



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Public Works and Transportation Committee

Date: May 6, 2025

From: Suzanne Bycraft
Director, Public Works Operations

File: 10-6370-01/2025-Vol
01

Re: Youth Climate Corps BC

Staff Recommendations

1. That a partnership with the Youth Climate Corps BC as outlined in the staff report titled "Youth Climate Corps BC" dated May 6, 2025 from the Director, Public Works Operations, be approved subject to funding, and the Chief Administrative Officer and General Manager, Engineering and Public Works be authorized to execute the agreement and all related documentation with Youth Climate Corps BC.
2. The six-month pilot program and total cost of \$85,000 be considered as part of the 2026 budget process with funding from the General Solid Waste and Recycling Provision.

Suzanne Bycraft
Director, Public Works Operations
(604-233-3338)

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Finance Department	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Community Social Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Human Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Climate & Environment	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

This report responds to the referral from Public Works and Transportation Committee on October 16, 2024 “that staff explore a working agreement with Youth Climate Corps British Columbia (YCCBC) and report back.”

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #1 Proactive in Stakeholder and Civic Engagement:

Proactive stakeholder and civic engagement to foster understanding and involvement and advance Richmond’s interests.

1.4 Leverage a variety of approaches to make civic engagement and participation easy and accessible.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #5 A Leader in Environmental Sustainability:

Leadership in environmental sustainability through innovative, sustainable and proactive solutions that mitigate climate change and other environmental impacts.

5.1 Continue to demonstrate leadership in proactive climate action and environmental sustainability.

5.3 Encourage waste reduction and sustainable choices in the City and community.

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.

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

This report supports the City of Richmond Youth Strategy 2022-2032 Strategic Priority 4: Opportunity:

4.4 Develop additional volunteer and paid opportunities for personal growth and development and for youth to gain job readiness skills, training and employment.

4.10 Involve youth in advancing City initiatives such as sustainability and climate-action projects.

Analysis

Background

Established in 2020, Youth Climate Corps BC (YCCBC) is a non-profit organization empowering youth (ages 17-30) to take action to address the climate crisis. YCCBC provides a liveable wage and training to young people to encourage them to engage in their communities, gain hands-on experience in climate-based jobs while building leadership mindsets around climate resiliency. Partnerships with YCCBC typically run five to six months and in that time communities can leverage the program to engage in projects that advance climate action on initiatives that typically fall outside of core mandates or service levels yet are important to advance the climate agenda. YCCBC have served over 80 youth totalling 7,000 working days in nine rural, urban and indigenous communities since 2020. Of this, seventy-five percent of the youth that complete a YCCBC program continue in “green jobs”.

In 2024, as a part of the Provincial Government budget, YCCBC received \$3 million in funding to expand its program and to work with local governments and First Nation communities on initiatives related to energy efficiency, community engagement, education, ecosystem restoration, youth leadership, local food security and forest fire mitigation.

Partnership Overview

YCCBC and the partner municipality collaborate to hire a cohort of five to six young people consisting of a Program Lead and a team of crewmembers. Youth hired under the program will be staff of YCCBC and not that of the City. For the division of municipality and YCCBC responsibilities please see Table 1 below.

Table 1: Division of Roles in Partnership

Responsibility	Municipality Role	YCCBC Role
Program funding	Contributes to program budget	Matches City's contribution
Hiring	Oversees job postings, participates in interview, approves hires	Advertises job posting, interviews and hires with City's input
Program planning	Provides work plan	Program Lead enacts work plan
Day-to-day program operation	City oversees	Program Lead coordinates crew
Payroll	n/a	Tracks hours and issues payment (including percentages in lieu of benefits)
Insurance	n/a	Provides insurance
Safety training	Identifies training needed	Provides safety training
Workspace	Provides workspace as needed	n/a
Workstations and supplies	Provides equipment as needed	n/a
Transportation to job sites	Provides transportation as needed	n/a

The total budget for a YCCBC program operating for six months can range from \$130,000 to \$227,000, with the municipal contribution to YCCBC ranging from \$50,000 to \$65,000. YCCBC matches the City's financial contribution through corporate, utility and/or government grants and in many instances have raised additional funds exceeding the match. Staff note that beyond the initial contribution to YCCBC to develop the program, an estimated additional cost of \$20,000 may be required from the City to appropriately cover operational and resource needs such as but not limited to supplies, IT hardware and vehicles. Indirect costs include the coordination and effort from staff to determine work scope, oversee implementation and program execution.

Jurisdictional Review

Staff engaged with four municipalities who have partnered with YCCBC including City of Kamloops, City of Courtenay, City of Vernon, and District of Squamish, to gain an understanding from the municipal perspective. A partnership agreement requires municipal funding and providing projects to the program's scope of work.

Some of the projects other municipalities have supported through the YCCBC program include education and outreach at public events, climate friendly homes tours and bike valet. Staff identified potential benefits in having multiple types of work available through the program, such as physical, policy and outreach. This mix of work will provide the youth engaged in the program a diverse look at the various types of municipal work related to climate-action, and the various skills and experiences needed to be successful within future roles. Attachment 1 provides an overview of partnership projects undertaken between YCCBC and other cities.

Program Opportunities for Richmond

The YCCBC program is specifically targeted to Richmond youth, providing them with paid, hands-on experience in climate-related work. This initiative supports youth employment and engagement while advancing community-based climate action. Staff have identified several projects from Environmental Programs, Climate and Environment, Roads and Construction, Water Services and Parks Services that align with the YCCBC mandate including residential and public spaces waste audits, waterway markings and public engagement. A complete list of potential YCCBC projects can be found in Attachment 2.

These projects align with Council's Strategic Goals for youth engagement and climate action as well as other City strategies such as the *Richmond Circular City Strategy*, *Climate Energy and Emissions Plan* and *Youth Strategy 2022-2032* (the Strategy).

Alignment with the Green Ambassadors Program

The Green Ambassadors (GA) Program is a City of Richmond youth volunteer program comprised of mainly secondary school students (ages 13 to 18). The GA Program provides many benefits for youth in the community and further supports the Strategy as outlined in the staff report that went to Public Works and Transportation Committee on October 16, 2024, titled "Green Ambassadors Program Update".

As the City would be involved in the YCCBC crew hiring process, consideration could be given to current and former Green Ambassadors. In addition to providing an opportunity to help bridge

Green Ambassadors into “green jobs”, a YCCBC partnership would align and support several aspects within the Strategy.

Proposed Approach

The YCCBC program presents the opportunity to support development of jobs for youth while creating awareness, through action, of the importance of creating climate resiliency. The program aligns with and supports multiple strategic priorities, including the City’s long-standing Green Ambassador program. Given these considerations, staff recommend partnering with YCCBC on a pilot basis

If supported, staff will initiate discussions with YCCBC and establish a formal partnership agreement. Through this process, staff will work with all impacted parties to finalize proposed projects from the list provided in Attachment 2, ensuring selected projects address community needs, departmental priorities and are outside of regular union staff duties. The unions would be informed of the City’s intention prior to program launch.

As the proposed projects are primarily outdoor in nature it is recommended that the YCCBC program launch in April 2026 to ensure optimal youth uptake and outcome for the projects.

Initial costs for the development of the pilot program are estimated at \$130,000, with the City contribution estimated at \$65,000. The total funding requirement by the City is estimated at \$85,000, inclusive of additional costs that fall to the City. A breakdown of estimated costs is shown in Table 2 below:

Table 2: Estimated City Funding Requirement

Funding	Expenses	Cost
City of Richmond, matched by YCCBC	Wages to YCCBC program participants including vacation/benefits in lieu, administrative costs, training	\$65,000
City borne expenses	Supplies, IT hardware, and vehicles	\$20,000
	Total Funding Requirement	\$85,000

Upon conclusion of the six-month pilot program, staff will report back to Council with outcomes and recommendations.

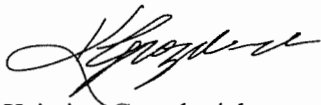
Financial Impact

Should Council approve a pilot program to enter into an agreement with YCCBC, \$65,000 funding would be contributed to YCCBC with their matching funds providing a total of \$130,000 in funding to hire Richmond youth for climate initiatives within the City. In addition, \$20,000 would be required to develop and implement the pilot program. If approved, the total City cost of \$85,000 will be considered as part of the 2026 budget process with funding proposed from the General Solid Waste and Recycling Provision, for no net impact to utility rates.

While costs will not be incurred until 2026, an approval of the pilot program is required at this time in order to enter into an agreement and undertake the necessary coordination measures for implementation in April 2026. The terms of the agreement with YCCBC will be subject to Council funding approval. Funding will not be required until 2026 and will be included as a budget request for next year.

Conclusion

This report presents details on the Youth Climate Corps BC and a summary of feedback received from municipalities that have partnered with the organization. Staff recommend engaging with YCCBC in a formal partnership agreement, development of a six-month pilot program and associated work plans, leading to the official launch of the pilot program in spring 2026.



Kristina Grozdanich
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KG:

Att. 1: Examples of Municipal Work Plans

Att. 2: Proposed Projects

Examples of Municipal Work Plans

Community	Program Length/Hours	Projects
City of Vernon	5 months, full-time hours	Outreach at community events Go By Bike Week Bike valet
City of Kamloops	5 months, combination part-time/full-time hours	Climate Friendly Homes Bike Valet Outreach and engagement at public events
District of Squamish	6 months, full-time hours	Climate Plan Update Energy Efficiency Environmental Education Zero Waste Events
City of Courtenay	5 months, combination part-time/full-time hours	Climate friendly homes program Home energy navigator program Public outreach for air quality and rainwater management Fire Smart wildfire mitigation

Proposed Projects

Project	Reporting to	Working location	Operational needs
Residential waste audits	Environmental Programs	In the community conducting audits	Vehicle, device, camera
Public spaces audit	Environmental Programs	In the community	Vehicle, device, space to complete audit
Fish waterway markers	Roads and Construction	In the community	Vehicle, supplies
Water services public engagement	Water Services	At public events in Richmond	Vehicle
Mechanical removal of invasive species	Parks Services, Roads and Construction, Climate and Environment	Throughout Richmond	Vehicle, protective gear