



CITY OF VANCOUVER

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: July 4, 2006
Author: Anka Raskin
Phone No.: 604.871.6870
RTS No.: 6082
VanRIMS No.: 07-3000-20
Meeting Date: July 18, 2006

TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: Director of Social Planning in consultation with the Vancouver Park Board and Vancouver School Board

SUBJECT: Youth Days in Council

RECOMMENDATION

THAT Council approve the Youth Days in Council (YDC) program in principle at a one time staffing cost of \$31,300 for an Auxiliary Youth Coordinator and Temporary Social Planner I. Funding to be provided from carry forward funds that are no longer required and can be directed to the YDC program. Staff will report back in September, 2006, with the final program plan and budget.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager supports the foregoing RECOMMENDATION.

COUNCIL POLICY

Vancouver Civic Youth Strategy, 1995

On March 28, 1995 Council approved the Vancouver Civic Youth Strategy (CYS). It is a statement that fulfils the requirements of the City's Children's Policy, 1992, following Canada's ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. The CYS is a commitment to work in partnership with youth and the larger community to:

- ensure youth have a PLACE in the City;
- ensure strong youth VOICE in decision-making;

- promote youth as a RESOURCE to the City;
- strengthen the SUPPORT BASE for youth.

It also commits the City to involve youth and youth-driven organizations as active partners in the development, assessment and delivery of civic services having direct impact on youth; and including youth in broad spectrum consultations.

PURPOSE & SUMMARY

The purpose of this report is for Council to approve a one-time YDC staffing cost from carry forward funds. A report to Council with a finalized budget and workplan will be made available in September, 2006. This report includes:

1. Overview of the proposed Youth Days in Council program;
2. Financial implications;
3. Attached Youth Days in Council draft proposal (See APPENDIX A).

BACKGROUND

On February 14, 2006, Vancouver City Council approved a motion supporting the development of a "Civic Youth Council" (hereon to be called "Youth Days in Council"). Youth Days in Council is an initiative from the Mayor's Office and jointly created and implemented by the City's Social Planning Department, School Board, Park Board, and youth community.

The purpose of the Youth Days in Council program is to provide an opportunity for young citizens within Vancouver to continue to become further engaged in civic government and have input on civic issues. The goals of the program are to increase awareness of civic issues and create additional opportunities to meaningfully involve Vancouver youth in municipal government.

Once the Council motion was passed in February, 2006, a Steering Committee, comprised of representatives from the Mayor's Office; City Clerk's Office; Vancouver School Board; Vancouver Park Board; and Social Planning, has been meeting to outline the following:

- Develop a youth directed comprehensive plan and budget for the Youth Days in Council to take place at Vancouver City Hall in the Fall of 2006, in accordance with the City of Vancouver and the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement principles of youth engagement;
- Actively seek out sponsorships to help defer the costs of hosting such an event;
- Establish a goal of having at least 500 youth participate in the program by 2010.

Over the summer months, the YDC steering committee will be:

- Hiring a youth coordinator
- Developing a more detailed program outline in partnership with a youth working group
- Drafting a finalized plan, budget and timeline

DISCUSSION

Overview of the Youth Days in Council program

Youth Days in Council is a new and innovative City of Vancouver youth program. YDC will involve 50-100 youth in a series of workshops, training and skills building activities and will conclude in a simulated council session the last week of November, 2006. Working in partnership with elected officials from City Council, park Board and School Board, this will be an opportunity for young citizens within Vancouver to become further engaged in civic government and have input on civic issues. The goals of the program are to increase awareness of civic issues and create additional opportunities to meaningfully involve Vancouver youth in municipal government.

Diversity and representation of the Vancouver youth community are important items when considering who will be involved. Communities of youth that could be targeted include: Students (secondary and post-secondary); Gay/Lesbians/bisexual/transgender (GLBT) youth; Aboriginal youth; Street involved youth; Newcomer and refugee youth; Youth from diverse Vancouver neighbourhoods; Disability youth community; and others.

Following best practice principles of youth engagement, young people will be involved in all aspects of planning and decision-making in the development and implementation of the Youth Days in Council program. Items, such as youth recruitment, participant selection process, representation, communications and outreach, will be determined by the youth working group, in partnership with the City staff steering committee.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Youth Days in Council program requires a one-time staffing cost of \$31,300 for a full time Auxiliary Youth Coordinator and Temporary Social Planner I at two days per week. Funding to be provided from previous carry-forward funds related to Youth Engagement Initiatives. The carry forward funds totalling \$31,300 would be directed to the YDC staffing for further youth engagement on this program, including program development in consultation with the Vancouver youth community.

Following best practice principles of youth engagement, it is paramount that young people are included in the development of the Youth Days in Council. As the meaningful inclusion of youth, summer school closures, and end of November program timelines are pressing issues, the YDC steering committee agrees that it is extremely important to begin the development of the program as quickly as possible.

In light of this, the YDC steering committee is seeking the approval for two program positions. Staff will report back in September, 2006, with the final program plan and budget. Over the summer months, the steering committee will explore other funding sources, as well as private sponsorships. A preliminary draft program budget is outlined on page 12-13 of APPENDIX A.

CONCLUSION

Youth Days in Council is an opportunity for the City to further involve youth in municipal government and to design a program that is inclusive and meaningful for youth people. When the world comes to our city in 2010, the Youth Days in Council will serve as yet another example of the high level of commitment the City of Vancouver has to its younger citizens.

* * * * *

Youth Days in Council

A Proposal for Youth Involvement in City Hall

City of Vancouver
June 12, 2006-06-30

Youth Days in Council DRAFT Proposal

Title: City of Vancouver Youth Days in Council

Date: Kick-off Monday November 20 – International Child Rights Day
Closing Tuesday November 21 – evening Gala Appreciation Dinner

Location: City Hall: Council Chambers and meeting rooms

Contact Information: Anka Raskin, Social Planner or Debbie Anderson, Child & Youth Social Planner

Phone: 604.871.6870 / 604. 871. 6032

Fax: 604. 871. 6048

Email: anka.raskin@vancouver.ca / debbie.anderson@vancouver.ca

Website: www.vancouveryouth.ca

Summary

In an effort to increase awareness of civic issues and create additional opportunities to involve Vancouver's youth in municipal government, Mayor Sam Sullivan put forth a Council motion on February 14, 2006, that the City of Vancouver create a Civic Youth Council (from here on to be named Youth Days in Council (YDC)).

The purpose of this proposal is to provide a framework for the development of a Youth Days in Council for the City of Vancouver. This proposal will act as a guide and provide background information for the Youth Days in Council Working Group.

This proposal contains:

- Draft schedule
- Program development
- Program elements/themes for consideration

Plus:

- Draft budget and timeline
- Snapshot of what exists in the City for youth
- Overview of the principles of meaningful youth engagement
- Case studies
- Additional Resources

Proposed Draft Schedule

Youth Days in Council is an initiative from the Mayor's Office and will be jointly created and implemented by the City's Social Planning Department, School Board, Park Board, and youth community.

The purpose of the Youth Days in Council program is to provide an outlet for young citizens within the City of Vancouver to become engaged in civic government and have input on civic issues.

Based on the assumption that elected officials from the Park Board, School Board Trustees, Library Board, 10 City Councillors, the Mayor and selected City staff will be involved in all of the events, the Youth Days in Council could accommodate up to 120 young people:

- 10 youth partnered with each Elected Official
- 10 with the Mayor
- 10 with City staff to receive media and City Clerk training

Suggestion#1:

Due to a tight timeline for this first year, it is suggested that the numbers are kept to 50+ youth and grow in numbers in the following years.

Suggestion#2:

It may also be possible to include young people as "citizens"; meaning that youth would participate in Youth Days in Council as mock interest groups, concerned citizens, etc. and attend the mock Council session. Due to a tight timeline for the first year, this element may need to be put on hold

These numbers do not include the young people who will be selected for the YDC Working Group.

Diversity and representation of the Vancouver youth community are important items when considering who will be involved. Communities of youth that could be targeted include:

- Students (secondary and post-secondary)
- GLBT youth
- Aboriginal youth
- Street involved youth
- Newcomer and refugee youth
- Youth from diverse Vancouver neighbourhoods
- Disability youth community
- Other

The tables below offer a brief draft outline of what the Youth Days in Council may entail. A more detailed program will need to be created with the youth community, City staff, and elected officials.

10:00am	<p>Topic breakout session</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 11 pre-determined topics – breakout groups (1 elected official per 10 youth dependent on elected official participation) • Overview of topic • Brainstorm opportunities and problems with the issue • 15 minute break • Set priorities for action and examine alternatives for best solutions
12:00pm	Lunch
1:00pm	<p>Topic breakout session continued</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare statements and debate points • Prepare 5 minute presentation on topic
3:00pm	<p>All participants in Council chambers</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review Council Chambers protocol • Group presentations
4:00pm	Wrap up

Day 2	Activities
9:00am	<p>Mock City Council/Park Board/School Board session (to be broadcast live on television and documented by GVTv)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • To consider and vote on the identified topics • Non-agenda items also presented
12:30pm	Lunch
1:30pm	<p>Break out groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community action projects (commitments from youth once they return to their respective community)
4:00pm	Action steps presentations
5:00pm	Wrap up session
5:15pm	Break
7:00pm	<p>Appreciation Dinner Closing Ceremony (family invited)</p> <p>Keynote speaker(s)</p>

The purpose of Working Group is to:

- Develop a **youth directed** comprehensive plan and budget for a Youth Days in Council to take place at Vancouver City Hall in the Fall of 2006 (budget recommendations in appendix B) in accordance with the City of Vancouver and the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement principles of youth engagement
- Actively seek out sponsorships to help defer the costs of hosting such an event
- Establish a goal of having at least 500 youth participate in the program by 2010

The Youth Days in Council Working Group is comprised of representatives from:

- Youth community
- Mayor's Office
- City Clerk's Office
- School Board
- Vancouver Park Board
- Social Planning & Youth Outreach Team

*The roles and responsibilities for each of the representatives will need to be determined by the Working Group.

Youth Involvement in the Working Group

Following best practice youth engagement principles, young people will be involved in all aspects of planning and decision making for the development of the Youth Days in Council comprehensive plan and budget. A recruitment and selection process for youth involvement will have to be put into place.

Suggestion:

Review the sections "Vancouver Civic Youth Strategy" & "Principles of Youth Engagement" listed below for an overview of youth engagement that is in accordance with the City of Vancouver and the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement. Incorporate these principles into all aspects of the design and delivery of the Youth Days in Council program.

Example:

The CoV Youth Awards Working Group consists of approx. 15 young people ages 14-22, mentored by older youth and supported by several adults who work in partnership with the young people. The CoV Youth Awards is an annual recognition event held in May that recognizes the positive contributions that young people have made in their community. This year, over 500 people will be in attendance to this event. The Working group has broken themselves into 3 sub-sections including: Communications (outreach material, media team etc.); Logistics (outreach, venue, food, etc.); & Program Development (speakers, performers, topics, facilitation, etc.). Both youth and adults also make up the selection committee. The youth lead the process and make many of the decisions, in partnership with the adults involved. The role of the adults have been to offer advice, support and their experience where required. For more information see http://vancouveryouth.ca/getting_involved/co_v_youth_awards

Appendix A: Program Elements

Vision

To be determined by the Working Group. The vision will help guide all decisions made in the creation and implementation of the Youth Days in Council.

Suggestion:

Consider what already exists for youth in the City and how the Youth Days in Council will enhance the work already being done. How will the YDC provide additional opportunities for the diversity of young people in the city? What is the purpose of the program? What are the benefits of this program for youth, the City and for the community?

Name

The Working Group will be tasked to create a process to produce several creative options for names, and to select a final name for the program.

Suggestion:

The name should be reflective of the program, be youthful, and also something that will be fun to communicate through different mediums, such as web and print (i.e. posters, rack cards, newspapers, bus shelter ads, etc.)

Note: "YDC" is also the acronym for the Youth Detention Centre

Example:

The City of Vancouver Youth Outreach Team facilitated an activity with a diverse group of youth to choose a new name for a City project. Originally named *Olympic Youth Legacy*, the young people involved in the renaming quickly decided that this would not be appropriate. The City project is now called *Get Out! Push Your Boundaries*, and is recognized by many youth groups from around the city. For more information on the project see: <http://heygetout.ca/>

Recruitment & Outreach

It has also been requested by the Mayor's Office that; "participants in [the Youth Days in Council] will be reflective of Vancouver's diverse population" and that the City has "a goal of having at least 500 youth participate in the program by 2010". In order to meet these targets, the Working Group will need to establish:

- Number of youth involved in the YDC annually
- Eligibility criteria
- Application procedure
- Selection process
- Representation
- Outreach strategy

Number of youth involved:

In order to meet the target of 500 youth by 2010, approx. 100 youth will be enrolled in the Youth Days in Council program annually from 2006 until 2010. These 100 youth may constitute youth directly involved as participants, to those receiving media training to Working Group members.

Eligibility criteria:

A number of factors will need to be decided upon to determine who is eligible to participate in the YDC. These include:

- Age: the City of Vancouver Civic Youth Strategy defines youth as 13-24.
- Residents of Vancouver: are the youth candidates residents of Vancouver? Do they work or play in Vancouver?
- Academics: should candidates be enrolled in school? Is academic performance important?
- Community involvement: will volunteerism, political interest or other community work be taken into account?

Suggestion: The definition of youth is very broad (13-24) and the developmental needs and mobility of youth between these ages are very broad. It is suggested that the age range for participation is 15-17 in order for the program to be successful and meaningful for the participants. Older youth (20-24) could be involved in a mentorship component to the program.

Application procedure:

Youth-friendly applications should be created and distributed through the web and print. The ability to fill out forms on-line makes it much easier to process for program administrators. Youth-friendly means that the application itself looks youthful, asks relevant questions, is straightforward and not complicated to fill out. For an example please see the COV Youth Awards application form here:

http://vancouveryouth.ca/content/media/nomination_form_2006.pdf

Selection process:

Undoubtedly, the Working Group will receive more applications than there are spots to fill. Selection criteria will need to be decided upon and followed when making final decisions on who will be chosen to participate. The selection criteria should be reflective of the Civic Youth Strategy objectives and the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement principles. The Working Group may decide to strike a sub-committee to select, or organize a community group of youth and adults outside of the working group to make the final selections.

Representation:

YDC participants should be reflective of the diversity of Vancouver's youth community. The Working Group will need to consider: Age, ethnic background, gender, sexual orientation, disability, Aboriginal, etc.

Outreach Strategy:

The City of Vancouver Youth Outreach Team has a large email distribution network comprised of: schools, community school coordinators, community centers, library youth groups, student council groups, and community youth organizations. The City also has a youth website with an up-to-date events calendar that posts announcements. For an example see <http://vancouveryouth.ca/>

Outreach is most successful when done in person. Offering peer presentations to schools and youth groups is a meaningful way to get young people involved in recruiting others, as well as getting the word out.

Other methods that the City's youth groups have used include:

- Bus shelter ads
- Advertisements in youth-friendly newspapers (i.e. YouThink, Courier, etc.)
- Radio spots on "The Beat" & "Fox"
- Rack/club cards
- Swag (i.e. rubber bracelets, t-shirts, key chains, etc.)

Training and Education

In order for young people to feel prepared to fully participate training should be offered. The youth involved in this process will need to *become familiar with City Hall* and municipal processes. Participants will also require opportunities to *enhance their facilitation, decision making, communication and conflict resolution skills*.

Adding a *mentorship component* to the YDC event is an excellent way to meaningfully involve older youth and younger youth. Leadership and facilitation training may be offered to older youth who would assist in the training of the younger youth participants on the Youth Days in Council.

Media training is another interesting dimension to the program that could occur. Partnering youth with GVTV and local media personalities who often cover Council proceedings would allow youth to develop their skills in this field.

Events coordination will be provided to those youth on the working group who may be interested. The Events Coordinator will take the lead on this.

Program Topics

Prior to the YDC event, Council and the Working Group may choose to identify particular themes of interest to be covered throughout the event. Examples of this may include: Olympics, sustainability, homelessness, arts and culture, planning and development, Woodward's, etc. The Working Group may also choose to designate an overall theme to the Youth Days in Council event on an annual basis, offering the YDC participants an opportunity to work on specific issues.

Suggestion:

Create and distribute a simple on-line poll asking for youth feedback on what is important to them in the City. This could form the basis for the YDC discussions for the event.

Fun activities

The Youth Days in Council will provide a variety of events for the youth participants and Council. In a latter section, case studies are offered as examples to assist the Working Group in designing the particular details of Vancouver's Youth Days in Council. Items for the YDC program events that have been previously discussed and that the Working group may want to consider include:

- Series of workshops
- 10 youth to 1 Councilor working on relevant issues
- Politics 101: mock all-candidates debate, mock election and mock Council
- Gala dinner event

- Connection to Youth Outreach Team projects and other City initiatives to keep youth involved beyond the YDC.
- Opportunity to research and present City issues and youth recommendations
- Alumni youth participants (future involvement)
- Performances
- Media training (i.e. Get Out! example)
- Debriefing sessions

Appendix B: Draft Budget & Timeline

Budget

It has been requested by the Mayor's Office that the Working Group develop a budget and "actively seek out sponsorships to help defer the costs of hosting such an event". It has been suggested that the Working Group seek out sustainable funding from ethical sources.

The Working Group will also need to map City resources that will be required to run the YDC program on an annual basis. Elements such as: materials and supplies, staff time, etc. will need to be considered in the budget.

Suggestions:

1. Hiring a youth coordinator(s) on contract to develop and implement the YDC program should be considered. See Vancouver Youth Week coordinator position for more details.
2. Post an RFP for an experienced event planner who will work with the youth coordinator and youth working group to ensure that the logistics of the program (i.e. distribution of invitations, communications, creation of applications, venue booking, food, etc.) are taken care of.

Budget

Section 1: Closing Ceremony Dinner

*This section has been separated out from the Youth days in Council budget. It was suggested that there may be **opportunities for sponsorship** for this portion of the event.*

Dinner event:	
(Youth, Council & family=approx. 250 people)	\$15/person = \$3750
Dinner venue	\$3000-\$5000
Additional items:	
Decoration	\$500
AV (Sound system)	\$2000
Set-up/clean up	\$1000
Security	\$1500
Certificates/Invitations	\$1000
Logistical Event Planner:	\$8000
Contract	
Total Event Dinner	\$22, 750 (EST.)

Section 2: Resources for YDC Pilot Program

***In-kind resources** may include some graphics and communications costs, plus elected official and supporting **staff time** (i.e. Steering committee, Child & Youth Social Planner, Park Board staff, Vancouver School Board staff, Mayor's office, City Clerk staff, etc.)*

Program Staffing:	
<u>Youth Coordinator</u> (1 auxiliary youth staff: 35 hrs/wkX24 weeks@ \$19.37/hr + 16%)	\$18,875
<u>Social Planner I</u> (2 days/wk X 24 weeks @ \$37/hr incl. MERC)	\$12,432 (Expense to be covered by Social Planning Dept. subject to approval)
Outstanding Program Staffing Total:	\$18,875
<u>Youth Days Program Costs:</u>	
Honoraria and bus tickets for working group Participation (planning and consultations + working group meets once every 2 weeks = 30 youth X \$50) + extra honoraria for performers, youth mentors, etc.	\$5000
<u>Materials for working group:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting supplies • Food 	\$2000
<u>Materials for YDC youth and staff:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meeting supplies (i.e. binders and education/training material) • Food (Morning refreshments & lunch X 2) 	\$3000
<u>Communications:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Applications & printing • Media advertisements • Posters/bus shelter ads 	\$7000
<u>Training:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest trainers (i.e. public speaking, conflict resolution, etc.) 	\$4000
Youth Days Program Costs Total	\$21,000 (EST.)
Total Budget Required	\$39,875

Timeline

The following table is a draft timeline that lists several actions that should happen in preparation for the YDC program.

<i>Suggestion:</i>

Given that this is the first time this program will take place at the City, planning will be more intense than in years to come. In addition, the summer months are a difficult time to connect with young people due to school closures. It is suggested that the launch of the YDC program be for November. In years to come, this program could be administered towards the end of September/early October. It is beneficial for the Working Group to consult with young people, schools and youth community organizations on this matter.

It is also important to consider that year one of YDC is a smaller scale one, and that it grows to its full potential in subsequent years.

Month	Action
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Announcement from Mayor's office
March/April	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preliminary meetings with Mayor's Office and City staff steering committee • Draft YDC proposal
May	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Complete YDC proposal • Finalize budget • Draft RFP for event coordinator • Draft and post job ad for Youth Coordinator
June	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire Youth Coordinator (by mid-June) • Hire event coordinator • Meet with steering committee • Call out for youth working group (before school is out) • First youth working group at end of June (meet once every 2 weeks until November)
July Developing material for training	Steering committee and working group committee to develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name • Eligibility criteria • Selection process • Outreach strategy • Application
August	Steering committee and working group committee to develop: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Detailed program • Training material for youth, Council and staff • Communications materials complete
September	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach • Applications distributed • Application deadline (end of September) • Selection process
October	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre-sessions begin with participants (x5)
November	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pre sessions continue • Council training • Youth Days in Council Nov. 20 & 21

Appendix C: What Exists in the City for Youth?

Vancouver Civic Youth Strategy, 1995

On March 28, 1995 Council approved the Vancouver Civic Youth Strategy (CYS). It is a statement of commitment to work in partnership with youth and the larger community to:

- ensure youth have a *PLACE* in the City
- ensure strong youth *VOICE* in decision-making
- promote youth as a *RESOURCE* to the City
- strengthen the *SUPPORT BASE* for youth

It also commits the City to involve youth and youth-driven organizations as active partners in the development, assessment and delivery of civic services having direct impact on youth; and including youth in broad-spectrum consultations.

Child and Youth Social Planner & Youth Outreach Team

The Child and Youth Social Planner provides overall coordination and planning for youth in collaboration with other levels of government, the youth community service providers and internally with other City departments and the Youth Outreach Team.

The Youth Outreach Team is a model of youth engagement. It is a group of youth hired as City staff whose primary goal is to build and strengthen meaningful youth engagement in municipal decision-making.

Project examples include:

- Planning for Youth: Co-chair Youth Working Group for GVRD Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness
- Youth Involvement in Civic Program and Policy Development: Get Out! Olympic Youth Legacy Program & City's Drug Policy
- Grants: Community Services Grants support programs and services through non-profit agencies that reach higher risk youth and address their needs
- Building Capacity around meaningful youth engagement for City staff
- Youth Celebration Events: COV Youth Recognition Awards

Other City Departments

Many other City departments and civic bodies provide direct programs and services to youth in the City. The Civic Youth Strategy Department representatives Committee is just one example. This committee is comprised of a representative from each relevant department throughout the City in order to share youth-related information with one another and to learn about new opportunities. These departments include: EEO; City Clerks; Planning; OCA; Housing; Drug Unit; Licenses & Inspections; Engineering Services; Library; Police; Parks & Recreation; School; and Sustainability Office.

Working in collaboration with the Social Planning Department, the CYS Department Representatives Committee is currently in the process of collecting project details and stories through a youth engagement inventory. The Inventory is a template to help document what's happening for youth in the City of Vancouver in all departments.

Examples of major youth initiatives in the City include:

- Get Out! is an interdepartmental project between the Park Board, Office of Cultural Affairs and Social Planning. Through new recreation programs, grants and youth research, Get Out! strives to engage less active and to improve the health and well-being of Vancouver youth.
- Drug Prevention youth engagement strategy is an on-going project between the Drug Unit and the Youth Outreach Team to find meaningful ways to include youth in planning for drug prevention.
- The Vancouver Park Board offers a wide range of social and recreational activities for youth in their local neighbourhoods. There are over 18 community based youth workers who work directly with young people to plan and implement these activities.

Appendix D: Principles of Meaningful Youth Engagement

The values and principles as defined by the *Centre for Excellence for Youth Engagement*, a national organization that helps to inform the youth work in the City and will help to guide the Working Group in the development of the Youth Days in Council.

Meaningful youth engagement is the participation of a young person in the decisions that affect their lives.

The following are the core principles of youth engagement that have been adopted by the City of Vancouver when working with youth. The City has commitment to new youth initiatives in the City that are implemented with consistent approach, values and principles. For the purpose of this proposal, suggestions are put forward with specific regard to the Youth Days in Council development. They have been internationally recognized as best practices and include:

1. Peer-based approach: Providing opportunities for Council members, staff and youth to be involved in the planning, development and implementation of the YDC initiative with and for their peers will bring the program closer to being truly unique, appropriate and accessible.
2. Mentorship: Matching adults, older youth and younger youth together has proven to be a successful model. In triads, the group learns from one another, each bringing something unique to the table.
3. Training & skills building: In order for young people to feel prepared to fully participate training should be offered. The youth involved in this process will need to become familiar with City Hall and municipal processes. The young people will also require opportunities to enhance their facilitation, decision making, communication and conflict resolution skills.
4. Shared decision-making power: Youth and adult partnership in decision making not only allows two way learning opportunities to take place, but it also creates spaces for more relevant and effective programming. Involving youth in making joint-decisions on youth programs is vital to the YDC success and sustainability.

5. Support for adults: Council members and City staff need support too in order to work meaningfully with young people. Workshops and training should be offered so that adults feel confident and comfortable working with a group of young people. Council and staff participating in this process will also need to commit their time and may need support in mapping out a workplan.
6. Tapping into passions: A good place to start to getting young people excited and involved in civic issues, is to ask young people what they care about in their community and what ignites their passion.
7. Youth-Friendly processes: Youth-friendly is people-friendly. Here are some examples:
 - i. Fun and easy to understand handouts and materials (no jargon)
 - ii. Plan meeting times during after school and weekends. Meetings location usually held in a youth-friendly
 - iii. Yummy snacks or a meal is always provided
8. Resources for youth participation: Meaningful youth participation can happen when young people have sufficient resources to participate. The following is a list of things to consider so that the process is youth-friendly, inclusive and welcoming to a diverse group of young people:
 - i. Paid youth staff as coordinators/contractors
 - ii. Bus tickets provided for transportation
 - iii. Food provided at meetings
 - iv. Honoraria for participation
 - v. Training & skills building

Appendix E: Case Studies

The following section is a list of case studies from around the world that offer a description of “youth parliament” style programs. Program details that are common, as well as particularly interesting have been noted for the Working Groups review.

Example 1: Forum for Young Canadians

<http://www.forum.ca/>

What is Forum?

Forum for Young Canadians is a youth program about Canadian government and our governmental institutions. Its purpose is to promote understanding of the role and function of our national government and the meaning of Canadian citizenship. Forum brings approximately 600 students (aged 15-19 years) from across Canada to Ottawa in four separate sessions each spring where they spend a week on Parliament Hill to experience first-hand how Canadian government works and the values it promotes.

During their week at Forum, students meet the nation's leaders, interact with decision-makers, and debate contemporary issues. Forum students sit in both the House of Commons and Senate with the Speakers of both Chambers. They watch Question Period from the Visitor's Gallery, and then conduct simulations of Forum Question Periods and a First Ministers' Conference.

Where is Forum Held?

- Forum's classroom is Canada's Capital.
- Most seminars and simulations are held on Parliament Hill.
- Participants attend general sessions together but split up into groups of 16 for group meetings.
- Simultaneous translation is provided at general sessions while group meetings operate either in French or English. Bilingual groups are set up where possible.

Who Can Participate?

High school and CÉGEP principals and directors can nominate any number of responsible students between the ages of 15 and 19, based on:

- Sound academic performance;
- Social and leadership skills;
- Extra curricular activities;
- Interest in current national and community affairs.

What does Forum Cost?

- Forum encourages students to seek sponsors in their communities. School boards and student councils, community organizations, service clubs, private companies and many individuals have provided generous support.
- The majority of transportation costs is covered by Exchanges Canada, a youth exchange program of the Department of Canadian Heritage.
- The fee to attend Forum 2006 is \$799.00. The fee covers tuition, room (quadruple occupancy), and board and transportation costs not covered by Exchanges Canada.

Example 2: Encounters with Canada

<http://www.encounters-rencontres.ca>

What is Encounters with Canada?

Encounters with Canada is a one-week program of Canadian studies held at The Terry Fox Canadian Youth Centre, in Ottawa. From mid September to early December and from late January to early May, more than 138 high school students per week, aged 14 – 17 come from across the country.

What is the Objective?

The objective of Encounters with Canada is to bring young Canadians of different backgrounds and regions together in order to give them an opportunity to learn about one

another, to discover their country through one another, and to gain a better understanding of Canadian Institutions.

What Does the Program Offer?

The program week is divided into two parts. The first part of the week focuses on Canadian institutions and includes visits to the House of Commons and the Senate, a guided tour of the National Capital Region, and modules. The second part of the week is organized around one of eleven sub-themes:

- Arts & Culture
- Business & Entrepreneurship
- Canada Remembers
- International Affairs
- Journalism & Communications
- Law
- Medicine & Health
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Science & Technology
- Social Sciences
- Sports & Fitness

The students gain "hands-on" experience through participation in group discussions, simulations, multimedia presentations, and role-playing. Activities also include guest speaker presentations, theme-related visits, and guided tours.

The students participate in 4 modules every program week:

- 1) Linguistic Duality: Discussions on the benefits and challenges of life in a bilingual country.
- 2) Diversity, Racism, and Multiculturalism
- 3) Peace: National and international solutions for peace and striving for a non-violent world.
- 4) Youth Engagement

Who is Eligible to Apply?

Any student 14 - 17 years of age enrolled in an educational institution recognized by the Ministry of Education of his or her province or territory may apply. Participants must be a Canadian citizen or landed immigrant. Students are selected regionally upon the recommendation of their school authorities and on the basis of regional quotas.

Program Monitor

Program monitors for Encounters with Canada are an essential part the program. Every week, 6 program monitors from all across the country join the group in Ottawa. The program runs for 12 weeks in the fall and for 14 weeks in the winter/spring.

Monitors participate fully in the program and provide guidance, supervision, and assistance to participants. Monitors also work with staff to implement the program, lead a group of participants, and attend all program events.

Example 3: British Columbia Youth Parliament

<http://www.bcyp.org/>

What is British Columbia Youth Parliament?

The British Columbia Youth Parliament is a non-profit, non-partisan youth service organization run by youth between the ages of 16 and 21. BCYP is run by youth, for youth. For a full year, 95 members pool their resources, creativity and determination for one purpose: to advance, better, and improve the lives of the youth of British Columbia.

Every year, between December 27th and 31st, 95 representatives of youth organizations from across British Columbia (the "Parliamentarians") gather at the Legislative Chambers in Victoria for the annual session of British Columbia Youth Parliament. Members sit as independents- not representing any political party and voting according to their individual consciences on all issues. They learn about parliamentary process, debate topics of interest, and plan numerous activities for the upcoming year. Proposed activities are presented in the form of government bills; once passed they must be put into effect. This is where BCYP differs from other Youth Parliaments in that BCYP is in no way a "model" or "mock" parliament; our legislation actually translates into real and positive action in the community.

What Does the BCYP Offer?

The BC Youth Parliament runs:

Camp Phoenix: a week long summer residential camp for kids. It is the aim of Camp Phoenix to provide the opportunity for children aged 8-12, who due to social and financial circumstances aren't readily provided with the chance of camp.

Sweet Dreams Dinner & Auction: BCYP organizes a large fundraiser every year. All proceeds from this gala fundraising event are used to subsidize the cost of Camp Phoenix.

Community service projects: Each and every single one of our members has a personal commitment to their own individual service projects in their communities. BCYP also undertakes group service events, where members get together to volunteer with different organizations or at special events.

Regional Youth Parliaments: Held around the province, Regional Youth Parliaments (RYPs) are weekend long parliaments, designed to educate high school students between the ages of 14 and 18 on the parliamentary process and the Canadian system of governance. During a RYP session, Members debate legislation, which serves as an action plan for the parliamentary year, as well as topics of interest in the form of Private Member Resolutions. After session, all RYPs plan to execute social and service events, with the intention of helping their local community.

Is there Something Else?

Western Canada Youth Parliament

Western Canada Youth Parliament (WCYP) is a bi-annual event that brings together delegations from the British Columbia Youth Parliament, the TUXIS Parliament of Alberta,

the Saskatchewan Youth Parliament and the Youth Parliament of Manitoba for a four-day parliamentary session over the May long weekend.

WCYP is an enriching experience for all who attend, whether it a person's hundredth day of youth parliament Session or their first experience. It gives young people the opportunity to visit another province or showcase their own province for other people. It provides a forum for debate on inter-provincial, national and global issues. It also gives parliamentarians the chance to learn about the parliamentary tradition, procedures and character of other youth parliaments.

Example 4: International Youth Parliament

<http://www.iyp.oxfam.org/>

What is the International Youth Parliament?

The International Youth Parliament is a global network of young leaders and activists in over 150 countries that advocates for the rights of young people and their communities.

An initiative of Oxfam Community Aid Abroad, IYP was launched at a world-first event (IYP2000), attended by 250 international youth delegates in Sydney, October 2000. These delegates are now actively engaged in social change projects in their home countries as "IYP Action Partners". Some 400 Action Plans are currently live, tackling such issues as human rights and discrimination, youth employment and sustainable development at grass roots level.

Example 5: Model United Nations

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/modelun/index.asp>

What is the Model United Nations?

Section 1.01 Model United Nations (also known as "Model UN" or simply "MUN") is a [simulation education](#) activity focusing on [civics](#), [communications](#), [globalization](#) and [multilateral diplomacy](#). During a Model United Nations conference, students take on roles as foreign [diplomats](#) and participate in a simulated session of an intergovernmental organization (IGO). Participants research a country, take on a role as a diplomat, investigate international issues, debate, deliberate, consult, and then develop solutions to world issues. During a simulation they must employ a variety of communications and critical thinking skills to defend and advance the policies of their country.

Model United Nations simulations allow participants to “experience, practice and experiment with [conflict resolution](#), [public speaking](#), small [group dynamics](#), and [negotiation](#).” Sometimes students also [organize](#) and run conferences taking on various leadership roles including [Secretary General](#), chairperson and [treasurer](#). These are all empowering roles, allowing students to make their own decisions and forge their own success.

What Happens at MUN?

Model United Nations simulations aim at being academically rigorous. It requires research that includes [current affairs](#), [economics](#), [geography](#), [government](#), [history](#) and [politics](#). Students must do in-depth research, write [foreign policy](#) principles and [position papers](#), and learn [parliamentary procedure](#). They must formulate prepared presentations as well as give extemporaneous

speeches. They must grasp foreign policy and [culture](#) norms. They must do [technical writing](#) as they craft properly formatted United Nations resolutions. Students practice listening, decision-making, and strategic thinking skills as well. Model United Nations requires a full complement of skill proficiencies that will serve them well in all future endeavors.

Section 1.02 Who are the Participants?

Model United Nations groups are usually organized as either a [club](#), conference, or class. A class can be a full semester class called "Model United Nations" or just one class period devoted to a short simulation. A conference is a school-wide, local, regional or international gathering of Model United Nations students who come together over one day or even one week.

Example 6: UK Local Government Association - Local Democracy Week

<http://www.localdemocracyweek.info/>

What is Local Democracy Week?

Local Democracy Week has expanded into a year-round campaign to increase young people's awareness of their power to shape their community.

Since Local Democracy Week started in 1997, councils in England and Wales have held over 2000 events ranging from 'Question Time' through to 'Mayor for a Day', 'I'm a Councillor, get me out of Here' and Political Speed Dating. Last year more than 300 councils took part in LDW.

The Local Democracy Campaign aims to make councils more relevant and useful to young people by encouraging them to 'Take Part Take Power'. The campaign also seeks to get young people to see councils as a route to shape change in their community. It aims to:

- Make Local Democracy Week bigger and better
- Increase councillor involvement in citizenship teaching in schools
- Ensure that young people have the power to make a difference to their community
- Get councils to devolve power, wherever appropriate, to local people

What is An Example of One of the Projects?

I'm a Councillor, Get me out of here: is an event that opened councillors' eyes to what young people really want and gave teenagers a taste for politics. This program runs annually for one week in October.

It is an online event run for young people and councillors. It takes place on an interactive website (<http://www.bigvote.org.uk/>) where young people pose pertinent questions to their local councillors and feed back their opinions on local and national issues. The site also provides engaging resources and activities that introduce teenage students to Local Government and politics.

The "I'm a Councillor, Get me out of here" event:

- Engages young people in the political process, often for the first time

- Gives young people a tool to voice their opinions on local and national issues in a constructive way
- Enables councilors to actively engage with young people, and learn more about their needs and concerns
- Helps teachers meet their Citizenship curriculum requirements in a unique and engaging way

Notable Program Details

The following is a list of program details, fun activities, and general information that have been collected from the case studies above.

- Developed a Youth Shadow Council and worked with individual city council members and/or city administrators and job shadowed for school credit
- Created a youth advisory council where youth served on an advisory board to the city council on issues involving youth
- Appointed young people to local boards and commissions after completing the youth parliament sessions
- Created official youth seat(s) on the city council and encouraged youth participants to apply
- Hosted a youth summit where issues that effect youth in the City were highlighted in the media and presented to community service clubs
- Held a City election where only youth vote
- Shaped a Mayor for the Day; Council for the Day; City Planner for the Day, City Manager for the day, etc. program
- Produced simulations of Council proceedings
- Connected to similar regional processes
- Involved in community action projects post youth parliament (part of the commitment of being a youth representative selected)
- Facilitated and participated in on-line civic dialogues
- Worked on local action plans from shadow Council workshops, and partnered with other youth in their communities to make it happen
- Developed a youth employment network
- Forwarded youth recommendations to appropriate departments, government agencies, etc.
- Hosted a dance and banquet in appreciation of the youth and Council participants
- Established working groups with themed activities. Worked on continuing the work year to year for each working group.

Article of Interest

** Article Below From -
Nova Scotia Government's Web Site - NEWS Brief Section May 26, 2006*

While politicians in Nova Scotia are on the campaign trail, students are heading to Province House this weekend to fill their shoes.

A law requiring car dealers in Nova Scotia to sell more vehicles powered by renewable energy sources is one of the hot topics the high school students will debate as part of Model Legislature 2006.

Bills to increase the number of environmentally friendly vehicles sold in the province and to limit a young person's involvement in the work force will be on the agenda as students gather at Province House for hands-on experience of how democracy works in Nova Scotia.

The event, organized by the Department of Education, begins today, May 26, and continues until Sunday, May 28. The students will divide into caucuses and debate two mock bills on the floor of the House of Assembly on Saturday, May 27, and Sunday, May 28.

They will experience first hand the challenges and opportunities faced by the men and women who work as elected representatives.

"Our students will see the many different aspects of Nova Scotia's legislature. They will see how decisions are made and then communicated to the public," said Education Minister Jamie Muir. "It's important that young Nova Scotians take an interest in how their government works. The weekend is designed to be educational, interactive and fun."

As part of the weekend's events, students will attend a workshop on the role of the media. They will also organize their own news conferences addressing the mock bills. The students will get public speaking and debating tips from speaking coach Josh Judah before debating the bills and preparing their news conferences. Retiring MLA Jerry Pye will hold a workshop on the life of an MLA.

MP Alexa McDonough is the guest speaker at the opening banquet, today, May 26.

The first Model Legislature was held in 2003.

Other Examples

Youth manifesto for the 21st century:

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0011/001184/118448Eo.pdf>

European Youth Parliament

<http://www.eyp.org>

YMCA Queensland Youth Parliament

<http://www.youthparliament.ymca.org.au/>

UK Youth Parliament

<http://www.ukyouthparliament.org.uk/>

African Youth Parliament

<http://www.ayparliament.org/>

Ontario Youth Parliament

<http://www.oyp.on.ca/>

Glocal Youth Parliament
<http://www.glocalyouth.org/>

Youth Parliament Manitoba
<http://www.ypmanitoba.ca/>

Mr. Speaker's Alberta Youth Parliament
http://www.abheritage.ca/abpolitics/people/cit_youth_parliament.html

Saskatchewan Youth Parliament
<http://www.saskyouthparliament.com/>

Youth Parliament Legislative Assembly of the Northwest Territories
http://www.canadiancrc.com/NT_Youth_Parliament.htm

Additional Resources

City of Vancouver Youth Outreach Team
<http://vancouveryouth.ca>

Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement
<http://www.engagementcentre.ca/>

The Power of an Untapped Resource: Exploring Youth representation on your Board or Committee
http://www.tgmag.ca/centres/e/resourcesdb//pdf/untapped_resource.pdf

At the Table: 14 Points to Successfully Involving Youth in Decision-Making
<http://www.atthetable.org/resources.asp>

The Innovation Centre: Youth-Adult Partnerships
http://www.theinnovationcenter.org/r_ya_partners.asp

For further resources, please contact the Youth Outreach Team
Email: youth@vancouver.ca

Youth Days in Council is a fantastic opportunity for the City to further involve youth in municipal government and to design a program that is inclusive and meaningful for youth people. When the world comes to our city in 2010, the Youth Days in Council will serve as yet another example of the high level of commitment the City of Vancouver has to its younger citizens.