



# City of Richmond

## Report to Council

**To:** Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee      **Date:** September 20, 2023

**From:** Keith Miller, Director, Recreation and Sport Services      **File:** 11-7375-01/2023-Vol 01

**Re:** **Community Services – Summer Programs Update 2023**

### Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled, “Community Services – Summer Programs Update 2023,” dated September 20, 2023, from the Director, Recreation and Sport Services, be received for information.

Keith Miller  
 Director, Recreation and Sport Services  
 (604-247-4475)

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Arts, Culture & Heritage Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO 

## Staff Report

### Origin

Summer is a highly anticipated season in community facilities characterized by distinct programming opportunities for the City and our community partners. This report provides a summary of the Community Services Division's registered program and community event opportunities for children, youth and families over the summer months, all which meet multiple objectives related to Council-approved strategies including the Recreation and Sport Strategy (2019-2024), Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023), the Arts Strategy (2019-2024), and the Richmond Youth Strategy (2022-2032).

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #6 A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

*Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.*

*6.1 Advance a variety of program, services, and community amenities to support diverse needs and interests and activate the community.*

*6.3 Foster intercultural harmony, community belonging, and social connections.*

*6.4 Support vulnerable populations through collaborative and sustainable programs and services.*

### Analysis

Summer is an important time for children, youth and families, and the summer season provides many unique opportunities with children and youth out of school, warmer weather and longer days, outdoor pools and school facilities available for use, and youth and young adults available to volunteer and work. Through the City's community-driven relationship-based service model, the Community Services Division and Community Associations and Societies provided a wide variety of summer camps, programs, and activities to meet the social, physical, and cultural needs and interests of Richmond residents.

As in previous years, a diverse array of accessible and inclusive summer programs and activities were offered. With many parents and guardians working during the summer, full day camps continue to be a valued option. However, half-day specialty camps and registered summer programs were also in high demand. These activities provide fun and engaging opportunities to be active, creative, to spend time outdoors, and to develop new skills.

Overall participation in summer camps and registered programs continues to grow, with 2023 registration totals increasing by almost 12 per cent over the previous year. Summer program registration has increased each year since the pandemic with some program areas regaining or surpassing pre-pandemic levels of participation. As new staff are hired in key program areas, such as aquatics, arts and sports, it is expected that participation in summer camps and programs will continue to increase in future years.

Table 1 below provides participation numbers for the past two summers for children and youth enrolled in day camps and other registered programs offered by the Community Services Division.

**Table 1:** Community Services Summer Registration – Day Camps and Registered Programs for Children and Youth (0 to 18 years)

<b>Program Category</b>	<b>2022 Registrations</b>	<b>2023 Registrations</b>
Summer Day Camps	7,183	8,226
Registered Programs	11,892	13,056
<b>Total</b>	<b>19,075</b>	<b>21,282</b>

Table 2 below provides further enrollment numbers for registered summer programs by program category. These numbers exclude summer day camp registrations.

**Table 2:** Community Services Summer Registration – Registered Programs by Category for Children and Youth (0 to 18 years)

<b>Program Category</b>	<b>2022 Registrations</b>	<b>2023 Registrations</b>
Aquatics	3,369	3,692
Arenas	1,203	987
Arts	2,495	2,515
Computers, Technology and Social Media	77	219
Cooking	19	40
General Interest	179	510
Language	101	78
Martial Arts	555	484
Nature and Science	416	789
Online	10	–
Racquet Sports	912	896
Sports/Fitness/Health	2,556	2,846
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,892</b>	<b>13,056</b>

### Summer Camps

Summer camps provide engaging opportunities for children and youth to be active, try new pursuits, learn new skills, build relationships, and foster a sense of belonging. Full day summer camps also provide a fun alternative to traditional child care options.

As in previous years, summer camps were offered at community centres, the Richmond Arts Centre, the Richmond Nature Park, Minoru Arenas, the Richmond Curling Centre and the Richmond Museum. Day camp programs also took place in public schools as part of the City's joint use agreement with School District No. 38 (Richmond).

Although full day camps continue to be popular for working families and caregivers, specialty camps were also offered to provide a variety of options for families. These camps were shorter in duration and focused on specialized skills and activities such as art exploration, cooking, science, and various sports.

#### Preteen and Youth Activities

Youth engagement during the summer months is an important priority and the City is committed to delivering a wide variety of accessible activities for preteens and youth. Summer programming included age specific day camps, expanded youth drop-in social programs, sports programs, cooking classes and creative activities that allow youth to stay physically and mentally active and connect socially throughout the summer break.

This year, several youth programs provided opportunities for youth to develop leadership and job related skills, including advanced aquatic training courses that certify participants that are interested in future job opportunities as a lifeguard or swim instructor, and the West Richmond Summer Slam program that provided an opportunity for 36 youth staff and volunteers to lead a grassroots basketball development program. In addition, the Skills for Success – High School Prep Camp offered students an opportunity to connect with other youth and build relationships before starting high school in the fall. For many of the youth enrolled, this was their first time participating in a day camp and it was a very positive connection to youth programs offered in the community.

The Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP) also continued to host free weekly drop-in sessions for youth throughout the summer and introduced a new music-oriented drop-in session on Fridays called, Friday Night Jam Nights. This created a space where youth could learn and play the guitar, DJ, experiment with music production, music mixing and other sound engineering techniques.

#### Free and Low Cost Activities

There were a variety of free and low cost programs and events for children, youth, and families. These activities provided residents with unstructured opportunities to enjoy physical, creative, cultural and social activities. Some highlights are identified below:

- Weekly open gyms and youth hangouts provided safe places for youth to spend time while being active and social;
- The Richmond Art Truck partnered with the Richmond Public Library to offer a free Art Club for school age children;
- Outdoor Concerts, such as the Minoru Seniors Society's Summer Concerts at the Minoru Outdoor Plaza, City Centre Community Association's Concerts in the Park at Garden City, and the Steveston Folk Guild Concerts at Britannia Shipyards;
- Neighborhood special events, such as West Richmond Community Association's West Fest at Hugh Boyd Park, South Arm Community Association's Block Party and East Richmond Community Association's Open House and barbeque; and

- Outdoor movie nights, such as the poolside movie at South Arm Outdoor Pool and Hamilton's Night Out in McLean Park, which featured community information booths, family games and activities.

Summer 2023 also saw the expansion of the \$29 Summer Active Pass to include additional drop-in activities for children and youth aged 5 to 18 years, up from 16 years in 2022. This low cost pass provided unlimited drop-in access to public swim sessions at indoor and outdoor pools, public skating at the Richmond Ice Centre, and weekday admissions to the West Richmond Pitch and Putt, as well as drop-in access to fitness centres (13 years and older), group fitness classes, and other select activities at community recreation centres from June 6 to September 4, 2023. As a result, pass sales increased this year by 79 per cent, totalling 5,913 passes sold, which were used for almost 60,000 visits over the course of the summer.

### Volunteer and Employment Opportunities

Volunteers are vital to the delivery of summer programs and events. In addition to building community capacity, volunteer opportunities allow youth to develop leadership and social skills, and increase competence and confidence. Summer program volunteer positions often lead to employment as a day camp leader, youth leader or program instructor in future years. Volunteer involvement in summer programs increased in 2023, with more than double the individuals contributing 2,025 more hours of service compared to 2022.

Table 3 below provides further details on Community Services summer volunteer contributions.

**Table 3:** Community Services Summer Programs Volunteer Contributions

	Summer 2022	Summer 2023
Individuals Volunteering	110	221
Volunteer Hours	6,400	8,425

In 2023, summer day camps provided employment opportunities for 157 staff, many of whom were youth. This year, 12 students were hired through the Canada Summer Jobs Grant, which provided \$65,106 in funding to support summer employment. In addition, the City's Summer Grant contributed \$37,017 to support the delivery of low cost or no-cost programs, summer support workers, supplies and staff, and volunteer training and development. Many young people find the skills developed while leading summer camps and programs are highly valued in future careers. These skills include leadership, critical thinking, decision-making, creative problem solving and teamwork.

### Participant Feedback

Summer program participants shared their appreciation for the programs and the benefits they and their children experienced. Comments received conveyed appreciation for the variety of different programs available for participation and the many opportunities to try new activities and learn new skills. Youth specifically highlighted the social connections they made through the various activities, and participants of all ages and their parents and guardians expressed gratitude for the staff and volunteers that helped create memorable and positive experiences throughout

the summer. The feedback received highlights the positive impacts that summer programs bring to the community.

**Financial Impact**

None.

**Conclusion**

Summer programs provide meaningful opportunities for participants of all ages to meet new friends, remain physically and mentally active, develop new skills and build confidence. Summer programs also assist in building stronger and more resilient neighbourhoods. The provision of a wide variety of summer programs is fundamental to achieving the City's Recreation and Sport Strategy vision for Richmond to be a leader in the planning and delivery of recreation and sport opportunities while inspiring individuals and communities to be active, connected and healthy for a lifetime.



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