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**To:** General Purposes Committee  
**From:** Lauren Melville  
Manager, Policy & Research  
**Re:** Neighbourhood Services Program

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**Date:** November 1, 2001  
**File:** -

**Staff Recommendation**

That staff continue to develop the Neighbourhood Services Program and report back to Council through General Purposes Committee with the results of the first pilot project.

Lauren Melville  
Manager, Policy & Research

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## Staff Report

### Origin

As outlined in the *Corporate Renewal Program – Learning from the Past/Shaping the Future*, it is the City's vision to make Richmond the most appealing, liveable and well-managed community in Canada. In order to move the City closer to achieving the "liveable" component of the vision, a cross-divisional staff team has been formed to develop a Community Vibrancy Strategy. The strategy will focus on developing and implementing initiatives that will help maintain and enhance the quality of life in Richmond as the City grows and develops. As one of their main initiatives, the Community Vibrancy Team is in the process of developing the concept of a Neighbourhood Services Program.

The purpose of this report is to highlight and receive feedback on the work completed to date on the concept before developing the program further and proceeding with a pilot project.

### Analysis

Richmond has a strong history of community involvement. However, as Richmond continues to become more urban and diversified, there is a need to find new ways to strengthen neighbourhoods and to improve the delivery of services to the broader community. Also, as people's life styles become busier, greater expectations are placed upon more responsive and convenient services. Thus, the proposed Neighbourhood Services Program is aimed at finding a better way for the City to connect more directly with people. In particular it is aimed at the broader community who rather the City come to their neighbourhood than them having to come to the City. It further utilises the delivery of key City services at the neighbourhood level, as a vehicle for "*Connecting People to People*" during the uncertain times that we are experiencing as a result of the September 11<sup>th</sup> tragedy.

The desired outcomes of the Program include:

- a more proactive rather than reactive service delivery model;
- visible increase in neighbourliness;
- co-ordinated approach to the delivery of services;
- opportunity for residents to benefit directly from the Corporate Strategies;
- more equitable distribution of services , and
- more attractive, safer and socially connected neighbourhoods.

How could the Program Work?

The possible steps to the process include:

- Select neighbourhood.
- Develop neighbourhood profile and determine the most appropriate roll-out strategy.
- Assign a small staff team who will become the facilitators or brokers between the neighbourhood and the City.
- The team will meet in the neighbourhood and present a menu of possible City services that can be utilised by the residents to strengthen their neighbourhood.
- The neighbourhood will be asked to reach a consensus on 1 or 2 services that they would like to have in order to improve their neighbourhood.
- The team will then co-ordinate with the various divisions to deliver the services.
- After the services are delivered, a neighbourhood celebration will be held, and a new neighbourhood would be selected.

A couple of examples of the type of services that will be offered to the neighbourhoods as part of the menu of services include:

*A Safe Home Plan*

The Safe Home Plan will involve staff representatives from Police, Fire-Rescue, By-Law Enforcement, Emergency Preparedness, and Building Approvals providing a neighbourhood workshop on:

- the development of home or complex security plans
- how to conduct home security inspections
- home security monitoring
- liase with Block Watch Co-ordinator and Youth prevention programs
- home fire safety inspections
- the development of home evacuation plans
- home style emergency preparedness training
- pre-design plan checking for renovators
- home inspections renovation advice with respect to code compliance.

*The Beautiful Yard Plan*

The Beautiful Yard Plan will involve staff representatives from Parks and the Beautification Team on providing assistance for groups of home owners on a variety of skills including planning and design, installation and maintenance of lawns and gardens, etc. As well, Neighbourhood Beautification Programs could be organized to bring residents together to beautify their neighbourhood. In order to facilitate participation, the City could offer funding under a formula similar to the Local Improvement Program.

### Next Steps


Over the next month it is the intent of the Community Vibrancy Team to further develop the program including the public process, the marketing strategy, and to work with the various divisions to create the menu of services. Once this is done, it is felt that a small pilot project involving a cul-de-sac or small townhouse project should be undertaken to test the program and individual menu items such as the Home Safe Program.

### **Financial Impact**

As the Neighbourhood Services Program will result in a more effective delivery of existing services, it is not anticipated that there will be any significant costs associated with its implementation.

### **Conclusions**

As part of Richmond's Community Vibrancy Strategy, a Neighbourhood Services Program concept is being developed. This report provides an update on the initial work that has been undertaken to date, and seeks direction from Council to develop the program further.



Lauren Melville  
Manager – Policy & Research