

3.2 Youth

There are two groupings which come under the category of youth:

1. Pre-teens which include youth between the ages of 8 and 12 years and
2. Teens and young adults between the ages of 13 and 24 years.

The City has considered youth a priority population group for many years. The primary role of the City with respect to this group has been to:

- increase youth involvement in the community.
- facilitate the development of programs and services for youth.
- fund preventative outreach youth services delivered by non-profit agencies.

The City's policy response to youth issues, for the most part, has been done in cooperation with the District of North Vancouver, reflecting the fact that collaboration results in the best use of scarce resources. Furthermore, the City, in cooperation with the District of North Vancouver and community service agencies, has for many years attempted to fill a gap in services that emphasize pro-active programs. Recent studies and consultations have revealed a variety of needs and interests of this group ranging from safe places to be with peers, to clinical services.

The City's focus will continue to be on facilitating pro-active program development through a collaborative approach. This will involve youth, other municipal governments, youth serving agencies and community groups, where relevant. The City's response will continue to value youth as members of the community. Providing opportunities for youth to be involved in the community will help to encourage youth to be responsible community members.

While the needs and interests of pre-teens, youth, and young adults may differ, the ultimate goal for the City remains the same.

GOAL

To promote an environment free from violence and abuse, discrimination, and inequality which supports the growth and development of youth to be successful, independent, and valued citizens.

Objective 1: Ensure youth have a strong voice and active involvement in decisions affecting them and their community.

Actions

The City will:

1. Continue to support the North Vancouver Youth Coalition as a way to involve youth in community activities and to have youth interests voiced.
2. Endeavor to involve youth in ongoing and ad hoc municipal advisory committees.
3. Continue to support the Youth Leadership Program – “Youth Power”, in cooperation with the District of North Vancouver and the North Vancouver Recreation Commission.
4. Explore other ways to involve youth who do not normally participate in structured programs, in planning for the current and future needs of the community.

Objective 2: Encourage a continuum of relevant support services and opportunities for youth and their families that are accessible, affordable, accountable, innovative, and proactive.

Actions

The City will:

1. Continue to fund the position of Youth Development Worker in facilitating the development of collaborative youth programs, services, and opportunities for youth.
2. Continue to provide core-funding support for the provision of Outreach Youth Services delivered by non-profit societies, as directed by the “Funding Policy for Outreach Youth Services” previously adopted by Council.
3. Continue to work cooperatively with the District of North Vancouver in developing joint municipal policy responses to youth issues.
4. Encourage core funding from provincial and federal ministries in support of preventative services for youth.
5. Continue to encourage and facilitate a cooperative approach to youth issues which involves all youth-serving agencies, including the North Shore Regional Operating Agency and North Shore Health Region.

6. Continue the Children and Youth Initiatives Fund as a means to support new programs and events for children and youth. This Fund will be evaluated regularly to ensure ongoing relevance.
7. Continue to promote and support Youth Week activities.
8. Support the Recreation Commission in continuing to provide specific youth programming during hours suitable to youth.
9. Through the Recreation Commission, continue to identify and implement ways to support volunteer-based groups that provide a considerable range of services to youth.
10. Work with the Lonsdale Recreation Centre staff to address youth needs and interests within the Recreation Centre.
11. Develop a strategy for ongoing pre-teen activities and programs in the City in cooperation with non-profit youth serving agencies, the Recreation Commission, Health Region, and School District #44.
12. Work with the Recreation Commission to develop strategies with youth to increase youth participation in recreation programs in the City, particularly youth from low-income families.
13. Develop a strategy to engage the business community more fully in supporting youth programs and services.

Objective 3: Support the provision of facilities and spaces for use by youth.

Actions

The City will:

1. Encourage affordable recreation and social opportunities for youth in existing community facilities.
2. Investigate the feasibility of building a year-round in-line skate/skateboard park in the City, possibly as part of a multi-use facility including basketball and/or volleyball.
3. Explore ways to support existing youth drop-in centres.
4. Work with the North Vancouver Recreation Commission, North Shore Neighbourhood House and arts agencies to identify potential resources to support youth programming, particularly outdoor and leisure activities.

Objective 4: Promote and highlight positive contributions made by youth to the community.

Actions

The City will:

1. Continue to support the Youth Achievement Awards Program to recognize youth for their positive contributions to the community and for personal improvement.

Objective 5: Support programs and initiatives designed to reduce the incidence of first time and repeat offenders.

Actions

The City will:

1. Continue to support, financially and through professional staff assistance, the North Shore Together Against Violence Network and the Restorative Justice initiatives.
2. Continue to support the RCMP School Liaison Program.
3. Facilitate opportunities for youth to participate in crime prevention programs in cooperation with the RCMP.
4. Develop a strategy for supporting the development of violence prevention programs for City youth.
5. Explore opportunities to collaborate with the North Shore Regional Operating Agency and other relevant groups on programs to reduce the incidence of first time and repeat offenders.

Objective 6: Improve employment and education opportunities for City youth.

Actions

The City will:

1. Continue to support, through staff assistance, the work of the Youth Employment Strategic Planning Committee.

2. Consider ways to assist Human Resource Development Canada in establishing a year-round youth employment centre in Lower Lonsdale and in delivering youth employment programs in the City.
3. Develop a youth employment strategy for the City in cooperation with Human Resource Development Canada, youth-serving agencies, youth, and business.
4. Explore opportunities to work with School District #44 and other relevant groups on improving educational opportunities for youth.