



**To:** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee  
**From:** Kate Sparrow  
 Director, Recreation & Cultural Services  
**Re:** 2010 Physical Activity Challenge

*To Parks, Recreation & Culture - May 25/05*  
**Date:** May 12, 2005  
**File:** 11-7000-01/2005-Vol 01

**Staff Recommendation**

1. That the City of Richmond join the 20 by 2010 challenge and work with the Provincial Government and 2010 LegaciesNow to help meet the target of increasing physical activity amongst its citizens and employees by 20% by 2010; and,
2. That the City formally register this commitment to the 20% Physical Activity Challenge with 2010 LegaciesNow.

*K Sparrow*

Kate Sparrow  
 Director, Recreation & Cultural Services  
 (4129)

Att. 3

FOR ORIGINATING DIVISION USE ONLY			
		CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER <i>[Signature]</i>	
REVIEWED BY TAG	YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <i>DW</i>	NO <input type="checkbox"/>	REVIEWED BY CAO <i>(CA)</i> YES <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
			NO <input type="checkbox"/>

## Staff Report

### Origin

The challenge of motivating Canadians to become more physically active and to reduce a number of risk factors for chronic illness was initiated by the Canadian Medical Association (CMA) with a goal of increasing physical activity in Canada by 10%. The Province of British Columbia took up the challenge through Legacies Now and officially doubled the target to 20% by 2010.

In March 2005, the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) issued the challenge to BC municipalities to support Legacies Now 20 % by 2010 targets. In 2003, 58% of the BC population were physically active and the overall goal is to increase that to almost 70% by 2010, with municipalities playing a leadership role. To date the following municipalities have identified lifestyle as one of its greatest virtues and have already jumped on board the province wide 2010 physical activity challenge :

- Vancouver
- Kelowna
- City of Kimberley
- Fort St. John
- Gibsons
- Abbotsford

The purpose of this report is to provide background on the physical activity challenge; provide information on some innovative programs the City is currently providing that directly support this provincial initiative; and to seek Council's formal endorsement of the province's 20% by 2010 physical activity challenge.

### Findings Of Fact

#### A. Development of the Healthy Living Targets For Richmond - Nov. 2004

In November 2004 Vancouver Coastal Health region brought together participants from recreation, health, school board, and dieticians to develop targets of improvement in the following areas:

- Increase levels of physical activity
- Increase the number of people consuming the minimum recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables
- Reduce the levels of tobacco use
- Reduce the levels of obesity

These targets were then used to develop province-wide targets.

## **B. Initiatives to support Increasing Physical Activity**

In addition to the many ongoing programs, services, parks and facilities the City of Richmond supports, there are a number of initiatives currently underway that specifically focus on the outcome of increasing physical activity:

### **Establishment of the "Getting Richmond Moving" Team - January 2005**

The Getting Richmond Moving staff team was formed as an offshoot of Action Schools to encourage youth to remain active beyond the school year and to try to achieve the 20% by 2010 physical activity target. The team consists of youth coordinators, programmers, physical activity specialists, and seniors coordinators. The committee's mandate encompasses 3 main objectives:

- Build bridges between the community and physical activity opportunities available to them
- Identify and build awareness in the community of ways they can regularly engage in physical activity
- Develop role models within the community for active living

Since the team's inception, the group has focused its attention, primarily on developing initiatives for Summer Camps. The intention is to increase youth awareness about healthy lifestyle choices. Listed below are some of the initiatives that will be used to achieve this desired outcome:

- Incorporating physical activity into all summer programs (including those that may not typically include physical activity into their program).
- A "50 ways to get moving" poster was developed to increase awareness of the many no cost or low cost physical activity opportunities families can engage in during the summer.
- Family Challenge passports were developed to promote physical activities families can engage in together. The passports will be available at Community Centres throughout Richmond and families are encouraged to fill in the passport and return them to the Community Centre at the end of the summer. All submissions will be entered into a draw
- Training for summer staff will include ideas for incorporating physical activity into camp programs and each camp will be given an activity pack that leaders will be able to use during the camp.

The team is also looking at how to encourage more Recreation and Cultural Services staff to regularly engage in physical activity and has developed a summer staff challenge.

### **Move For Health Day - May 7, 2005**

This year will mark the second annual Move For Health Day walk. Move for Health Day is an international event that spotlights and celebrates the importance of physical activity. The walk will be a joint venture between the City of Richmond and the Richmond Fitness and Wellness

community association. The event is free to the community and focuses on getting families to go out for a walk together.

### **Action Schools**

Richmond was one of the pilot districts for this initiative and Recreation and Cultural Services worked closely with Action Schools BC to provide a resource binder to the pilot schools. The binder highlighted community opportunities available to schools and families for engaging in physical activity. Action schools was so impressed with this resource binder that it was used as an example for other schools and municipalities in BC of how the community could get involved. This year the focus is going to be on the community piece of the Action Schools model and again Recreation is supporting the initiative. The Action Schools project has also expanded to include more schools in the Richmond area.

In addition to providing support to the Action Schools initiative Recreation and Cultural Services also provided Action School "leader training" to many of the programming staff. The feedback from the session was very positive. Programmers committed to looking at how they could incorporate the information into programs back at their community centre.

### **Garratt Wellness Centre**

The Garratt Wellness Centre unofficially opened in September 2004, in Garratt Elementary School. The Garratt Wellness Centre is a joint venture between Richmond Health Services and the City of Richmond Recreation and Cultural Services. The primary objective of this Community Wellness project is to provide the community a dedicated space for specialized physical activity and education programs.

The programs offered by the City are for those individuals living with some form of chronic illness. The desired outcome of this initiative is to help people living with a chronic illness better manage their illness and to help them develop the confidence and skills to exercise in an unsupervised setting (community centres). The programs are designed in partnership with health and are delivered by Recreation. There is a large body of research that has shown that regular physical activity improves the quality of life and reduces acute episodes for those individuals living with a chronic illness. In tracking the progress of all participants, findings have supported the literature, with the majority of the clients seeing improvements in functional ability. Feedback from participants in our programs has also been extremely good (see **Attachment 1** for a sample of some of the impact statements from past participants).

As of April 2005 the number of visits to the City's programs at Garratt Wellness Centre has been 1322.

### **PlayDay - July 2005**

This year will be the second year that Recreation and Cultural Services has hosted a Playday event. Last year this event attracted 11,000 children and their parents. The focus for the day is play and all the positive aspects that come with engaging in regular play. There will be 9 play zones, each with a different focus.

**IWalk -Annual**

The International walk to School project (IWalk) highlights the importance of physical activity by promoting walking to school. Each year Recreation and Cultural services has worked with Richmond School board to offer an art contest for children. Children are encouraged to submit their posters highlighting how they engage in physical activity. In the past the winners from each grade category has had their submission made into fridge magnets and into posters. The posters were part of displays in the community centres and the fridge magnets were distributed at the community centres. Winning submissions were also used in transit shelter ads to engage the community o getting more active.

**City of Richmond's Corporate Wellness Program**

The City of Richmond's Corporate Wellness program has provided healthy lifestyle programs and services to City of Richmond employees for the past six years. During that time more than 60% of employees have participated in one or more of the Wellness program initiatives. The Wellness program also received the BC Medical Association's award of Excellence in Health promotions in 2002.


**Financial Impact**

To endorse and formally proclaim the City of Richmond's support of the 20% by 2010 initiative, there is no financial impact.

**Conclusion**

Given the alarming obesity levels of adults and youth coupled with the knowledge that physical activity can significantly reduce the risk of Type 2 diabetes, heart disease and strokes, raising the levels of physical activity in communities is critical. As little as 30 minutes a day of moderate physical activity can maintain an active lifestyle and reduce the levels of obesity in BC. Physical activity contributes positively to an individual's well-being and can lead to a more productive and healthier workplace and community.

The City of Richmond, has already developed programs and services to increase the physical activity levels of the community and its employees, so it is a natural next step, to formally endorse the 20% by 2010 physical activity levels.



Alison Dennis  
Fitness and Wellness Services Coordinator  
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*Each program participant underwent a pre and post functional assessment with parameters of importance for each condition (ie. glucose monitoring for Diabetes; balance for Fall prevention) and also a post program evaluation that rated their satisfaction with the program, asked them to identify in order, the top three benefits they experienced from participating in the program, and if they were to promote the program to their friends what would they say (four different health-related benefits of Recreation quotes were used for this section).*

#### Osteofit 1 & Osteofit For Life (level 2):

100% of the classes saw improvements in:

- muscular strength
- muscular endurance
- Cardiovascular endurance

Balance scores for the participants in the programs improved at a moderate level. However, people's perceptions were that they had improved more significantly in this area than the quantifiable data indicated. This psychological benefit resulted in an increased sense of self-confidence relating to fall prevention, which translated into people going out more and not feeling quite so isolated because of their health status and fear of breaking a bone. People voiced that they felt stronger and were not as afraid of having a fall as they had been prior to the program.

These functional improvements translated into an improved quality of life as was seen by their comments on the feedback forms. Improved quality of life came out as the number one benefit they felt they experienced from being involved in the programs.

#### *Samples of Participant feedback:*

- I can walk down the stairs like a human being!
- I can get up from the table and out of a chair all by myself
- I felt safer when I went out grocery shopping
- I still have some pain but I can cope with the pain much better now
- After this course, I dusted my house for the first time in three years!

#### Diabetes Exercise Program:

The group was extremely sedentary and had lots of neurological complications as a result of their Diabetes, which translated into some real mobility issues (they had chronic pain or numbness in their extremities - feet) for some of them. Exercise was totally foreign to this group, so it was a big challenge to get them motivated to attend regularly and then to keep them motivated.

After 6 weeks, the feedback from the participants was very positive. One of the participants has gone on to join an Aquafit program at Minoru Pool. The individual indicated that they would never have ventured into a fitness setting if it had not been for this program – they had always been too intimidated by all the thin people to go to a community centre or private club – they felt like they didn't belong and that people were staring at them because of their size.

Healthy Back Program:

This program is for individuals who experience some sort of back pain. Each participant is screened to ensure his or her back problem are not too advanced for the program (nerve involvement that caused numbness in their legs).

*Sample Participant Feedback:*

- For the first time since I started experiencing back problems, I was able to go on a 4.5 hour plane ride and not experience any discomfort during or after the flight.
- The instructor was extremely knowledgeable and was able to adapt the exercises to meet everyone's needs. Excellent class!
- I have been to many physios and massage therapists and this is the first program that I have actually experienced improvements in my back problem and pain.
- This is just what I needed. I felt so supported by the group and the instructor.

Heart Wellness Program:

The Heart wellness program is our most established program (in existence for more than 25 years). Functional improvements are measured both quantitatively (annual exercise stress tests with their Cardiologist) and qualitatively (annual participant questionnaire). Due to the progressive state of coronary artery disease the desired outcome of the program is to slow down the progression of the disease. Most participants have seen quantitative improvements on their annual stress test (their exercise tolerance results increased), ranging from minimal to fairly significant and everyone has noticed qualitative improvements ranging from improved sense of mental well-being (depression can occur for a large number of people with heart disease and has a strong link to the medications they are on) to being able to carry out activities of daily living with less fatigue.

*Sample of Participant Feedback:*

- I feel so much better mentally since being involved with the program – my husband has even commented that I am a different person since being involved.
- This is an excellent program- I would highly recommend it. The instructors are very knowledgeable, compassionate, and helpful.
- I have had increasingly better and better results on my yearly stress test. I attribute this to the program. This program is a must for anyone with heart-related problems – it is for your future survival.
- I have lost weight, I can walk longer and faster and I now have better eating habits.
- I have met so many wonderful new friends through this program.