniors) could be opened up to people of all ages who share the same challenges. It was also emphasized that some disabilities are not visible and therefore staff (reception and instructors) need to be better trained in this area. Building awareness around disabilities was an area of concern for many. Source: Focus Groups

   Suggestions included opening up seniors programs such as arthritis classes at Seniors Centre, having programs during the day and weekend, and including cultural opportunities in the programming mix. In terms of broadening awareness, suggestions ranged from in school awareness programs to putting strong messages and images that celebrate diversity in the Centres.

4. **Foster a sense of community in the local community** – There is a strong desire by citizens to develop the neighbourhood as the hub of recreational activity with 1) opportunities for people of all ages and abilities 2) spaces that promote socialization i.e. lounging spaces with coffee being served 3) better connections via all modes of transportation 4) better access for local citizens to local parks and special events (multi-cultural, BBQ's, seasonally appropriate events) and 5) improved physical appearance of neighbourhoods to foster pride. Source: Focus Groups

5. **Create a balance between locally based services and city wide services** – Citizens articulated the desire to have some services provided close to home and to reflect the unique needs of the local community (unique special events, specialized programs, etc.). On the other hand there are some services that they believe need to be offered across all communities in order to ensure equity (e.g., seniors opportunities, youth opportunities). Still at another level, some facilities can not be replicated in each community due to facility and operating costs as well as not having the critical mass to make these facilities and programs sustainable (i.e. indoor pools). Citizens also supported the notion of housing community services within local community centres as a way of improving local access to these services and strengthening the community fabric. A model needs to be developed that strikes the balances between local and community wide opportunities. A critical component to this model is establishing a service delivery decision-making process to ensure that the resultant activities reflect local and community trends as well as opportunities to collaborate on a broader scale to best meet the needs of all citizens. Source: Focus Group

6. **Engage citizens from all ages, cultures, and lifestyles in planning processes** - Citizens in all of the focus groups were concerned that all segments of the community are not being involved in the service planning process to the extent they need to be. They believe more involvement will not only reshape and reprioritize services but will also further increase awareness and support for services. They also mentioned that staff need to be more skilled at structuring ways to involve people who have different confidence levels, backgrounds and language skills. Source: Focus Groups

Examples included having the City engage citizens at a young age through the school system, revisiting very structured forums such as meetings for getting input, talking more slowly so that people for whom language is a barrier can better follow the conversation, etc.

7. **Increase Number of Volunteers and Types of Volunteer Opportunities** – The Community Wide Survey indicated that 41% of those who responded were involved or very involved in the community. In the future, 50% of the respondents say they would like to be either more, or much more involved. This indicates that citizens are contributing to the community through volunteerism at quite a high level. Yet, there is also a tremendous opportunity to further tap into this resource. Focus Groups suggested increasing the number of volunteers by structuring volunteer opportunities to reflect smaller time commitments, requiring less responsibility, being doers instead of leaders, and having less intimidating labels for work being done (i.e. "coordinator versus worker bee"). They also suggested finding ways to engage volunteers from all cultures who don't have the confidence with their language skills and ensure they feel they can contribute. Communication methods need to be improved. In terms of target segments, youth emphasized that they are an important volunteer resource (i.e. the Youth Council in East Richmond does a great deal of volunteer work and is committed to contributing to the community). As well, seniors felt they have a great deal of time and expertise to contribute as volunteers. Finally, volunteer recognition is seen as an important way to increase the awareness of the value of volunteerism, to show the City's appreciation for volunteer contributions, and to inspire others to be involved. Source: Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups

8. **Review Park allocation practices** – Enabling local people to use local parks/fields is seen by citizens as important way to foster more local opportunities for activities and a sense of connection with neighbours. Many citizens mentioned that their inability to use local parks is undermining their ability to participate in structured and unstructured activities. As well, by having to go outside the community to access parks and fields undermines the number of times one sees their fellow neighbours and therefore is detracting from creating more social connections with neighbours. This situation combined with the lack of public transportation is precluding many citizens from accessing their park system. Source: Focus Groups

9. **Improve the relationship with the local Schools** – Many citizens mentioned their frustration with not being able to access school facilities and the fact that at the last minute their activities can be cancelled to make way for a school activity. Citizens want increased access to these publicly funded facilities and they want improved allocation policies. They believe the critical success factor is the attitude of the principals. They also mentioned that the City assign appropriate gyms to the right groups with right sports and age groups. Source: Focus Groups

10. **Upgrade Aquatics Registration practices** – Many aquatics users mentioned the need to create easier access to swimming sessions through improved registration practices. A significant number of people who have the ability to go to New Westminster and Delta mentioned that they choose to go to outside Richmond because of better access. Source: Focus Group

11. **Improve Customer Service** - For the most part people feel well treated by facility staff however citizens note that staff are sometimes too busy to talk to people for more than a few minutes. They also mentioned that while staff know the names of people they see regularly but don't make the same effort for those they don't. Citizens believe that staff need to reflect the population they are serving—ethnicity, age, abilities—because it promotes a higher level of comfort, acceptance and the ability to relate to the target groups. Source: Focus Groups

12. **Increase Coordination of Heritage operations and marketing of assets** – Different groups that share a connection with the importance of the heritage resources would benefit from coordinating their activities. Specific areas include marketing, packaging of experiences, and creating a critical mass of assets through supporting the protection of existing resources as well as having the ability to mobilize (either public or private resources) when opportunities arise. Source: Focus Group

13. **Review and Improve Relationship with Associations** – Richmond has a long standing model of partnership with the Associations that have helped to develop and operate the Community Centres in the City. However, as the scale and variety of spaces and uses of Community Centres has grown and the format of use has changed in recent years, the needs of the partnership have changed. Stresses and strains on the partnership need to be dealt with in order to continue to have the Associations and the City play the roles each wants to and is positioned to play. Both Associations and the City staff have identified these problems. Source: Focus Group

14. **Ensure indoor and outdoor facilities, services and programs are responding proactively to a range of changing circumstances** - There are many external factors that are or will affect the Division's ability to provide value in the community: A steadily increasing population, greater demand than supply, an aging baby boomer generation with specific health and lifestyle expectations, a work force that with varied work hours, stay at home parents that need activities while their children are participating in programs, an aging recreation and park infrastructure, etc. Citizens want needs assessment to be done regularly and for the City to commit to implementing solutions that meet real needs – not the needs perceived by staff or put forward by those with the loudest voices. They challenged the City to ensure that the "Needs Assessment" information be acted upon and not sit on a shelf. Many citizens felt that strategic planning needed to be tied to land development. Source: Focus Groups

Category 2—Related to Resources at Risk of being Permanently Lost

2. Needs that Relate to Resources At Risk of Being Permanently Lost – The need listed in this category is one that relates to preserving heritage resources. Preservation will require some capital investment, however, if that investment is not made the resource will be lost forever. This need is different than all other facilities types (i.e. a pool) which could be replaced because they don't have historical significance. Due to the fact that the resource is at risk of being permanently lost, this need must be met and is not prioritized. The outcome of meeting this need is that a unique irreplaceable community resource is protected for future generations.

15. **Reinvest in Existing Heritage Assets** – Some existing heritage sites are in need of significant maintenance in order to protect the assets. This should be done to reduce risk of losing these important heritage assets. Source: Focus Groups

Category 3—Service Enhancements (requiring operating budget investment)

> 3. Service Enhancement Needs Requiring Some Operating Budget Investment – The outcome of addressing these needs is a higher level of service. The needs presented in this category will require some investment of operating dollars but no capital investment. In the absence of a Master Plan and therefore more comprehensive information, the Division will need to evaluate alternate ways to address the priority needs within the context of the availability of resources and a cost benefit analysis of each. Since resources are required to address this category of needs, these needs have been prioritized in the next section in order to show which are most highly supported by the Community Wide Survey, Focus Groups, and by local and societal trends.

16. **Increase awareness about and access to the financial assistance program**– Eighteen percent (18%) of survey respondents and twenty nine percent (29%) of the facility survey respondents mentioned financial resources as a limitation to their participation. This is the second highest ranking barrier after lack of time. Specifically, users and agencies which link with those who have financial challenges said the financial assistance program shouldn't be accessed by only those people who have connections with "people in the know". Source: Community Wide Survey, Facility survey, and Focus Groups

    Suggestions include access cards that enable access to all facilities, investigate community and business partnerships to sponsor activities for those who are financially disadvantaged, and advertise "free" programs and opportunities.

17. **Customize program, service, facility, and special event information to target audiences** – Local newspapers and the Guide are used by the largest number of residents to learn about parks, recreation and cultural opportunities. Respondents to the community wide survey stated that the 3rd highest barrier to participating was lack of information/communication. In the Focus Groups, most people who felt there could be improvements to communication tools suggested having material specific to age groups rather than having to read through the whole guide. Source: Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups.

18. **Provide more child care and before and after school care.** Many citizens in the Focus Groups identified that the lack of child care and before/after school care has a profound impact on the financial and social fabric of the family. As well the Community Wide Survey identified the need for child care facilities as ranking fourth highest (22.3%) for those who thought new or improved indoor facilities were needed (60%). By not being able to access quality care, many families are forced to keep one parent at home which in turn restricts financial resources to invest in recreation and cultural activities. For those who do stay at home, the lack of services and the lack of transportation tend to isolate not only parents but children (for ESL children this severely impacts their language and social skills). Opportunities need to be provided for parents to participate in their own activities while children attend their program. Source: Focus Groups

19. **Make Arts a higher priority** – There is the perception that the arts is seen as a low priority and is in need of investment in staff, spaces (multi-purpose as well as performance spaces), communication, and broader exposure through outreach services. Source: Focus Group

20. **Improve Staff's Relationship with Community** – This Needs Assessment project was not only about collecting strategic information. It was also about forging a stronger connection 1) with citizens at large and 2) between citizens and their local community centre staff and board members, partners, and allied agencies. An important outcome of this process is that expectations have been heightened in terms of the type of relationship citizens, partners, and allied agencies expect to have with staff and the way in which they will be engaged in the future. In order to respond and to further foster excellent relationships, the Division needs to invest in staff training in the area of community and partnership development. Source: Focus Groups

Category 4—Service Enhancements (requiring both operating and capital investment)

> 4. Service Enhancement Needs Requiring Both Operating and Capital Investment – The outcome of these needs are significant service enhancements which require both Operating and Capital Investment. Again, it is particularly important to emphasize that needs are being presented here. And, the solutions to address these needs must be considered as part of a Master Plan process where more information is available to assist with decision-making and strategies to meet needs. In the next section, these needs are prioritized to provide guidance to future planning initiatives.

21. **Invest in Safe and social places that Youth can call their own** – The Community Wide Survey revealed that citizens believe the greatest need in terms of recreation and cultural opportunities is in the areas of youth and seniors. Of those who felt there should be improved recreation and cultural facilities in Richmond (61%), 30% (the second highest priority) felt youth centres were needed. Specifically it was suggested that the community invest in, ideally, centres for youth within each community. Youth noted that the centre should be comfortable, casual, and easily accessed by public transit. It should have regularly scheduled activities as well as unstructured indoor activities (such as arts and crafts) for drop in. Youth also expressed the need for outdoor spaces (basketball hoops and skateboard parks). Sources: Community Wide Survey and Focus Group

22. **Address lack of pedestrian linkages, local parks and easily accessible programs in the City Centre area** - With the lack of local parks with pre-school play equipment and a facility of sufficient size to house programs, people must travel outside their local community if they want to access these services. The reality is that many people who live in this area don't have vehicles and therefore they are being underserved. Walking or cycling to various destinations aren't options because the pedestrian and cycle route system is disjointed. Source: Focus Groups

23. **Address lack of services in East Richmond (around Cambie area)** - A library, community police station, youth facility and skateboard park are desperately needed in East Richmond. More local opportunities for youth are needed i.e. volleyball, badminton, youth aerobics at convenient times, and organized outdoor sports located close to home. Installing banners, lamp standards and flowers in East Richmond would significantly help create a sense of community identity. Fostering better local retail and support services like Ironwood would reduce the need to go out of the local community for quality retail services, would help create a sense of place and would enable shoppers and shopping dollars to stay in the community. Source: Focus Groups

24. **Balance the level of investment in the Seniors Centre with local opportunities for seniors -** The Community Wide Survey indicated that one of the segments of the population in most need of parks, recreation and cultural services is the seniors age group. The seniors from the Seniors centre noted their priorities included installing more fitness equipment at the Seniors Centre, improving the pool room, and programming for a variety of ages and abilities within the seniors age group. They also mentioned issues such as isolation and fear of going out at night as being barriers to participation. They supported intergenerational opportunities to break down the fear between youth and seniors.

The Community Wide Survey indicated that the age group that was not accessing public recreation and cultural facilities in the past year were those who were 65 and older. The gap was dramatic – 17% were from this age group versus 9 % for those aged 55 – 64, 3.9% 35-54 years old , and 7 % of the 25-34 year olds. This result was echoed at the neighbourhood focus groups. Seniors mentioned the need to have opportunities available through their local community centre.

Incorporating the needs of seniors who are able to travel to the Seniors Centre and the need to provide local opportunities for seniors who are less mobile needs to be pursued. Source: Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups.

25. **Reinvest in Older Facilities and Aging Equipment** – There is significant use of indoor facilities. Ninety three percent (93%) of the Community Wide Survey respondents had used indoor facilities in the past 12 months. In addition, survey respondents indicated a greater interest in improvements than in new facilities. Some facilities and much equipment in a number of facilities are approaching the end of its functional life span or no longer fully meets the needs they were intended to meet. Bringing these spaces and equipment up to more modern standard and a level that again meets the needs is required. Source: Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups

26. **Invest in Community Centre facilities that are below the level of service of other Community Centres** – There has been significant investment in indoor facilities in general over the past years. However, some Community Centre facilities have not been adequately resourced and are in need of investment to ensure the surrounding community have equitable access to services. These are:

   • City Centre: an adequately sized facility is seen not only as an important venue to host recreation and cultural activities but as a social gathering place. Lang Centre does not have space to accommodate sufficient programs. In a new facility, one of the key features identified is an auditorium with good acoustics which could house programs as well as special events and performances

   • Hamilton – local citizens strongly support a free standing community centre which blends recreation and cultural services (especially a gym and fitness facility) with community services (i.e. emergency services and community policing)

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- Sea Island – While the community strongly relates to Sea Island Community Centre its value is being undermined by the fact that it is often closed and locked up due to short operating hours. Citizens feel an investment in staff time to enable the centre to be open more hours and to offer more programs is imperative.

Source: Focus Groups

27. **Improve trail linkages and water access** – In the Community Wide Survey, 92% of the respondents indicated that they had used outdoor spaces in the past 12 months. Sixty–nine percent (69%) indicated a need for new and improved parks and outdoor facilities. Respondents placed a greater emphasis on places for quiet and informal uses. Of those who responded positively to the needs for quiet and informal spaces, strong support was given to walking paths/trails (61%), natural open spaces (50%), access to the waterfront (49%), and community/neighbourhood parks (45 %). In the focus groups, citizens wanted staff to address the disparity between parks/open space and trails in East Richmond versus West Richmond; increase the number of access points to the water beyond Garry Point and west; and improve the connectivity of trails, urban pedestrian routes and bike route. Source: Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups

    Suggestions included converting Railway Avenue to a linear park

28. **Broaden the benefit of parks** through improved interpretative signage, maintenance, and lighting. Parks, streetscapes, and rural/farm landscapes are a source of pride for many citizens. However there is the need to broaden the benefit of parks by pursing better educational signage and opportunities, improved maintenance, increased lighting to improve safety and enable longer hours of use, and dog litter awareness. Source: Focus Groups.

29. **Upgrade Minoru Aquatics Centre** – Of those respondents in the Community Wide Survey who said they had used an indoor facility in the last year, the highest use of a recreation facility was indoor swimming pools (62%). At the Focus Groups, issues that surfaced regarding swimming pools related to Minoru Aquatics Centre. Specifically, citizens wanted improvements to the weight room, family change rooms, and better water temperature in the showers. Source: Community Wide Survey and Focus Group

30. **Create a Specialized Wellness Facility** – Allied agencies who work in the area of health and wellness strongly support the development of a specialized wellness facility as a way to address a lack of services and spaces for those with specialized physical barriers (people with health issues resulting from heart attacks, stroke, diabetes, respiratory problems, arthritis, accidents, sedentary lifestyle). Citizens who have health issues and attended the neighbourhood based focus groups mentioned the need to have more support services to enable them to become healthier and active in their local community centre. Currently the need is not being met because public fitness spaces can't be booked for this population. This group requires a lot of time to move on and off equipment, require special equipment, and feel intimidated by "young and healthy" users. They also need other support services such as programs to learn how to manage their health issues and meeting spaces for their support groups. The purpose of a specialized

facility would be as a transition place – a place to build confidence and competence and they could move to local community centres to participate in existing activities. Source: Focus Group

Suggestions included converting the old Zellers store to a fully equipped facility with meeting spaces.

31. **Expand Capacity of Sports Fields** – The Community Wide Survey indicated that of those who thought there should be more outdoor recreation areas (69%), 22% felt there should be more sports fields/diamonds. While the capacity of Richmond sports fields, diamonds, courts and pitches has expanded somewhat over the past decade, the expansion has not kept pace with growing needs, standards for field provision in surrounding communities and increased investments in indoor facilities. More capacity is needed, especially in the areas of high level tournament quality spaces and in high capacity surfaces. Source: Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups

32. **Expand Capacity of Performing Arts** – The capacity for performing arts in Richmond has remained relatively constant for many years, while the needs have grown. Some performing arts groups expressed the need for different kinds of performing spaces than currently exist (e.g. recital hall) while others expressed the need for larger performing arts venues. Some citizens at the neighbourhood focus groups suggested investing in portable stages which could be moved between outdoor spaces. Source: Focus Groups

33. **Increase Indoor Pool Capacity** – Sixty one percent (61%) of the respondents to the Community Wide Survey indicated a need for new and improved recreation and cultural facilities. Of those, 31% (highest ranking) mentioned the need for an indoor swimming pool. While the capacity for indoor swimming was greatly expanded several years ago, the demand for indoor swimming has grown very quickly and there is now a need to consider further expansion of indoor swimming capacity. Groups were clear that they didn't want this to happen at the expense of not having access to existing outdoor pool capacity during construction (e.g. if the indoor capacity is added by redeveloping the well used outdoor pool at Steveston). Source: Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups

Category 5—Suggested Approaches

> 5. Suggested Approaches – Listed in this category are ideas that were proposed through the Survey and Focus Groups which are not true "needs" per se. Instead, they reflect a way of doing business, are tactical or advocate an approach that the Division can take to address a need or barrier or take advantage of an opportunity. The outcome of this category of need is that service levels will be enhanced by approaching the underlying need in a specific way.

34. **Target partnerships with business to support and expand services** – A significant number of respondents (59%) support increased corporate sponsorships and increased commercial advertising to reduce operating costs for parks, recreation and cultural services. In the Focus Groups, citizens felt the City needs to actively pursue more partnerships with the business community to provide space for recreational activities (i.e. Zellers, the mall, common spaces in condominium development for public use) and cultural performances, equipment donations and more revenue by creating employee wellness programs for their employees. It was felt that that the investment was justified by significant health and performance benefits to employees and employers alike. Citizens noted that business employees are part of the community even if they don't work in Richmond. The local tourism centre is keen to work with the Division to promote activities for marketing purposes. Sources: Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups.

35. **Focus Investment in New Heritage Assets** – There will always be more need to protect heritage assets than there are resources to respond to the need. Instead of attempting to do more than the City is capable of doing, and failing to do each project fully, the City should take a more strategic approach to identifying what it can do and then doing those things well. That doesn't mean that the City is the only entity with resources to protect heritage assets, but that doing fewer things well will be more productive than attempting to react to all the needs expressed. Source: Focus Groups

Category 6—Outside the Scope of Municipal Government

6. Needs that are outside the scope of Municipal Government – This category of needs encompasses those needs that are not within the mandate of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Division nor the City of Richmond.

36. **Improve Public Transit to make programs, services and indoor/outdoor facilities more accessible** - The lack of public transit is seriously undermining people's ability to access service as well as to connect with other citizens in their community, overcome isolation and feel a sense of belonging. While this theme did not come out as a priority in the survey, it was the top ranking barrier mentioned at most focus groups. Source: Focus Groups

9. Priority Needs

In this section, the list of needs from Categories #3 and #4 are prioritized by passing them through a number of filters. (Category #1, #2, #5 and #6 have note been prioritized. Category #1 has not been prioritized because it is comprised of foundational needs – needs that have to met by the Division as they are integral to a public leisure system. Category #2 has not been prioritized because it relates to heritage resources that will be permanently lost if the need isn't met. Therefore this need must be met. Category #5 and #6 have not been prioritized because they are methods for addressing needs or outside the mandate of the City. The process for establishing priorities is shown below:

Needs emerge from
Community Wide Survey, Facility Based Survey
Focus Groups – Neighbourhood based/ Partners, Stakeholders and
Agencies/Users/Disconnected, and Focus Group Surveys

Presented in "List of Needs"

Filters Applied
to 'List of Needs"

A set of
Priority Needs

Strategic Recommendations
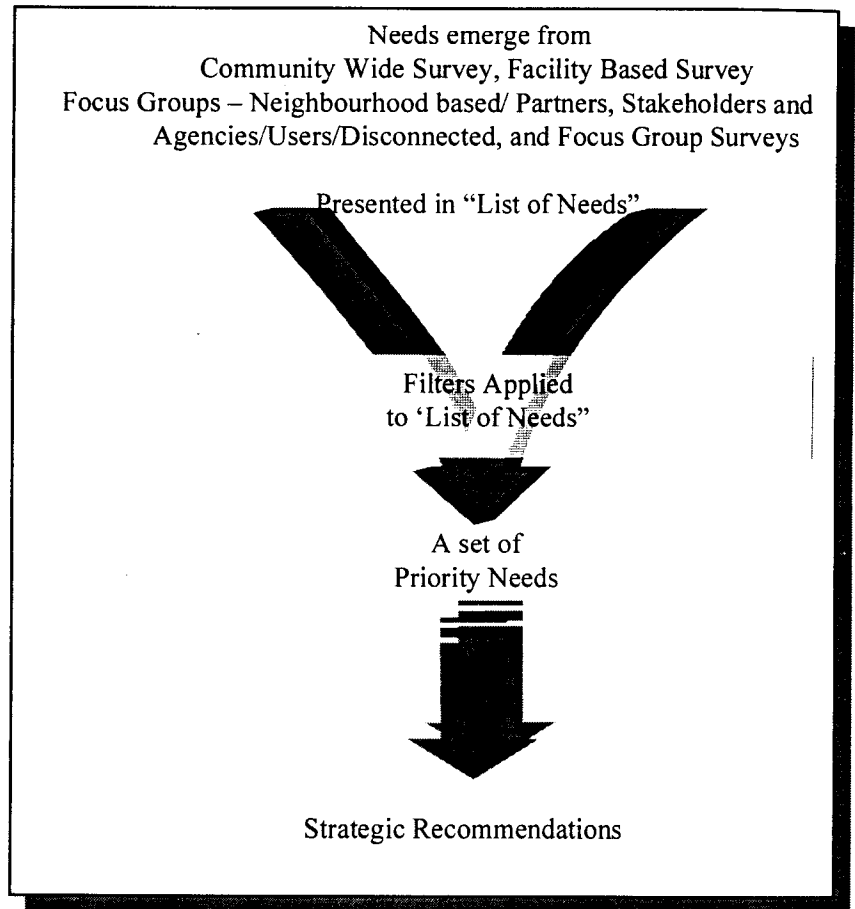
The filters that have been applied are:

- Societal Trends
- Community Trends (twice the weighting of other factors)
- Community Wide Survey
- Focus Groups/Surveys

Since the Community Wide Survey is statistically valid, quantifiable and represents a city wide perspective, it has been given a weighting of "2". All other filters have a weighting of "1". If a filter is silent on the need (i.e. does not support or contradict the need) it is shown as blank and is not included in the total score calculation.

For each need, a score between 1 and 5 is possible and indicates the magnitude of support for the need. The score of 1 indicates there is a significant contradiction between the filters and the need. A score of 5 indicates strong support for the need by the filters. In the case of the Focus Groups, a score of 5 means the need was mentioned several times across

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several different Focus Groups. A score of 3 indicates no clear support for the need at all. A blank means that the filter didn't apply to the need.

A total score is provided for each need based on the score given for each filter multiplied by the weighting. A maximum score of 25 is possible. Since some needs will have filters that don't apply not all scores will be out of 25. Consequently, all scores have been recalibrated to all have a common denominator of 25. Based on the total scores, those needs that scored over 20 are considered top priorities.

The priority needs in the context of the scope of this Needs Assessment Project provide the foundation for eleven strategic recommendations. These are presented in the next section.

Matrix of Priority Needs

Foundational Needs (Can be met Using Existing Resources or by Reallocating Resources	Source	(Not prioritized as all needs must be met by Division as foundational to a public leisure service system)					
1. Celebrate and Share between Different Cultures	Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups						#1
2. Engage citizens with barriers to participation in leisure and community life	Focus Groups and discussions with Agencies who work with the disconnected.						#1

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Foundational Needs (Can be met Using Existing Resources or by Reallocating Resources	Source	(Not prioritized as all needs must be met by Division as foundational to a public leisure service system)					
3. Integrate programs and services for able bodied participants into programs for those with disabilities	Focus Groups						#1
4. Foster a sense of community in the local community	Focus Groups						#1
5. Create a balance between locally based services and city wide services	Focus Group						#1
6. Engage citizens from all ages, cultures, and lifestyles in planning processes.	Focus Groups						#1
7. Increase Number of Volunteers and Types of Volunteer Opportunities	Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups						#1
8. Review Park allocation practices	Focus Groups						#1
9. Improve the relationship with the local Schools	Focus Groups						#1
10. Upgrade Aquatics Registration practices	Focus Group						#1
11. Improve Customer Service	Focus Groups						#1
12. Increase Coordination of Heritage operations and marketing of assets	Focus Group						#1
13. Review and Improve relationship with Associations	Focus Group						#1
14. Ensure indoor and outdoor facilities, services and programs are responding proactively to a range of changing circumstances	Focus Groups						#1

Needs Relating to Resources At Risk of Being Permanently Lost	Source	(Not prioritized as this resource must be protected and cannot be replaced)
15. **Reinvest in existing heritage assets**	Focus Groups	#1

Service Enhancement Needs Requiring Some Operating Budget Investment	Source for Need	Filters (Weighting in brackets) Legend: 5 = strong support for need 4 = some support for need 3 = no clear support for need 2 = contradicts the need 1 = significantly contradicts need blank = filter didn't include information on the need				Total Weighted Score (Maximum 25)	Top Ranking Priorities (scores over 20)
		Societal Trends (1)	Community Trends (1)	Community Survey (2) - Cell includes the calculation of the score based on weighting (in brackets)	Focus Groups /Survey (1)		
16. Increase awareness of and access to the financial assistance program:	Community Wide Survey, Facility survey, and Focus Groups	3	5	4 X (2) = 8	4	20/25	
17. Customize program, service, facility, and special event information to target audiences.	Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups	5		4 X (2) = 8	5	18/20 Adjusted score: 22.50/25	#1
18. Provide more child care and before and after school care.	Focus Groups	3		3 X (2) = 6	5	14/20 Adjusted score: 17.5/25	
19. Make Arts a higher priority	Focus Group	4	4	4 X (2) = 8	5	21/25	#2
20. Invest in Safe and social places that Youth can call their own	Community Wide Survey and Focus Group	4	4	4 X (2) = 8	5	21/25	# 5
21. Improve staff's relationship with community	Focus Groups				4	4/5 Adjusted score: 20/25	

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Service Enhancement Needs Requiring Some Operating Budget Investment	Source for Need	Filters (Weighting in brackets) Legend: 5 = strong support for need 4 = some support for need 3 = no clear support for need 2 = contradicts the need 1 = significantly contradicts need blank = filter didn't include information on the need				Total Weighted Score (Maximum 25)	Top Ranking Priorities (scores over 20)
		Societal Trends (1)	Community Trends (1)	Community Survey (2) - Cell includes the calculation of the score based on weighting (in brackets)	Focus Groups /Survey (1)		
22. Address lack of pedestrian linkages, local parks and easily accessible programs in the City Centre area	Focus Groups	3.5		3.5 X (2) = 7	4	14.5/20 Adjusted score: 18/25	
23. Address lack of services in East Richmond (around Cambie)	Focus Groups	3			4	7/10 Adjusted score: 17.5/25	
24. Balance investment in the Seniors Centre with local seniors' opportunities	Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups		5	4 X (2) = 8	4.5	17.5/20 Adjusted score: 22/25	#3
25. Reinvest in Older Facilities and Aging Equipment	Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups	4	4		4	12/15 Adjusted score: 20/25	
26. Invest in Community Centre facilities that are below the level of service of other Community Centres	Focus Groups	3	4	4 X (2) = 8	5	20/25	
27. Upgrade Minoru Aquatics Centre	Community Wide Survey and Focus Group				4	4/5 Adjusted score: 20/25	
28. Create a Specialized Wellness Facility	Focus Group	5	4		3.5	12.5/15 Adjusted score: 20.80/25	#4

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Service Enhancement Needs Requiring Some Operating Budget Investment	Source for Need	Filters (Weighting in brackets) Legend: 5 = strong support for need 4 = some support for need 3 = no clear support for need 2 = contradicts the need 1 = significantly contradicts need blank = filter didn't include information on the need				Total Weighted Score (Maximum 25)	Top Ranking Priorities (scores over 20)
		Societal Trends (1)	Community Trends (1)	Community Survey (2) - Cell includes the calculation of the score based on weighting (in brackets)	Focus Groups /Survey (1)		
29. **Expand Capacity of Sports Fields**	Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups	2		2 X (2) = 4	5	11/20 Adjusted score: 13.75/25	
30. **Expand capacity of performing arts facility**	Focus Groups	4		2 X (2) = 4	4	12/20 Adjusted score: 15/25	
31. **Increase Indoor Pool Capacity**	Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups	4		5 X (2) = 10	4	18/20 Adjusted score: 22.5/25	#2

Suggested Approaches	Source for Need	(Not prioritized as is a tactic that should be employed to enable above needs to be met)					
32. Target partnerships with business to support and expand services.	Community Wide Survey and Focus Groups						
33. Focus investment in new heritage assets	Focus Groups						

Needs that are outside the scope of Municipal Government	Source for Need	(Not prioritized as falls outside the mandate of the City)					
34. Improve public transit to make programs, services and indoor/outdoor facilities more accessible	Focus Groups						

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Presented below is a summary of the priority needs in priority order:

Foundational Needs	
1. Celebrate and Share between Different Cultures	#1
2. Engage citizens with barriers to participation and community life	#1
3. Integrate programs and services for able bodied participants into programs for those with disabilities	#1
4. Foster a sense of community in the local community	#1
5. Create a balance between locally based services and city wide services	#1
6. Engage citizens from all ages, cultures, and lifestyles in planning processes.	#1
7. Increase Number of Volunteers and Types of Volunteer Opportunities	#1
8. Review Park allocation practices	#1
9. Improve the relationship with the local Schools	#1
10. Upgrade Aquatics Registration practices	#1
11. Improve Customer Service	#1
12. Increase Coordination of Heritage operations and marketing of assets	#1
13. Review and Improve relationship with Associations	#1
14. Ensure indoor and outdoor facilities, services and programs are responding proactively to a range of changing circumstances	#1
Needs Relating to Resources at Risk of Being Permanently Lost	
15. Reinvest in existing heritage assets	#1

Service Enhancement Needs Requiring Some Operating Budget Investment		
17. Customize program, service, facility, and special event information to target audiences.	22.5	#1
19. Make Arts a higher priority	21	#2
16. Increase awareness of and access to the financial assistance program	20	
20. Improve staff's relationship with community	20	
18. Provide more child care and before and after school care.	17.5	

Service Enhancement Needs Requiring Both Operating and Capital Budget Investment		
27. Improve trail linkages and water access	23.5	#1
33. Increase Indoor Pool Capacity	22.5	#2
24. Balance investment in the Seniors Centre with local seniors' opportunities	22	#3
26. Invest in Community Centre facilities that are below the level of service of other Community Centres	22	
30. Create a Specialized Wellness Facility	20.8	#4
21. Invest in Safe and social places that Youth can call their own	21	#5
25. Reinvest in Older Facilities and Aging Equipment	20	
28. Broaden the benefit of parks	20	
29. Upgrade Minoru Aquatics Centre	20	
22. Address lack of pedestrian linkages, local parks and easily accessible programs in the City Centre area	18	
23. Address lack of services in East Richmond (around Cambie)	17.5	
32. Expand capacity of performing arts facility	15	
31. Expand Capacity of Sports Fields	13.75	

10.   Strategic Recommendations

This section builds upon the learnings derived from the Community and Facility-based Surveys, national and local trends, Focus Groups workshops and surveys, and a prioritization methodology. In this final section, a set of strategic recommendations (that are consistent with the parameters of a Needs Assessment process) are outlined to position the Division to effectively respond to the information collected.

The recommendations have been grouped under two streams:

1.   Overarching recommendations which focus on <u>foundational</u> actions that will position the Division for success; and

2.   Recommendations that focus on <u>rebalancing</u> the current Divisional emphasis and efforts to better respond to priority needs in specific market or service segments

Overarching Recommendations:

1. Ensure staff and encourage partners to become intimately familiar with all the **detailed notes from the Surveys and Focus Groups** to garner an in depth understanding of citizen's needs, concerns and priorities. By simply increasing awareness, it is believed that many new initiatives can be implemented which respond to actual citizens' desires without significant fiscal resources.

2. Develop an **Implementation Strategy** for the Needs Assessment to ensure staff are well positioned to fully understand, integrate, develop strategies and act upon the learnings from this project

3. Incorporate the detailed Needs Assessment information from this project into **a broader strategic planning exercise** (i.e. Master Plan) in order to integrate this information with an analysis of physical, fiscal and human resources.

4. Review the Division's **relationship with the Associations** and establish a model that best serves the community and values the contribution of both types of partners.

5. In partnership with all service providers, reconcile what services should be provided on a (i) **city wide basis** and (ii) on a **community/neighbourhood basis** (driven by local community characteristics and needs)

6. For services provided by the City, ensure these services are responsive to citizen needs by establishing a **service delivery decision-making framework** which is grounded in data collection and knowledge management practices. For services that are offered in partnership with other agencies, incorporate the requirement for a data based decision-making framework into their operating agreements.

7. Improve the effectiveness of **communication tools** to reflect how citizens make decisions around participation in special events, structured and unstructured parks, recreation and cultural activities, and volunteerism

8. Train staff in **partnership and community development techniques** to foster stronger community relationships, more effectively leverage community resources, be in touch with changing demands and opportunities, and be better positioned to engage citizens and partners in Divisional activities.

9. Integrate the Needs Assessment information into the work being done on the **2001-2003 Corporate Plan**

Rebalancing Recommendations:

10. As part of a larger strategic planning exercise, further investigate ways to address the need to focus more resources on the **sectors that are relatively weak** (such as culture and informal outdoor spaces)

11. As part of a larger strategic planning exercise, investigate strategies to address the need for those **community centres** which are not adequately resourced to provide equitable levels of services to their local community (Sea Island, Hamilton, and City Centre)

Using the information collected in this project on opportunities and barriers, investigate ways to **increase the participation of those who are relatively underserved** (i.e. individual and families who are isolated, have cultural and language barriers, have disabilities, have financial barriers, who can't participate because of the lack of before and after school care, youth, and who don't have children and therefore find it more difficult to connect with their local community