

CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT



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TO: Standing Committee on City Services and Budgets

FROM: General Manager of Corporate Services in Consultation with General Manager of Community Services and General Manager of Parks and Recreation

SUBJECT: Collingwood Neighbourhood House Gymnasium Operating Funding 2005

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve 2005 funding in the amount of \$217,160 (an increase of 2% from the 2004 approved funding of \$212,900) to the Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society for the operation of the Collingwood Gymnasium for the period January 1, 2005 to December 31, 2005; source of funds to be the 2005 Operating Budget.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends approval of the foregoing.

COUNCIL POLICY

On February 19, 2002 Council approved a five year lease, commencing May 1, 2002, with the Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society. The lease agreement includes arrangements related to the operation of the Collingwood Gymnasium. On November 26, 2002, a modification to the lease agreement was signed by the City and the Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society to formalize funding and operating commitments for the gymnasium.

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to seek Council approval for 2005 operating funds for the Collingwood Gymnasium.

BACKGROUND

The Society has been operating at the Joyce-Vaness site since late 1995. Section 1.7 of the lease agreement states that the Society agrees to provide, to the satisfaction of City Council, administration of the premises, operation of the Gymnasium for the benefit of the Collingwood neighbourhood, a licensed daycare centre area and outdoor play area and provide other programs and activities which promote the educational, social, economic, cultural, health and recreational interests of the residents of the Collingwood area.

The operation of the Gymnasium is considered to be a unique arrangement. Although owned by the City, the Society leases and operates the Gymnasium. It was determined that the independent operation of the Gymnasium would be less expensive than if it were City managed and would allow for more community input into the operation. The foundation for the recreation and gym programs was established by a committee that included City and resident representation.

In order to clarify roles and responsibilities, a modification was made to the lease agreement on November 26, 2003 to provide details of the responsibilities of the City and the Society for the operation of a Gymnasium at the premises. The lease modification establishes that the City staff advisory committee, referred to in the lease, be three staff members with representatives from Corporate Services Group, Community Services Group and Parks and Recreation. The lease modification requires the Society to provide a business plan detailing the programs and services to be delivered in the up coming fiscal year along with financial and performance information for the current fiscal year ending March 31.

The lease modification requires the Advisory Committee to meet with management and at least 2 board members of the Society to review current performance and plans for the future. The Society is required to summarize the information in an annual report to Council.

The annual review meeting took place in April, 2005. The Advisory Committee included representatives from Vancouver Parks and Recreation, Community Services and Corporate Services. Representatives of the Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society included the Recreation Coordinator / Director of Community Services and two members of the Board of Directors.

The Annual Review meeting provided a good exchange of ideas and discussion focusing largely on the common goals of the City and the Society. The Advisory Committee concluded that Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society had continued to provide quality service throughout 2004 and that their operational plan for 2005 was consistent with the City's goals.

In 2004 funding of \$212,902 was approved by Council for the operation of the Gymnasium. This provided for approximately 60 programs by funding 13 casual staff and 19 contract instructors for the delivery and administration of these programs.

DISCUSSION

A. Operating Results for the year ended March 31, 2005

The Society continues to reflect the needs of a diverse community by providing a broad range of programs. Society staff continued to work with local residents to improve recreation opportunities, cultural development and participation in the community by encouraging the intermingling of different age groups and cultures. In 2004, approximately 24,000 members of the community participated in Collingwood's recreation programs. An additional 15,500 youth participated in programs offered by the Centre.

In 2004/05, the Recreation Department, which delivers the programs funded under this agreement, anticipates a deficit of (\$4,483). The projected financial operating results for the Recreation Department for the year ended March 31, 2005, can be summarized as follows:

	Budget 2004/05	Projected Actual 2004/05	Var. Budget 04/05 to Proj. 04/05	Budget 2005/06	Var. Budget 05/06 to Proj. 04/05
Total Revenue	\$296,140	\$303,057	\$6,917	\$311,506	\$8,449
Expenses					
Accessibility Expenses	\$3,240	\$1,953	\$1,287	\$4,520	-\$2,567
Contract Services	\$54,518	\$59,302	-\$4,784	\$48,500	\$10,802
Human Resource Expenses	\$171,672	\$161,910	\$9,762	\$168,806	-\$6,896
Administration Expenses	\$47,217	\$48,926	-\$1,709	\$50,326	-\$1,400
Capital and Facilities Expenses	\$8,004	\$14,373	-\$6,369	\$8,000	\$6,373
Program Expenses	\$6,120	\$5,162	\$958	\$10,420	-\$5,258
Total Expenses	\$290,771	\$291,626	-\$855	\$290,572	\$1,054
Operating Surplus/Deficit	\$5,369	\$11,431	\$6,062	\$20,934	\$9,503
Wage Contract Estimate	0	\$15,914	-\$15,914	\$14,914	\$1,000
Net Surplus/Deficit	\$5,369	-\$4,483	-\$9,852	\$6,020	\$10,503

In 2004/05 the Recreation Department anticipates a year-end deficit of \$4,483 against a budgeted surplus of \$5,369. The variance is due primarily to the anticipated wage contract settlement for a collective agreement that expired on March 31, 2003, which was not included in the 2004/05 budget. This amount was partially offset by increased revenue and reduced Human Resource expenses due to program reductions during the year. Facilities expenses were also higher than anticipated due to equipment replacement. The deficit is to be covered by the Collingwood Neighbourhood House Society's undesignated surplus.

C. Funding Request for 2005

As required by the modified lease agreement, the Society has provided a copy of its 2005 Work Plan for Council review (Appendix A). The Society continues to address the challenges associated with providing affordable, accessible recreation programs in a rapidly growing community. To improve accessibility and to take advantage of existing facilities, the Society maintains a number of partnerships with local schools and community centres in order to

provide recreational programs. In the past year the Society has added approximately 16 new programs targeted to children and families. However, the Society anticipates cost increases related to an outstanding wage contract settlement that is expected to conclude this year.

The current funding arrangement with the Society for the Gymnasium expired in December 2004. The Recreation Department is anticipating an \$8,449 (28%) increase in revenue from earned income and fundraising in 2005/06 due to increased user fees and increased participation in several programs.

Program staffing costs include both Human Resource Expenses and Contract Services. The Recreation Department anticipates a (net) reduction of approximately \$3,900 (1.8%) in total program staffing costs. This variance can be attributed to cancellation or reduction of several programs due to low participation and the replacement of contract staff with UBC practicum students in two program areas. The rise in accessibility expenses of \$2,567 (131%) is due to an increase in program-related publicity and promotion. The anticipated increase in recreation program expenses of \$5,258 (102%) is due to the increased cost of program and food supplies.

The Society's projected surplus for the operation of the gymnasium for the 2005/06 fiscal year is \$6,020. The Advisory Committee recommends an increase of 2% over 2004 funding. This is consistent with the general inflation factor used in preparing the City's 2005/06 operating budget.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Advisory Committee support the extension of the funding arrangement for the Gymnasium and the proposed City funding of \$217,160 for 2005, based upon a general inflation rate of 2% over 2004 funding; source of funds to be the 2005 Operating Budget.

CONCLUSION

The Society provides an important service to a demographically diverse community in the Collingwood area. The unique arrangement of a local organization responsible in the development and operation of a City-owned gymnasium has been mutually beneficial in this community. Continued financial support for the Gymnasium operation will ensure that the service can continue to be provided to members of the community.

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Appendix A:

**Collingwood Neighbourhood House
Recreation/Gym Program**

PURPOSE

The purpose of this report is to provide the City of Vancouver with an update of program activities to date (March 2005) and provide a plan for the upcoming year. Collingwood Neighbourhood House (CNH) is seeking approval for 2005 operating funds to support continued and expanded delivery of recreation programs in the Collingwood Neighbourhood House and community. CNH is requesting a cost of living increase on its current funding as Council policy permits. This increase is necessary to cover existing costs and address budget pressures.

BACKGROUND

City funding for CNH recreation has been stable and consistent since 1994 and most recently, in April, 2004, Council approved funding to CNH in the amount of \$212,900. In November 2002, in order to clarify roles and responsibilities, staff recommended in a report to Council that the agreement between the City and the Society regarding the funding for the gymnasium/recreation be formalized. City staff worked with the Society to draft and enter into a specific operating agreement. This agreement completed and executed in November 2003, set out the requirement for this review. One of the principle elements of this agreement is the recognition that Corporate Services, Community Services, and Parks and Recreation require representation in performing an annual review of gymnasium and recreation operations. Management of the services contract is therefore seen as a joint responsibility.

An Overview of the Collingwood Community

Collingwood has been undergoing unprecedented development since 1995 resulting in rapid population growth in the last decade, and this is expected to continue as current and new developments are realized over the next few years. School enrollment figures and demand for services also confirm this continuing growth. The Collingwood Village growth projections alone correctly predicted an additional 10,000 new residents when all phases are completed in the next few years.

Collingwood is also one of the most economically and culturally diverse communities in East Vancouver. The proportion of residents with English as a Second Language is over 60% and government statistics confirm that there are large pockets within the community of low-income families. Collingwood also has one of the highest proportion of newborns, as well as the highest number of youth per capita as confirmed by Health and Census statistics. Lastly, Collingwood has a disproportionately high number of seniors and special needs residences. This community diversity continues to shape the overall content of recreation programs and their accessibility.

Collingwood Neighbourhood House Gymnasium and Recreation Program

Background

The Collingwood Neighbourhood House gymnasium was part of the 1995 Collingwood Village Amenities, a comprehensive city plan to support the establishment of city funded services as part of the approved Collingwood Village development. The development of a gymnasium and recreation program was a community priority identified by the Joyce Street Area Planning Committee.

Under this plan, the Collingwood Neighbourhood House assumed responsibility for managing the gymnasium/recreation program on the understanding that the society would receive City funding to support these operations at a comparable level to that provided to similar operations. The gym/recreation program is one component within a multi-service facility that included other community amenities, such as licensed childcare facilities, settlement services, family and social services, community development, park space, and an elementary school that opened in January 2002.

As noted in the 1995 City report, this approach was less costly than having the gym/recreation program operated by the Parks Board. It also ensured that services on the Collingwood site could be better coordinated and that there was maximum potential for community input into the operation. Under this agreement, the Collingwood Neighbourhood House agreed to fund services beyond the basic level through fundraising and program revenues.

A steering committee was established in 1995 to start-up operations, establish operating budgets, and guide programming direction. This committee was made up of representatives from the Joyce Street Area Planning Committee, the Collingwood Neighbourhood House, Vancouver City, Vancouver Parks and Recreation, and the School Board. Working within the mission of Collingwood Neighbourhood House to serve the needs of the community, this committee established the principles and vision that continue to guide Collingwood's recreation program operations, as described in the goals below:

Main goals of the Recreation program

- 1) To provide a broad range of recreation and leisure services and opportunities to Collingwood residents of all ages and ability levels.
- 2) To provide a good balance of social, cultural, physical and arts related activities and to communicate with residents to ensure programs are relevant and responsive to community needs.
- 3) To provide programs and services that remain accessible to all people in the Collingwood community, responsive to disadvantaged residents, and designed to reduce or eliminate any barriers to participation.
- 4) To create community development opportunities through recreation and leisure including activities for people from different generations to engage in recreation together.

Overview of Activities

The overall Collingwood Neighbourhood House Recreation program is comprised of close to 60 individual programs with most of these operating year round. There are a wide range of ongoing activities offered including arts, drama, music, outdoors, reading and language, cooking, social, fitness, and many physical activities and sports. We also run five summer camp recreation programs for children including drama, gymnastics, basketball, visual arts, jazzercise and soccer. Special Events and clinics such as running seminars and drumming events are also offered at various times throughout the year. The nature and number of programs offered reflect the continuing growth and change of the Collingwood community itself.

Future Challenges for Collingwood/Renfrew Community and Impacts on Recreation and Leisure services

- 1) **Rapid population growth** - We have experienced rapid population growth in our community during the past decade resulting in a steady increase in the number of people participating in our programs and activities. Our membership numbers grow steadily each year and more people discover our neighborhood house each month. We expect steady growth in population to continue for the next few years however the increase in the population will not be as dramatic as in the past decade. Along with more people comes a need for more and greater variety of services. In addition, the cultural diversity of the community continues to present unique challenges and opportunities in planning recreation programs, as over 60% of residents are English as a Second Language.
- 2) **Space availability** - Until now we have been able to provide a high level of service and respond well to the changing needs of our growing population. This will become more difficult in the future due to the limited available community space for recreation programs at the main neighborhood house. At present, we operate several programs in local elementary schools, however the availability of other community spaces to operate recreation programs is limited and is usually short term with no guarantee of future availability. These arrangements are achieved through community relationship building and require ongoing attention.
- 3) **Funding cutbacks** - Recently, we have undergone funding cutbacks in the areas of youth and family services both of which have a significant recreation component. This has put additional pressure on our recreation program to help maintain good opportunities and access for youth and families to participate in recreation activities.
- 4) **Expansion of services, affordability and accessibility** - We will also need to find ways to fund expansion of services that community residents need. This will be a significant challenge as many of the people living or moving into the Collingwood community are in the lower to middle socio-economic class and therefore, affordability and accessibility of recreation programs is a major issue.
- 5) **Training and retention of staff** - Another future challenge will be our ability to provide ongoing training and fair wages that will help us retain our recreation staff. This includes

part-time unionized employees as well as contract staff. A new collective bargaining agreement is likely to be completed in the near future and this will result in an increase in wages and benefits for recreation staff. As a consequence, the rate for contract staff (eg; Pilates, Visual Arts and Yoga instructors) will also need to be reviewed and increased from the current \$20 per hour in order to retain our contract staff. Our contract staff members have been at the current rate of \$20 per hour since 1999. Currently we have limited funds for training of staff and rely on the ability of new part-time paid employees to learn on the job under the direction of the recreation coordinator. This is becoming more challenging as the number and variety of recreation programs and services we offer continues to increase.

Meeting the Challenges

- 1) **Maximizing use of available space** - As our main facility is getting close to full capacity (currently nearing 90% use) we are exploring other facilities in the community that can be used for the provision of recreation and leisure services. We are optimistic about maximizing available community space through continuing to use elementary and secondary school gym space after school (and increase this use). However this will depend on continued local support from Principals, and the ability to avoid paying School Board rental fees that may apply.
- 2) **Promotion of programs** - We need to maximize our efforts to promote existing programs so that community members are aware of what is offered which will help to maintain high levels of participation. This will help to ensure that the recreation needs of a larger proportion of community members are met, as well as increasing revenue that can be used for new recreation opportunities.
- 3) **Participation Rates in Programs** - Participation rates in programs are generally high. Approximately 60% of our programs are considered to be full and some have waiting lists; 20% of programs are considered to be at 75 to 90% capacity; 20% of programs are considered to be between 50 and 75% capacity.
- 4) **Community involvement** - We believe that residents must be involved in the planning and design of services, and are working toward implementing a community development approach to providing recreation and leisure opportunities for the community. By having a high level of community input and involvement in the planning and development of our recreation program, people are encouraged and motivated to take more responsibility for how recreation and leisure becomes a part of their lives. Through education and building the capacity of people to provide recreation opportunities for themselves and their families, we will be achieving our goal of creating an active and healthy community. This community development model will work in concert with our recreation program service delivery model that is used to provide many recreation programs for community members.
- 5) **Partnerships and collaboration** - Another way we meet the challenges identified in providing quality recreation services to our community is to develop and maintain strong partnerships with other local community groups and with some groups outside of our community. The following groups are examples of partnerships we have established that help us with our recreation program in various ways.

- **Renfrew Park Community Centre** - Renfrew C. C. is our main partner in the planning of recreation, youth, and community development programs and activities in Renfrew/Collingwood. We have a strong working partnership and we coordinate activities to minimize duplication and maximize resources and efforts.
- **Vancouver School Board** - We have a standing agreement for the use of the Collingwood Neighbourhood School Gymnasium during after school hours and on weekends.
- **Joyce Street Area Planning Committee** - This resident group has been actively involved in the development of the Collingwood community and the neighborhood house since the 1980s.
- **Collingwood Community Policing Centre** - Have been involved in the development and planning of recreation in the community and with special events. They support our recreation initiatives as a key preventative tool in reducing crime in the community.
- **Windermere Family of Schools** - Provides space for recreation activities in the high school (Windermere) and the seven elementary feeder schools. The CNH recreation coordinator has helped to facilitate leadership opportunities and training for students. We have also provided training and workshops for teaching staff during the past 6 years.
- **Evergreen Health Center** - Evergreen helps to promote active living by providing space for us to display and promote various recreation activities at their center. Our Visual arts program has worked with Evergreen on several projects and we currently have a display of various local artists at the center. Other initiatives taking place in partnership with Evergreen are the Young Parents program and the Young Fathers program. These programs help to support young parents by providing group support, information on health and social issues related to parenting as well as social and recreation opportunities.
- **Langara College** - We have offered workshops and assisted with the teaching of classes in Langara's Recreation diploma program. In addition to this we have mentored recreation students during their practicum placements for 6 of the past 9 years.
- **Some other groups** we have established partnerships with include: Vancouver Coastal Health authority, Genesis and Eagle High Alternate schools, B.C. Parks and Recreation Association, Club Elite Rhythmic Gymnastics, Pinnacle Pursuits Outdoor Adventures, Gym-Sense Gymnastics Education, Active Holistic Health, Jazzercise Inc., Latin Canadian Soccer group, Luk Tung exercise group, and Canadian Maple Leaf Ballroom Dance.

2004/05 Work Plan - Update on Accomplishments to Date

Maintain existing complement of basic recreation programs at high level of quality.

We have maintained our existing complement of recreation programs and evaluation responses from all of our programs this year have been very positive. The number of programs being offered continues to increase each year. During the past year we have offered approximately 16 new programs and we have discontinued 6.

Develop new or expanded programs in the following areas:

Increase gym and recreation activities on weekends.

- We have developed several new programs and expanded on some existing ones to operate on weekends including Children's basketball, Youth activities (cooking, leadership, visual arts), Girl's social recreation activities, Jazzercise, Canoe club and the Running club.

Increase services for children and families.

- The new programs being offered on weekends reflect some of the increased services for children and families. The Canoe Club will begin its' second year in the spring of 2005. Gardening activities are about to begin in the summer of 2005 with the completion of our new rooftop garden area. We have increased the number of ballet/creative dance, children's gymnastics, junior jazzercise and Pilates being offered in the past year.

Work with the Windermere family of schools (one secondary and 7 elementary) to expand recreation activities for children.

- Currently we have activities scheduled for children after school from Monday to Thursday. (average of two activities per day being offered at this time) We are limited to what we can offer at this time as the Collingwood elementary school has access to half the gym, Mon. to Fri. from 8 am to 5 pm. There are some available times and spaces to expand activities on Fridays and on weekends and we are exploring these.
- We have been actively involved with the **Olympic Youth Legacies - Get Out** grants program through the City of Vancouver. We have been successful in acquiring grants for projects such as a Youth led community mural, and using recycled material from the Renfrew ravine to form a youth percussion band. These one time funding grants will be a catalyst to start activities with the idea that we could integrate them into our existing programs in the Renfrew/Collingwood community in the future.
- **The Child and Youth Friendly initiative**, established by the B.C. Society for Children and Youth, has operated for the past 3 years at Collingwood in partnership with Renfrew Community Center and the Windermere family of schools. Projects that the

youth of Collingwood/Renfrew have taken on include a renovation of the youth center at Renfrew community center and mapping existing parks and open play spaces and making recommendations for future improvements.

Youth Services

- **Young Parents programs** - We have been successful in planning and implementing two young parents programs in partnership with the Evergreen Health Center. These programs consist of a young mothers group and a young fathers group. As well as offering group support and knowledge related to parenting, these programs provide social and recreational opportunities for participants. These programs are not funded directly by City Recreation dollars however staff hours are used to help connect participants in these programs (which have a strong recreation component) to other existing recreation services at Collingwood and in the community.
- **Canoe Club** - During the past year our Canoe Club has involved over 20 aboriginal youth from the ages of 12 to 19. Workshops and instruction in leadership, teambuilding, first aid, swimming and canoeing have helped to prepare these young people to be able to participate safely and skillfully in canoe trips. These trips have usually consisted of half-day paddles in local lakes such as Trout, Sasamat and Buntzen Lakes. The highlight of the year was having our group participate in a 5-day trip along the Fraser river from Harrison to Stanley Park with other Canoe groups. We are running the canoe club again this year with one of the goals being to involve more young people and to link them with other recreation and sport opportunities in our community.
- **Youth basketball** continues to be in high demand. We have worked with Parks Board and the community, to ensure that available basketball courts at Gaston Park are managed to the satisfaction of residents and serve youth needs. Also, our youth basketball programming has increased. We are continuing to offer our highly successful fast-break basketball program in partnership with local schools and have expanded regular gym times for youth to play basketball.
- **Other new youth initiatives** include outdoor trips and activities, overnight sleepovers at CNH, increased sport activities such as girls volleyball and various leadership opportunities. Our youth program has won two awards in the past year including the Solicitor General's award for community safety (one of 2 youth groups in province to win) and a Child and Youth friendly award established by the B.C. Society for Children and Youth.

Seniors Activities - A seniors out-trip/outdoor program has been operating and is highly successful. Recently, 45 seniors went on a bus trip to Harrison and had a wonderful day. More trips are planned for the future. Other senior's activities recently added include poetry reading, genealogy, social opportunities, dancing and music, special events and encouraging seniors to participate in the many volunteer opportunities at CNH.

Performing Arts and Music - We currently have two drama programs that operate at various times of the year and several music programs. All of these programs are for

children and youth. We would like to expand opportunities in performing arts for seniors and adults during 2005/06.

Expand community education and promotion of health benefits of recreation and leisure.

This is an ongoing goal and we have continued to collaborate and work with the various community health organizations in our community to educate the public and promote the benefits of an active, healthy lifestyle. We have continued to expand our website and use it as a tool to help educate community residents on the benefits and importance of an active, healthy lifestyle. Currently we have developed programs with the Vancouver Coastal Health authority and the Windermere Family of schools that encourage community residents to be active on a regular basis and help them to learn the value of recreation and leisure.

The recreation coordinators have continued to develop a values-based approach to sport and recreation that encourages young people to get involved and stay involved in physical activity. This approach emphasizes having fun, socializing, learning and developing skills, play, character development and creating community through participation in sport and recreation. The values-based philosophy is used in many of our programs and it will continue to grow in the upcoming years. We believe that by encouraging good values and positive character through participating in recreation and sport we are helping to develop good citizens. We have seen participation rates in these programs rise and this in turn will help to deal with the current challenges of inactivity and obesity among young people.

Work with community residents to develop Gardening Programs

We have gone through a process of seeking community input in the development of a rooftop garden to be located on our second floor patio. Plans have been developed and our garden should become a reality this spring. We will be developing gardening activities in collaboration with the food security institute and the green-up clean-up committee.

Hold a community planning session involving the public and key community organizations.

We are currently organizing a community planning session for recreation that will take place in the spring of 2005. Unfortunately, this session has been delayed until 2005, as there have been major changes in the leadership of CNH and the recreation coordinator has taken on additional duties (12 hours per week) as the director of community services in the past year. An assistant Recreation coordinator has been hired for 12 hours per week to meet the work demands in Recreation.