



CITY OF VANCOUVER

A12

ADMINISTRATIVE REPORT

Report Date: June 9, 2008
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TO: Vancouver City Council

FROM: General Manager, Community Services; General Manager, Vancouver Park Board; City Librarian; Chief Constable

SUBJECT: Youth Services Review

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT Council endorse the goal of a coordinated approach to serving youth as set out in the report titled Youth Services Review and dated June 9, 2008.
- B. THAT Council direct staff to conduct further consultations with stakeholders and report back on the operational framework and implementation plan, including any operational costs requirements and funding strategies.
- C. THAT Council direct staff to forward this report to the Vancouver Public Library Board and the Vancouver Park Board to request their endorsement of the recommendations set out in this report.

GENERAL MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The General Managers of Community Services, the Vancouver Park Board, the City Librarian and the Chief Constable support this review process geared to developing a corporate approach to the planning, coordination and delivery of youth services, and streamlining working relationships with external stakeholders. The General Managers recommend Council approve Recommendations A, B and C.

This report is scheduled to be forwarded to the Vancouver Park Board on June 23 and the Vancouver Library Board on June 25.

CITY MANAGER'S COMMENTS

The City Manager recommends Council endorse the objective of a City-wide coordinated approach to youth services and a consultation process with key stakeholders regarding an appropriate organizational model. This approach is consistent with the City's interest in providing coordinated, efficient and strategic service delivery and builds on the City's contributions to youth to date. Staff have identified a framework for re-focussing services, the benefits of a coordinated service system and a process to develop an operational model based on consultation.

Attention will need to be given, in implementation planning, to enabling processes, procedures and structures that link programs and services across corporate Departments and Boards. In turn, these structures must support city-wide planning while addressing unique needs of each civic partner, the community and neighbourhoods.

This report provides a review of work-to-date in developing this initiative and outlines the steps to develop and implement a coordinated approach to serving youth through a corporate framework.

COUNCIL POLICY

Council and City Boards have endorsed the following (in chronological order):

The Vancouver Police Department (VPD): The VPD's overall response towards young people, or youth, is guided by its mission, vision and strategic objectives with respect to providing policing service to all citizens in the City of Vancouver. The VPD is also guided and compelled by its statutory duties and responsibilities under the Youth Criminal Justice Act (YCJA) as well as other statutes relating to child protection, and the Criminal Code of Canada.

The VPD recognize youth engagement and outreach as a powerful crime prevention tool that promotes and enhances public safety in the community. The VPD has a Youth Services Section.

The Vancouver Park Board (VPB): The Park Board Blueprint for Youth Services (1992) was designed to enhance community centre youth programs across the city, and to facilitate partnerships with local youth-serving agencies to develop further community recreation opportunities for youth. The Blueprint was based on recurrent themes from a series of reports and research projects which frequently identified the need for community-based, preventative, collaborative and culturally-competent services for Vancouver's young people.

Vancouver Civic Youth Strategy (CYS) Policy: Council adopted the CYS in March of 1995, (including VPB, VPL, VPD and the Vancouver Board of Education) and initiated new youth engagement methods with the establishment of the Youth Outreach Team in 2003. CYS includes a policy statement that commits the City to involving youth and youth-driven organizations as active partners in:

- the development, assessment and delivery of civic services which have direct impact on youth; and
- broad spectrum consultations and initiatives on civic issues.

The policy statement above ensures that all City departments work towards 4 key objectives:

- ensuring youth have "a place" in the City of Vancouver

- ensuring a strong youth voice in decision-making
- promoting youth as a resource to the City of Vancouver
- strengthening the support base for youth in the City of Vancouver

In 2003, Council approved the establishment of the Youth Outreach Team, a new model of youth engagement for the City. Council also endorsed a request to the Vancouver Board of Education and City partners to work with Social Planning to fully implement the CYS.

In 2004, Council approved the Olympic Youth Legacy Framework (later renamed Get Out! Youth Legacy) and pilot project implementation. Council is still awaiting a report back on the long term plan for the Get Out! program.

Social Sustainability: In April 2002, Council approved the following definition of sustainability, and endorsed sustainability as a guiding principle for future development: *A sustainable Vancouver is a community that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is a place where people live, work, and prosper in a vibrant community of communities. In such a community sustainability is achieved through community participation and the reconciliation of short and long term economic, social and ecological well-being.*

In 2005, Council adopted following definition of social sustainability: *Individual or human capacity refers to the attributes and resources that individuals can contribute to their own well-being and to the well-being of the community as a whole. Such resources include education, skills, health, values and leadership. Social or community capacity is defined as the relationships, networks and norms that facilitate collective action taken to improve upon quality of life and to ensure that such improvements are sustainable. To be effective and sustainable, both these individual and community resources need to be developed and used within the context of four guiding principles - equity, social inclusion and interaction, security, and adaptability.*

The Vancouver Public Library Board (VPL): The VPL Board adopted 2008 Strategic Objectives include objective # 3: Increase Services to Children and Youth. *"In partnership with the City of Vancouver, the Vancouver School Board, other service providers, and in conjunction with youth, the Library works to enhance the effectiveness and reach of library services for youth."* Actions for 2008 that have been identified are to "implement a plan for improving library service for youth throughout the city by contributing to the development of the City of Vancouver's youth strategy."

SUMMARY

The City recognizes the important contribution of youth and the importance of strategically investing in our future through youth development. This report outlines a process to develop a city-wide coordinated policy and operational framework to achieve the goal of a coordinated service delivery framework with all civic partners including the VPD, VPB, VPL, Community Services Group, other City Service Groups and strategic partners including the Vancouver Board of Education.

This process builds on the strengths of the City's existing continuum of programs and services. For a description of current civic programs dedicated to youth, please see Appendix A.

PURPOSE

This report provides an overview of the work to date on the development of a corporate youth strategy, including the strategic framework and initial analysis regarding the rationale and benefits of developing a coordinated approach. The report seeks Council endorsement of the initiative and the proposed next steps to develop an operational framework for a corporate approach.

BACKGROUND

Youth (age 12 to 24) is a period of immense change, experimentation and risk. Adolescence and emerging adulthood is a time typically marked by relatively high instability in terms of personal relationships, educational and vocational paths, and living situations. It is also a time of intense identity exploration in terms of personal, social, moral and political values.

Recent studies indicate diminishing health, wellbeing and resiliency among Vancouver's youth - including increasing rates of adolescent obesity, heart disease, mental health issues, major injuries due to violence, use of certain drugs and other risk behaviours. Research has linked these declining indicators in strong part to declining rates of youth engagement in their communities, increased social isolation experienced by many youth and a lack of access to crucial social and community networks of support.

See Appendix B for a snapshot of youth-related statistics.

Many important arenas for positive youth development are outside the family and the school system e.g. municipal amenities and services such as public streets and spaces, community centres, libraries, museums, and community recreation and leadership programs. Municipal youth workers, programmers, librarians and police officers all play an essential role in positive youth development as mentors, facilitating community engagement and connecting young people to critical community supports, networks and services.

By and large, most big Canadian cities' investment in youth is proactive and prevention-based geared to building social capital through leadership and skill development, engagement and empowerment. Proactive and preventative investments are considered an efficient investment than later intervention and treatment, which is by and large the responsibility of other levels of government. This is generally the case for Vancouver except where legislature requirements are in place and govern specific programs such as police services.

A Corporate Approach to Serving Youth in Vancouver

Vancouver civic services are currently geared to supporting youth within specific divisions and have evolved and developed to meet specific needs. Staff have worked at coordinating services, but continuously encounter process and structure gaps that impact efficient service planning, reporting and delivery.

Staff have identified a need for a coordinated corporate approach to position the City to be responsive to emergent issues, meet the growing and changing demands of a diverse, urban environment and to make the best use of existing resources. This approach would enhance research and planning, achieving corporate and program outcomes, reporting, staff development and relationships with stakeholders.

To address this, an inter-departmental staff committee, plus a representative from the Vancouver Board of Education, developed an unifying service framework based on social sustainability, asset development and child and youth friendly city models. The following goals guided this work:

- Partnerships are required to ensure all youth have their basic needs for healthy development met and to ensure youth live in a safe and caring community;
- Youth require opportunities to develop their individual capacities in the areas of learning/education, recreation in its broadest sense, employment, leadership and advocacy and other life skills; and
- Youth can contribute to building the social and community capacity of their neighbourhoods and city, and should be involved in advising City processes on the delivery of service and all matters that concern them.

Please see Appendix C for a summary of the committee's work.

Staff are now proposing a process to engage stakeholders in finalizing this service framework development as well as developing an operational framework to support a corporate approach. This work would be grounded in the following principles:

- Youth and stakeholder engagement
- A proactive and preventative focus
- Adaptable, responsive and innovative continuum of civic services to meet changing community needs and complement external community services
- Approaches that promote integration and synergy - building on the diversity and capacity of the City and its partners
- Services address equity and provide access
- Services are accountable, transparent, effective and efficient
- Best practices/centre of excellence approach

A literature search, conducted in Oct. 2006 on Municipal Youth Strategies around the English-speaking world, was undertaken including the United States, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand, which yielded some useful information. Of the 45 civic youth services plans and service mandate documentation reviewed, six demonstrated significant evidence of sound policy and practice; and included 2 from Canada: (Calgary and Halifax), 2 were from the United Kingdom, and 2 from Australia. None of the 5 US cities demonstrated comprehensive policy frameworks. Many cities stated that they had policies, practices and/or evaluations underway, but few had demonstrable evidence. See Appendix D, Literature Search Summary, for more information.

DISCUSSION

A corporate youth strategy that coordinates services enhances accountability and positions civic investments that contributes to and leverages youth partnerships will help define cohesive civic policy. This approach will serve to help equip the younger generation for a future characterized by rapid changes, the complexities of globalization, the development of the knowledge society, and the impacts of ageing society. Demographic trends make the need more pressing both in the need for more engaged citizens and productive workers and the need to better balance the intergenerational connections.

Work to date has identified an important domain for municipal involvement recognizing that other levels of government are responsible for addressing child poverty, healthcare,

education, and employment. This domain is primarily one of proactive youth engagement and development that mitigates negative social, health and safety impacts while building individual and community capacity. This approach is further embedded in Council's approved definition of social sustainability.

A review of current programs and services indicate that the current service configuration provides a continuum of services grounded in youth engagement and development activities. These services are generally distinct and therefore, would benefit from a corporate framework of coordination and planning. This corporate planning would allow for enhanced service levels, youth engagement, partnerships and improved use of resources.

This approach is envisioned to support:

- consistent reporting;
- coordinated research, planning, priority-setting and resource allocation;
- enhanced leadership and convergence (one contact point) for enhanced external alignments and partnerships;
- staff development and training opportunities;
- more consistently engaged youth;
- a unique corporate approach to managing a critically important cohort;
- a system more responsive to emergent issues and needs; and
- an opportunity to build an innovative, centre of excellence/best practice model complete with benchmarks and base-line tracking.

Some examples regarding anticipated benefits resulting from a coordinated approach include: resource mobilization on critical/emergent issues e.g. safe dating; better HUB utilization to connect programs such as YouthPolitik with on-line reading clubs, more widespread EcoDensity consultations with youth; more research partnerships such as working with Vancouver Foundation on a youth Vital Signs project; and streamlined planning and priority-setting due to shared/common framework, including business plans and annual reports.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no financial implications as a result this report. A follow-up report detailing the strategic and operational framework, resultant policy changes and any financial implications including new and/or realignment of resources will be brought back to Council in 2009.

COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

Notification of this report was provided to external stakeholders who will be included in the subsequent consultations.

CONCLUSION

Vancouver has a long history of investing in youth, both through dedicated programs and through population-based programs. These programs and services have been developed in response to needs identified by each civic partner and have been guided by the Civic Youth Strategy, but have not been systematically aligned or coordinated with other civic services. This review will develop an operational model geared to a corporate approach to coordinated service delivery within a corporate strategic framework.

The proposed next steps include a consultation process with key stakeholders, including youth, regarding the structures, processes and outcomes for the operational framework in keeping with the mandate of each civic partner and the goal of a coordinated service delivery. This phase would also provide the opportunity for feedback and build on the work-to-date in developing the conceptual model noted above. Staff anticipate a report back to Council in early 2009.

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DESCRIPTION OF PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

1. CIVIC YOUTH STRATEGY

All City departments and civic boards take an active role in ensuring the values and principles of the Strategy guide their work and how youth are engaged.

Child & Youth Planning and Youth Outreach Team, Social Planning Department includes:

- 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.
- broad-based systemic planning (e.g. homelessness and housing, youth services delivery hubs); working with multiple stakeholders including funders.
- developing and advocating for youth engagement strategies that lead to leadership and mentorship for youth participation.
- an innovative and internationally recognized model of youth engagement.
- a resource group of youth hired as City staff (2.5 FTE).
- build and strengthen meaningful youth engagement in all aspects of civic business (e.g. consultations, planning processes and other City initiatives),
- work with City staff and community to achieve the goals of the CYS.

Civic Engagement examples:

- Youth Working Group for GVRD Regional Steering Committee on Homelessness.
- Youth Funders Committee: an inter-governmental body working to improve coordination and planning for youth at risk.
- Youth Vital Signs: Partnering with the Vancouver Foundation on the Youth Vital Signs project to gather input on issues for youth in Vancouver.
- YouthPolitik: This inter-departmental initiative (School, VPB, VPL and Mayor's Office) provides opportunities for young Vancouver citizens (ages 15 -19) to learn about municipal government while developing leadership skills.
- Get Out! - Olympic Youth Legacy Program: an inter-departmental pilot initiative to get youth more active in sports, arts and culture.
- City's Drug Policy: a youth engagement component including training youth to facilitate community dialogues, a "youth-friendly" version of the Strategy, facilitating youth participation in the development of future prevention activities, and a Prevention Summit.
- Elections: partners with the City's Elections Office to develop and implement a youth engagement strategy for the November, 2008 municipal election.

Capacity Building to Meaningfully Engage Youth examples:

- a new CityLearn course "Involving Youth in Public Processes".
- partnerships with the youth community and Youth Leadership Development Network to identify needs and supports for front line youth workers.
- Youth Engagement Tools: YOT developed a "youth engagement checklist" that has been included in the City's Public Process Guide and website.
- Youth in Planning: support, guidance and advice on how to involve youth in public processes from Civic departments.

Youth Celebration Events

- CoV Youth Awards: Annual event planned by youth for youth, to recognize the positive contributions made by individuals, programs and organizations.
- Vancouver Youth Week: Annual event currently supported by the VPB, the City's Youth Outreach Team, and various community partners.

Communications & Outreach

- Website: The City of Vancouver's youth portal website (<http://vancouveryouth.ca/>) is managed and administered by the YOT.
- E-Newsletter: Semi-monthly e-newsletters called "The Grapevine" are sent out to the youth community, City staff and others.
- Brochure: A double-sided colour brochure highlights some of the City's projects where youth can get involved.

Research and Best Practices of Youth Engagement - Youth Outreach Team

- Presentations & Conferences: dissemination of information regarding the City's model of youth engagement through presentations to youth groups, schools, resource fairs, conferences.
- Documentation and Evaluation: a partnership with the Centre of Excellence for Youth Engagement to document and evaluate the impact of the YOT and related projects.

The Vancouver Police Department

The VPD recognized decades ago that youth engagement and outreach was a powerful crime prevention tool that promoted and enhanced public safety in the community. Towards that end the VPD has a Youth Services Section whose mandate and goals are the following:

The Youth Services Section promotes for our youth the engagement in experiences that create strong self-esteem and a respect for the dignity and differences of others. Communities and agencies are seen as working as a team, identifying at the earliest those children at risk and those who have committed crimes. The referrals and justice processes that are activated are timely and effective at restoring children back into a positive environment.

The goals of the Youth Services Section are to:

- Pursue a safe, secure and positive environment for all youth through asset building, youth programs, prevention initiatives, interventions, information gathering and partnerships;
- Address criminal involvement through investigation and justice processes; and
- Refer those at risk to appropriate partner agencies.

In the context of these goals the VPD Youth Services Section deploys services in the following specific areas:

- Child protection services in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD). (Infants to 12 years of age)
- Youth probation services directed at monitoring youth in conflict with the law, enforcement of bail and probation orders, as well as identifying and referring "high

risk", sexually exploited, street entrenched youth (12 to 18 years of age) to appropriate services. Again, this is in partnership with the Ministry of Children and Family Development (MCFD).

- Police School Liaison Officer (SLO) services that combine education, investigation, law enforcement, counselling, and crime prevention and community relations to meet the diverse needs of residents in the school community. The SLO program's users include students, staff, parents, the community, the Vancouver Police and School Liaison Officers. The school population in Vancouver is approximately 65,000. Between the students, parents and staff, approximately one quarter of the population of Vancouver is reached by the VPD School Liaison Program.
- Youth Referral Program services as mandated by the YCJA. The Act states that before laying a charge a police officer SHALL consider, amongst a number of options, whether it would be sufficient to refer the young person to a program or agency in the community that may assist the young person not to commit offences. The VPD provides a youth program referral service.

Currently, VPD youth service partnerships include the Vancouver School Board, VPB, the Ministry of Children and Family Development, and the Vancouver Coastal Health Authority.

Vancouver Park Board

From its early beginnings as a provider of parks, playing fields, swimming pools and ice rinks, the Board of Parks and Recreation has provided generations of children and youth with recreational skills, sport opportunities and cultural activities in addition to parks, beaches and other amenities. Services provided by Park Board staff are used and enjoyed by residents and visitors of all ages, and it would be hard to find any of the Park Board's 2,000+ staff who do not count youth 12 to 24 years among their many 'customers'.

It is important to point out that many of the Board's 1,300 auxiliary staff are youth under 25 years of age, whose first volunteer role or paid job is with a local community centre, pool or related service, and who are also a target of the city's youth services review.

Many of the Park Board's playing fields, tennis and sport courts, skateboard parks and other outdoor facilities are used extensively by youth. Ice rinks, pools and fitness centers are also visited regularly by casual users and high-level youth athletes training for competitive events in their chosen discipline. Despite these opportunities and more, many of Vancouver's youth are unable to, or choose not to be actively engaged in sport, in recreational activity or in the visual and performing arts.

The Developmental Blueprint for Youth Services was adopted by the Board in 1992.

Youth Development thru Recreation Services describes the services of community-centre based community youth workers in each of Vancouver's community centres. The VPB mission for youth development services is to: Develop the capacity of youth by engaging them in active participation in community settings, using a holistic approach.

Youth workers build the capacity of both individuals and groups of youth through the following actions:

- Provision of volunteer leadership training, personal skills development and certification
- Support and placement of youth volunteers, to assist peers and/or children
- Scheduling structured and drop-in sessions (sports, arts, social and community events)
- Delivering outdoor experiential education e.g. camping, hiking, skateboarding, water sports
- Promoting special events participation, leadership, instruction
- Involvement in participatory decision-making e.g. youth councils, clubs, committees
- Outreaching to newcomers, immigrants and less active youth by engaging colleagues in other youth -serving agencies
- Supporting the reduction and removal of barriers to participation e.g. fees, transportation, equipment acquisition

In 2008, the Park Board's specific contribution to community youth development amounts to over \$ 1 million, with a similar net contribution from the network of 23 community centre associations, fees from services and other funders. Youth workers report to individual community centre supervisors, and work closely with the Board's community association partners to provide links to their Boards, and program funding assistance. The Coordinator of Child and Youth Recreation Services works to link and support Park Board staff with those of other city departments, agencies and funders to advance youth work practices.

Vancouver Public Library

The Library is a primary public institution that fosters literacy skills in pre-school children, works with school aged children to build literacy skills and with young adults to create information literacy capacity. The availability of print and audio-visual collections for youth through the Library's 20 branches both supports learning and literacy and provides entertainment and inspiration for youth.

Recent achievements in service to teens are:

- Addition of one new teen librarian position in 2008.
- Participation in the City of Vancouver's Youth Politik initiative.
- Contribution to the work of the City's youth strategy.
- Increased funding for Youth collections across the city.

Proposed plan to improve library service for teens includes:

- Foundation funds to upgrade branch and Central teen areas.
- Making the library more welcoming by creating options to limit the negative impact of overdue fines on youth.
- Take the lessons learned from the Working Together project to ask teens not using library resources what they need, using the community-led model.
- Increase dedicated youth service staffing from two to five positions.
- Work with the Vancouver Board of Education to engage aboriginal youth.

For the past 3 years, VPL Librarians have worked with Vancouver Board Of Education staff to offer the *Get Carded Program*. This program provides:

- in-school library research training for every regular grade nine student; and
- enhances the student's ability to succeed in their education by providing skills and information to support classroom education.

Librarian positions work with a teen advisory group (TAG) to develop the teen collections and to create programs that meet their interests.

Branch staff are in contact with neighbourhood youth groups, youth service agencies and local high schools.

Youth ages 12-24 hold 16% of the library cards among the library card holders in Vancouver, a total of 122,923. Approximately \$200,000 is spent annually on library material purchased specifically for youth and \$150,000 on dedicated staff. Other staff throughout the library system serve youth by answering reference questions both in person and virtual, present the Grade Nine *Get Carded Program* and do readers' advisory to support recreational reading. Youth of course also have access to the entire library collection of over 2.5 million items.

In partnership with the City Of Vancouver, the Vancouver Board of Education, other service providers, and in conjunction with youth, the Library works to enhance the effectiveness and the reach of library services for youth.

Snapshot of Youth-Related Statistics for Vancouver

2006 Youth Profile:

- 12.8% (73,930) of Vancouver residents were between the ages of 15 and 24 (an 11.6% increase in this age group since 2001).
- 4% (25,375) of residents were in the preceding transitional period (10 to 14 years old) between childhood and adolescence.
- Males outnumbered females in all age groups 19 years and younger.
- 12% of all students in Vancouver schools were ESL students (5% of secondary students)
- Increasing rates of adolescent obesity, heart disease, mental health issues, major injuries due to violence, use of certain drugs and other risk behaviours.
- 42,020 or 57% of Vancouver youth aged 15 to 24 were in the labour force. The youth unemployment rate was significantly higher at 11%, compared to the rate for the labour force over the age of 25.

Vancouver neighbourhoods:

- Greatest number of youth: Downtown, Dunbar, Arbutus Ridge, Kensington-Cedar Cottage, and parts of Kerrisdale, Marpole, Oakridge, Sunset, Victoria-Fraserview, Renfrew-Collingwood, Grandview-Woodland and Hastings Sunrise.
- Highest proportion of youth (over 15% of the overall population): Dunbar-Southlands, Arbutus Ridge, Shaughnessy west, Kerrisdale, Oakridge, Marpole, Victoria-Fraserview, and parts of the West Point Grey, West End, Renfrew-Collingwood and Killarney.

The 2005 Greater Vancouver Homeless Count indicated:

- 296 unaccompanied homeless youth under age 25 (15% of the total homeless population).
- Many homeless youth reported no source of income (31%) or 'other' income (30%).
- Homeless youth had the highest rate of addiction (56%), compared to all homeless persons (49%) or any other sub-group.

The Six-Year Dogwood Completion Rate (S-YDCR) tracks a set of first-time Grade 8 students, and provides a measure of how many have graduated six years later:

- In 2006/07, the S-YDCR in Vancouver was 82.1% of all students, 87.1% females, 77.3% males, 24.7% Aboriginals, and 84.2% ESL.

Rates of political participation:

- Canadians (age 15 to 30) are participating at a significantly lower rate than other age groups.
- In municipal elections, Canadians aged 22 to 29 are 50% less likely than the overall population to vote.
- Rates of youth participation in community-oriented activities are correlated to greater civic-mindedness and likelihood for political participation concurrently and as adults.

Vancouver Police Department report:

- Property crime and auto theft committed by youth in Vancouver have decreased.
- Youth swarming incidents have slightly declined, but the number of severe injuries resulting from such incidents has dramatically increased.
- Youth possession of dangerous weapons, including firearms, in Vancouver has increased.
- New technologies - cell phones, text messaging, Internet and rapid public transit, have created links between youth in different neighbourhoods and schools. This is changing the nature of youth crime investigation, policing and safety in the city.

YOUTH SERVICES REVIEW EXECUTIVE SUMMARY PHASE I

This report has been prepared to address two objectives:

- Development of a unifying conceptual framework for youth development and service delivery that can form a vision for Vancouver youth, and the development of corporate goals with respect to this framework/vision.
- The articulation of the conceptual framework into a corresponding management structure and ongoing communications network to implement services in the most cost-effective manner.

The proposed vision is as follows:

The City of Vancouver and its associated boards and partners are committed to providing a youth friendly city that helps youth to reach their personal potential and to be contributing citizens while they are youth and to grow into responsible adults.

To achieve this vision, the City must:

- Work with its partners to ensure that all youth have the basic needs for healthy development, and take a leading role in ensuring that youth live in a safe community.
- Ensure that youth have the opportunities to develop their individual capacities in the areas of learning/education, recreation in its broadest sense, employment, leadership and advocacy, and other life skills.
- Ensure that youth can contribute to increasing the social and community capacity of their neighbourhoods and city, and are involved in advising City Council on the delivery of services on all matters that concern them.

Management Framework

The current management frameworks are generally working well but some rethinking is required. The following recommendations are proposed:

- Develop improved reporting up the system to senior management and City Council and Boards
- Initiate discussion about the unifying framework/Vision for Youth, in order to identify where additional programmatic focus is required and where potential for more, or less, joint or collaborative action is required
- Initiate discussion about the unifying framework/Vision for Youth, as a way of identifying how youth issues fit within the strategic priorities of the City
- Develop better data which will lead to better reporting and better understanding

- Broaden collaboration outside of the City, and facilitate greater input from the other partners in youth service and program delivery
- Strengthen the City's role in coordination and planning for all aspects of youth service delivery. In order to implement these recommendations, the following actions need to be taken:
 - Develop a Biannual or Triennial State of Vancouver Youth Report
 - Develop an Annual Youth Strategic Priorities Report
 - Develop additional support for the Management Structure and its Service Planning efforts
 - Develop a More Comprehensive Approach to Staff Training

In order to move forward with this youth strategy, the first steps for City and Board considerations are:

- Develop an information report for Council and other elected/appointed Boards.
- Present this proposed youth strategy to the City's partners.
- Request that the Youth Outreach Team prepare an information brochure for youth, and conduct a series of youth discussion forums.
- Once these steps are complete, bring a report back to Council and Boards with an appropriate set of action recommendations.

LITERATURE SEARCH SUMMARY

Vancouver Public Library's InfoAction research division conducted a literature search of cities and municipalities in North America, Europe, New Zealand and Australia in October 2006.

The full text of this report is available from the City's Social Planning homepage at <http://www.vancouver.ca/commsvcs/socialplanning/info/index.htm>.

The Youth Strategies Summary yielded results from 6 cities which serve as examples of comprehensive, well-written and organized youth plans. Birmingham and Manchester, England; Kingston and Melbourne, Australia; Calgary, Alberta and Halifax, Nova Scotia provided the best examples. North Vancouver and Richmond were cited in the report as examples of cities in the lower mainland which demonstrate evidence of youth strategies. Evidence of integrated youth strategies in the U.S. was limited.

The Snapshot suggests common themes emerged in strategic goals and objectives. The best example is from Salisbury, Australia, listing 5 major outcomes:

- belonging and being involved
- learning and developing (education, training, employment)
- well-being (housing, health and well-being)
- fun, freedom and expression
- Infrastructure strengthening (partnering with service agencies, groups and youth)

Best practices are suggested, the best example of this comes from Australia's National Youth Affairs Scheme, which offers details on the 17 good practices they have identified. (e.g. Food has emerged as a theme; it is important to recognize the role of food and drink in bringing together youth in participatory events as an essential component of good practices)

Review and Evaluation evidence is limited, and rarely offers qualitative analysis. Typically, project status reports were provided, but outcome evaluation was very rare.

Finally, further research has located a publication by the European Bureau of Policy Advisers, entitled, and Investing in Youth: an empowerment strategy.

This paper reinforces the need for a renewed investment strategy by European nations and its cities in human and social capital, and reminds cities that an early momentum and investment yields the greatest results. It includes an assessment of the ECM situation in five main youth policy domains of well-being, health, education, employment and citizenship. Full text is available at:

http://ec.europa.eu/dgs/policy_advisers/publications/docs/Investing_in_Youth_25_April_fin.pdf