

THE CORPORATION OF THE  
**CITY OF WHITE ROCK**  
CORPORATE REPORT



**DATE:** September 25, 2023  
**TO:** Mayor and Council  
**FROM:** John Woolgar, Director, Recreation and Culture  
**SUBJECT:** Summer Children and Youth Program Update 2023

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**RECOMMENDATION**

THAT Council receive for information the corporate report dated September 25, 2023, from the Director of Recreation and Culture, titled "Summer Children and Youth Program Update 2023."

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**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

Summer is a busy and highly anticipated season for the White Rock Recreation department as it offers distinct indoor and outdoor programming opportunities for City residents. During July and August, the City's waterfront and parks and facilities are full of children and people of all ages participating in a variety of exciting summer camps and programs. This report provides a summary of the programs and initiatives that were delivered for children and youth, that support families and meet multiple objectives related to Council-approved strategies.

**INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND**

Through a combination of city-staff led and contracted summer camp operators, White Rock Recreation offered a wide-range of summer programs and activities for children, youth and families designed to meet diverse physical and social needs. As in previous years, the 2023 summer season offered distinct opportunities for programming due to the following factors:

- Children and youth are out of school;
- Warmer days allow for a wider variety of activities;
- Warmer days allow for more programming at the Waterfront; and
- Young adults and youth are available to work and volunteer in summer camps and programs.

The benefits of children attending summer camps are numerous. White Rock Recreation Summer camps help children:

- Connect with nature;
- Make new friends;
- Get healthy (physically and mentally);
- Unplug from technology;
- Foster growth;
- Get creative;

- Build self-esteem;
- Learn teamwork; and
- Learn new things/interests.

Many parents and guardians who are working during July and August need care for their children during the day and the enriching summer camps provided by White Rock Recreation fill this need. City summer camps offering all-day care were almost completely filled on the first day of registration on April 21 as it can be challenging for families to secure summer childcare. These all-day summer camps are important for families given the nine-week break for the majority of schools in White Rock. Many families use summer camps as an alternative to childcare.

Affordable and inclusive activities for all ages were offered during the summer to provide participants with active, engaging and fun experiences. In addition, The City's Leisure Access Program allows low-income families in White Rock to experience summer camps of their choosing at a reduced-rate.

### **Day Camps**

Children can try new activities, make new friends, develop social skills and build a sense of community. White Rock Recreation day camps were extremely popular as evidenced by the majority of spaces selling out within the first hour of registration.

Day camps include the City's signature Land'N'Sea camp which takes frequents White Rock beach via the Ruth Johnson Park trail system to Centennial Park. Land'N'Sea camp also features a weekly out-trip to exciting destinations such as Science World, H.R. MacMillan Space Centre, and the Greater Vancouver Zoo. A second, older age group, was added in 2023 that saw participation double from the 2022 registration numbers.

Recreation partners with the YMCA who host outdoor day camp at Centennial Park. This camp attracts 50 participants per week, utilizes space at the curling club, and visits the beach multiple times per week.

There are a variety of sport camps based out of Centennial Park that allow children to learn and practice a variety of sport skills. Sport camps offered include soccer, tennis, pickleball, and judo. Sport ball camps on the Centennial Arena dry floor allow participants to learn and play hockey, soccer, tennis, volleyball, and basketball.

Creative camps are popular with children being able to choose from art and Lego® Bricks Engineering camps. These camps challenge young minds but also ensure time for play and physical activity.

Overall, participation in summer day camps increased 42% to 1,585 participants compared to 2022.

<b>Program Category</b>	<b>2022 Registrations</b>	<b>2023 Registrations</b>
Summer Day Camps	1,116	1,585

### **Volunteer**

Recreation and Culture offers a Leaders In Training Program for youths aged 14-17 years old at the beginning of each summer. Twenty-one youth successfully completed the three-day Leaders in Training program and received the opportunity to volunteer at the city's Land'N'Sea camp. Youth developed critical skills, received valuable experience, and volunteered for over 300 hours over the course of the summer.

### **Registered Programs**

Summer is a popular season for outdoor programs such as tennis lessons, pickleball lessons, Pilates at the beach, and our senior excursions that utilize the city’s 22 passenger mini-bus. Seniors greatly enjoy going to locations and events that they may otherwise be unable to attend on their own. Popular excursions this past summer included the Chilliwack Sunflower Festival, Salt Spring Island Tour, Sea to Sky Gondola, Theatre Under the Stars and the Commercial Drive Culinary Adventure.

Overall, participation in registered summer programs increased 34% to 1,319 participants from 2022.

<b>Program Category</b>	<b>2022 Registrations</b>	<b>2023 Registrations</b>
Registered Programs	985	1,319

### **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Summer camp registrations increased significantly to record levels in 2023. Summer camp registrations totals for summer camps in 2023 were 1,585 compared to 1,116 in 2022. This represents an increase of 42% in registrations.

Registered program registrations increased significantly in 2023. Participation increased 34% to 1,319 participants compared to 2022.

<b>Program Category</b>	<b>2022 Registrations</b>	<b>2023 Registrations</b>
Summer Day Camps	1,116	1,585
Registered Programs	985	1,319
<b>Total</b>	<b>2,101</b>	<b>2,904</b>

### **ALIGNMENT WITH STRATEGIC PRIORITIES**

This report supports Council’s 2023-2026 Strategic Priorities of Community:

*We foster a livable city with connected residents enjoying distinctive places and activities.*

*4.B. Optimize the City’s digital volunteer management platform (Better Impact) to leverage the use of community volunteers where appropriate across the City, e.g. community policing, special events, adopt-a-street clean-up.*

This report supports Council’s 2023-2026 Strategic Priorities of Organization & Governance.

*We commit to continuous improvement, efficient service delivery, and fostering positive relationships with Semiahmoo First Nation and other key stakeholders.*

*2.A. Complete a Recreation Services Strategy to increase participation and revenue.*

### **OPTIONS / RISKS / ALTERNATIVES**

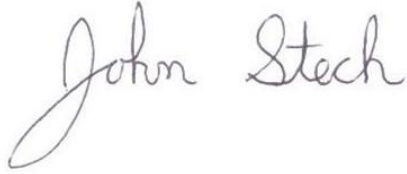
Staff receive risk management training and are required to hold first aid certification.

### **CONCLUSION**

The City’s summer camps provide children, youth and teens with a variety of benefits that include connecting with nature, learning new skills/activities and making new friends. Employment and volunteer opportunities give critical experience for local young people to

develop employment skills and contribute to their communities. New programs and activities were developed that increased year-over-year summer program participation by 38% and provided a much-needed service to White Rock families.

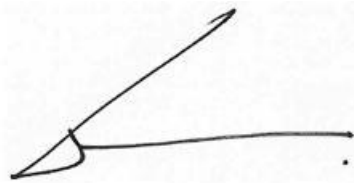
Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "John Stech".

John Stech  
Manager, Community Recreation

**Comments from the Chief Administrative Officer**

This report is provided as information for Council.

A handwritten signature in a stylized, blocky script that reads "Guillermo Ferrero".

Guillermo Ferrero  
Chief Administrative Officer