



City of Richmond




Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee
From: Elizabeth Ayers
Director, Recreation and Sport Services
Date: September 6, 2022
File: 11-7000-01/2022-Vol 01
Re: **Community Services – Summer Programs Update 2022**

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled, "Community Services – Summer Programs Update 2022," dated September 6, 2022, from the Director, Recreation and Sport Services, be received for information.

Elizabeth Ayers
Director, Recreation and Sport Services
(604-247-4669)

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 met multiple objectives related to Council-approved strategies including the Recreation and Sport Strategy (2019-2024), Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023), and Arts Strategy (2019-2024).

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #3 One Community Together:

Vibrant and diverse arts and cultural activities and opportunities for community engagement and connection.

3.1 Foster community resiliency, neighbourhood identity, sense of belonging, and intercultural harmony.

3.2 Enhance arts and cultural programs and activities.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #4 An Active and Thriving Richmond:

An active and thriving community characterized by diverse social and wellness programs, services and spaces that foster health and well-being for all.

4.1 Robust, affordable, and accessible sport, recreation, wellness and social programs for people of all ages and abilities.

This report supports the following focus areas in the Recreation and Sport Strategy 2019-2024:

Focus Area #2 Engaged Community:

Recreation and sport opportunities are accessible, inclusive and support the needs of a growing and diverse population in Richmond.

Focus Area #3 Physical Literacy and Sport for Life:

Richmond residents have the fundamental movement skills, competence, confidence and motivation to move for a lifetime.

Focus Area #6 Community Capacity-Building:

Collaborations, partnerships and volunteerism are strengthened to expand the reach and impact of recreation and sport in Richmond.

This report supports the following focus areas in the Community Wellness Strategy 2018-2023:

Focus Area #1:

Foster healthy, active and involved lifestyles for all Richmond residents with an emphasis on physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellness.

Focus Area #2:

Enhance physical and social connectedness within and among neighbourhoods and communities.

This report supports the following strategic directions in the ArtWorks: Richmond Art Strategy 2019-2024:

Strategic Direction #4:

Increase awareness and participation in the arts.

Strategic Direction #1

Ensure affordable and accessible arts for all.

Analysis

Through a relationship-based service delivery model, Community Services and respective Community Associations and Societies offered a wide range of summer programs and activities for children, youth and families designed to meet diverse physical, social and cultural interests and needs. As in previous years, the 2022 summer season offered distinct opportunities for programming due to the following factors:

- Children and youth are out of school;
- Warmer days allow for a wider variety of activities;
- Outdoor pools and school facilities are available for use; and
- Young adults and youth are available to work and volunteer in programs within the community.

Affordable, accessible and inclusive opportunities for all ages were offered during the summer to provide participants with active, engaging and fun experiences to learn new skills, connect to their community and reinforce a sense of belonging. Programs and activities for children, youth and families were especially important given the nine week break for the majority of schools in Richmond.

Since many parents and guardians work during the summer, full day camp options were popular as a daycare alternative. Registered programs, typically occurring once per week over several weeks, were also available.

Table 1, as follows, lists the participation by children and youth in summer daycamps and other registered programs within the Community Services Division over the past two summers.

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

Program Category	2021 Registrations	2022 Registrations
Summer Daycamps	5,384	7,183
Registered Programs	7,734	11,892
Total	13,118	19,075

Table 2 below lists the participation by children and youth in other registered programs, not including daycamps, broken down by program category.

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

Registered Program Category	2021 Registrations	2022 Registrations
Aquatics – swimming lessons, aquatic leadership	2,058	3,369
Arenas – skating lessons	901	1,203
Arts – dance, music, visual and performing arts	1,115	2,495
Computers, Technology and Social Media	24	77
Cooking	0*	19
General Interest	498	179
Language	57	101
Martial Arts	134	555
Nature and Science	584	416
Online	162	10
Racquet Sports – tennis, badminton and pickleball	424	912
Sports/Fitness/Health – physical literacy, sports and group exercise	1,777	2,556
Total	7,734	11,892

* Not offered due to COVID-19 health restrictions

The participation numbers indicate the popularity of summer programs for children and youth in Richmond and represent a 45 per cent increase over 2021 participation. Furthermore, the 2022 data represents 65 per cent of pre-pandemic participation levels (2019), demonstrating a steady recovery towards pre-pandemic participation and the community's gradual readiness to return to our facilities. It is anticipated that program offerings and participation numbers should return to

historical levels in 2023, barring any further COVID-19 impacts.

Daycamps

Daycamps provide engaging experiences for preschoolers, children and youth to stay active, try new activities, build social skills, connect with new peers and build a sense of community belonging. Daycamps also play an important function in providing childcare for working parents or guardians. Daycamps have become even more integral than in the past given the social isolation, increased screen time and lower activity levels that many experienced during the COVID-19 pandemic. Summer daycamps were offered at community centres, the Richmond Arts Centre, Richmond Nature Park, Minoru Arena, Richmond Curling Club and Richmond Museum. As in previous years, daycamps 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, such as Richmond Nature Park Society's Nature Quest Camp, Thompson Community Association's Discovery Camp, Richmond Museum Society's Youth Archeologists Camp, or Richmond Arts Centre's Arts Experience Camp, are popular for many working families, specialty camps were also offered as an alternative to full-day camps. These shorter, week-long camps included topics such as Lego® brick building, visual arts exploration, sports variety, wacky science, basic cooking skills, pickleball and engineering, as well as the new Big Top Circus Camp offered at the Richmond Curling Club.

Preteen and Youth Activities

A wide variety of activities were offered for preteens and youth this summer across the City's community facilities. In addition to 'traditional' registered programs, several new programs were offered, such as Website Development and Design, Iron Chef Cooking, Kick Boxing, Stop-Motion Animation and Pickleball. Full- and partial-day camps also took place with a breadth of experiences such as bike tours, leadership and life skills development, out trips to local attractions and participation in a variety of sports. Many youth also participated in advanced aquatic training courses over the summer as a means to develop leadership abilities, learn transferrable skills, and gain certification for future employment.

The West Richmond Summer Slam Basketball Program, comprising of basketball camps and an inclusive league, continued in 2022. Offered in partnership with the West Richmond Community Association, this grass roots developmental basketball experience provided approximately 550 children and youth in grades 4 to 11 with the opportunity to partake in a positive and inviting environment while being active, growing their skills, developing teamwork and building positive relationships. Summer Slam also provided volunteer and paid employment opportunities for 24 youth, some whom were once Summer Slam participants themselves.

The Richmond Youth Media Program ("RYMP") also continued weekly skill sessions and community engagement projects, including outdoor RYMP in the Park sessions. The 200+ hours of projects that youth engaged in included learning macro nature photography and music video creation, as well as a youth presentation to our community partners at The Foundry.

Free and Low Cost Activities

There were a variety of free programs and events for children and families alike, which provided residents with unstructured opportunities to enjoy physical, artistic, cultural and social activities.

Provided by Community Associations and Societies, these opportunities included:

- Weekly open gyms and youth hangouts, which provided a safe place for youth to spend time while being active and meeting friends;
- Weekly Summer Free Play drop-in programs offered at Thompson Neighbourhood Park, West Richmond Playground, Garden City Park and Steveston Park, for children from 2 to 12 years of age to try fun arts, crafts and sports facilitated by Summer Outreach Leaders;
- The Art Truck, coordinated by the Richmond Arts Centre, which provided free workshops at Brighthouse Library and arts programming at citywide special events;
- Neighbourhood special events, such as West Richmond Community Association's West Fest at Hugh Boyd Park, South Arm Community Association's Neighbourhood Block Party and East Richmond Community Association's Open House Barbeque, which included physical activity and arts opportunities, live performances and interactive games;
- Outdoor concerts, such as the Minoru Seniors Society's Summer Concerts Series at the Minoru Outdoor Plaza, City Centre Community Association's Concerts in the Park at Garden City Park, and Steveston Folk Guild's Concerts at Britannia Shipyards, featuring live entertainment, arts and crafts and information on community resources;
- Outdoor movie screenings, such as the poolside movie night at South Arm Outdoor Pool and Hamilton's Night Out in McLean Park featuring community information booths, and family games and activities;
- London Heritage Farm Society's Family Farm Day which featured live animals, music performances, games and crafts; and
- The Branscombe Social, supported by the 2022 Richmond Neighbourhood Celebration Grant Program and hosted by artist-in-residence Krystal Kiran and West Richmond Community Association, which included free family-friendly live music and dance performances, art activities, and food and refreshments from local eateries.

In addition to these free and low cost opportunities, the \$29 Summer Swim, Skate and Golf Pass returned in 2022. With over 3,300 sold, this affordable pass for children and youth aged 5 to 16 years, provided unlimited drop-in access to public swim sessions at indoor and outdoor pools, public skating at the Richmond Ice Centre, and weekday admission to the West Richmond Pitch and Putt between June 11 and September 6.

These free or low cost programs, events and activities provided opportunities for children and families to connect with their neighbours, try new activities, and explore the wonders of their local community, thus supporting physical, mental, social and emotional wellness and leading to a more connected community.

Volunteer and Employment Opportunities

Volunteers play a vital role in supporting the delivery of summer programs and events. Volunteers learn new skills and accomplish personal development goals while increasing competence, confidence and building community capacity. These opportunities often lead to employment as a daycamp leader, youth leader or program instructor in future years.

Volunteers were welcomed back to our summer programs and events in 2022. Table 3 below indicates the popularity of volunteer opportunities for youth in Richmond and represents a significant increase over 2021 contributions.

Table 3: Community Services Summer Volunteer Contributions

	2021 Summer	2022 Summer
Individuals Volunteering	40	110
Volunteer Hours	2,500	6,400

In 2022, summer daycamps provided employment opportunities for 135 staff, many whom were youth. Of these, 34 were hired under the Canada Summer Jobs Grant, which provided over \$150,000 in funding across 13 Community Associations and Societies. Furthermore, the City Grant Program contributed \$30,000 towards support workers for summer camps, as well as citywide administration, training and development, and team building initiatives for the summer leader team. Many students, at the high school and post secondary level, find that the skills developed in summer programs, such as leadership, critical thinking and decision making, are highly valued in future careers.

Testimonials

Participants shared their appreciation for the variety of programs and the benefits they and their children experienced. The following are a few of the many positive testimonials from summer 2022 program participants and leaders, demonstrating the benefits to participating in these meaningful and impactful activities:

“I had a lot of fun at camp this summer, like always! All of the out trips were fun, but my favourites were Centennial Beach and the Space Centre. The in-days were really fun as well. I was never bored because we were always playing big group games. My favourite is Alien Invasion and we get to play it a lot. I also think that all my leaders are awesome! I like hanging out with them.” – Participant, 10 years old, City Centre Community Centre

“I love water Wednesdays! We get to play with the [older kids] and I get to shoot them with my water blaster. And when it’s hot I get to cool down. It’s my favourite day of the week.” – Participant, 6 – 7 years old, Cambie Community Centre

“It was really fun and I loved going on all the fieldtrips. Everyday there would be a really cool theme day and we did new activities each day. I also got to spend time with my friends!” – Participant, 10 years old, Steveston Community Centre

“[My children] love going to camp everyday and they are not bored even though they attended every single day! The staff are caring and loving and do a wonderful job looking after my children. The out trips are fun and well organized. The hours are also amazing and allows my husband and I, who both work full-time, to be able to grow our careers and also balance our responsibilities at home.” – Parent/guardian of 7 and 9 year old participants, South Arm Community Centre

"My child has participated in the South Arm Summer Daycamp program for the last four years and not once has he been disappointed in the activities, out trips and sporting events that the program has delivered. Not only does it keep him active and busy throughout the summer but also encourages him to participate and be part of a bigger team. The staff have always been very professional, encouraging and supportive. I have no hesitation to recommend this program to any parents or guardians who are want to give their child an opportunity to explore, have fun and develop." – Parent/guardian of 10 year old participant, South Arm Community Centre

"He was so excited for today! Even woke up before my alarm. He's been with you all day and still doesn't wanna go home!" – Parent/guardian of 8 year old participant, Cambie Community Centre

"The camp was wonderful! My kids had the time of their lives and won't stop talking about it. They loved the activities and the leaders. My son broke into sobs when I picked him up on the last day because he was so sad it was ending." – Parent of a 6 year old participant, Steveston Community Centre

"Being a leader in camps this summer has been fun, exciting, and rewarding. There have been challenges, of course, but this year I found myself surrounded by a team of leaders who always supported each other, and an amazing group of kids who made me happy to come to camp every single day. Daycamps are an incredible and memorable way to spend my summer, and I'm so thankful for the time I get to spend in camps!" – Daycamp Leader, City Centre Community Centre

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

Summer programs continue to be valued by the community. They provide opportunities for participants of all ages to meet new friends, and remain physically and mentally active while developing new skills and building confidence. Summer programs also assist in building stronger and more resilient neighbourhoods. All of these opportunities are 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, inspiring individuals and communities to be active, connected and healthy for a lifetime.



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