

Appendix F – Focus Group Notes

Group 1 – Richmond’s Public Outdoor Areas – Residents with a Chinese Background, <5 Years in Canada

(Only 1 Participant)

- Likes Richmond’s parks in general.
- Has only used that are easily accessed on the bus (e.g. not Nature Park).
- Prefers ones closest to home so she can walk to them with her young daughter.
- Enjoys the social aspect of park use.
- In China, the concept of parks is different – they are gardens – so it takes some time to understand how Canadians use terms like parks and public open space.
- Wanted to comment that our indoor pools are unsanitary and so, while she wants her daughter to learn to swim, she won’t use the indoor pool.

Group 2 – Richmond’s Recreational and Cultural Facilities – Residents with a Chinese Background, <5 Years in Canada

- Concept of public facilities is changing in China and new immigrants might have more experience with high quality public facilities, but we have had a hard time getting used to having such great facilities here, and it takes awhile to get used to using them.
- Minoru pool is far too crowded most of the time and therefore the problems of cleanliness get out of hand. Each person had stories of family or friends who “caught some ailment” from using the pool, so they don’t like to use it (most references to Minoru).

- Also, quite concerned about theft at the indoor pools. Each person had heard of someone who had something stolen in a Richmond pool, and that concerns them.
- Some have had problems with specific instructions at facilities which they don't understand. For example, putting coins in lockers to activate them. That may be why their stuff gets stolen.
- Several comments about fees too high for family uses of facilities and the confusion or inability to apply for financial hardship discounts.
- Many concerns about how transportation system in Richmond is not conducive to bicycles on roads.
- Would generally like more access to activities that are popular among Chinese people; specifically badminton and table tennis which fill up quickly and we can't get access.
- Difficulty with concept of arts related facilities. Haven't heard about and don't know about Arts Centre (but do know and use the Library). They thought this project was about recreation. So, why are we asking questions about private facilities like the Gateway Theatre? Don't use arts facilities primarily due to language.
- They all commented that the Library has Chinese language books written vertically and they can't read them. Need books written horizontally.
- Also, wanted more user information about books in library. How about a poster with user rated "best reads" so help us find good books.
- Need more gathering places indoors and outdoors; places for numbers of people to congregate.
- Don't use the Leisure Guide very much except for the few pages written in Chinese inside each one. Get their information instead from Chinese language broadcast media and newspapers.

Group 3 – Richmond's Recreational, Cultural, and Instructional Programs – Residents with a Chinese Background, <5 Years in Canada

- Much of the conversation and comments focused on the differences between facilities and programs in Richmond and those in the new residents' home countries. The key issues that were included:
- The availability of programs – not only type of programs but space in the programs.
- Many commented that they couldn't get their child into a program as there was a waiting list. Or they also said that when they were in a program it was sometimes difficult for them to get to the next level of the program because they couldn't find space to get in – they were already full.
- Many participants expressed the need to have systematic organized and progressive programs and courses so that their child could be registered in not only Level 1 but that that registration would secure them a spot all the way to the final Level. This was felt that it would ease the concern about completing one level and then not being able to progress because they could get level 2 before getting level 3 and so on. It would allow parents to register their children not in a course by course process but by a program basis which includes all course levels.
- Participants drew another comparison which related to the length of the courses. Many courses such as swimming were for 30 minutes, which seemed to limit the learning time and progress of their children as well as take far longer to complete a course or program. If instead of 12 30-minute swimming lessons they had 6 60-minute sessions the children would not only progress faster but it would also ease the amount of time parents would spend taking their children too and from the lessons. As well the savings in traffic, parking congestion, parking lot turnover, shower and change room use as well as lost facility time when they are switching courses has an impact on the environment, the efficiency of the facilities, and the time required by children and parents.
- Better timing seems to be required between when one course ends another begins as well as better scheduling between schools and public facilities would be helpful.
- Can the City have more sampler programs after school near where the kids go to school so they could try a number of different activities and then decide from there what programs they would like to take. This may be a good way to test the temperature in advance of selecting the final program schedule.

Group 4 – Public Outdoor Areas & Recreational and Cultural Facilities – Residents with a Chinese Background, >10 Years in Canada

- There needs to be more facilities or at least more time in the existing facilities for hockey, soccer and swimming pools.
- Many participants use the city website to get information. The website is very organized with sections for different neighbourhoods.
- On walking tours all information and signage was in English. Parks and Recreation dept can reach out to community groups to help with translation and getting information they need.
- Promote parks so that more people use them and therefore they will become safer. The Richmond Walk

Group 5 –Recreational and Cultural Facilities & Recreational, Cultural, and Instructional Programs – Residents with a Chinese Background, >10 Years in Canada

- The major concerns among these participants include:
 - Minoru Pool isn't as clean as it once was – it appears to have declined in cleanliness over the past few years
 - Minoru Pool is bad for parking – planning swim lessons with 15 minutes between them would alleviate the traffic and parking congestion.
- What if anything stops you from using parks, facilities or programs more often?
 - Poor or lack of parking
 - Water features in poor condition – they are dirty, not always working, water smells and as a result fewer people use it and more teens use it and it has spiralled downwards in condition and use.
 - If they had longer working hours – given the number of people who work shift work or late hours and still want to use public facilities
 - Access for low income families is limited since the forms used to apply for subsidy are very complicated for people especially those who are ESL.
 - Language issues – please train staff to be more patient and tolerant of people who aren't comfortable with the language. Maybe even have a hotline of volunteers or other staff who can assist speaking to residents.

- There is a lack of family and children counselling in Richmond – especially ones with an understanding of the language (Chinese) and the culture.
- General lack of advertising about facilities and programs – many facilities don't have enough information in Chinese language
- The key issues from this group are as follows:
 - Cleanliness is the most important thing
 - Chinese books in library for children to learn to read
 - Not enough public parking at library (Minoru)

Group 6 – PRCS needs and wants – Residents with a South Asian Background

- Concerned with general maintenance standards in park areas and the lack of response to their complaints.
- Also, somewhat concerned with the maintenance standards in some facilities where reports of broken equipment go unheeded.
- Specific concerns with cleanliness and thefts at the indoor pools.
- There is some effort to serve the larger Chinese populations in our community in their own language and with culturally relevant programming, but there is almost no effort to do any with our community. While we are smaller, we should get at least some service in our language and with some sensitivity to our cultural backgrounds.
- Examples of being culturally relevant include:
 - Provision of private change areas in pool dressing rooms to accommodate those in our culture that are not as used to nudity
 - Provision of tables in Community Centres that have adjustable height (used to have at Cambie Community Centre, but they were replaced with fixed height tables that are too high to be comfortable) for our elders that sit for hours socializing and playing cards
 - Opening fitness facilities earlier in the morning as many of us are already at work by 7AM
 - Providing more gathering places outdoors

- Providing more special events from our cultural background

Group 7 – PRCS needs and wants – Refugees

- This session was divided between two groups of refugees: 7 Arabic speaking women and 4 Spanish speaking women
- The Arabic women time living in Richmond ranged from 6 months to 4 years; all had young children. The main issues this group is concerned with includes:
 - Access to age appropriate Arabic books that they can use to teach their children how to read Arabic; this is a requirement within their culture and religion. Dual language educational based books would be best so they can use them with young children 0 to 2 years and 3 to 5 years. They were not able to bring any of these books with them and the cost to buy them from their home countries is very expensive.
 - Another large barrier is their need for transportation around Richmond. What was mentioned most was how nice it would be to have a shuttle bus that could take them to various facilities in the City.
 - The Spanish women discussed having more activities for babies in parks and that they and their children would be allowed to use gyms after school was out. They have asked to use school gyms but they would have to pay for their use.
 - The wait lists for swimming programs was mentioned by both the Spanish and Arabic speaking groups. There does seem to be some confusion around what ‘wait list’ means which leads to the question “How many people ESL residents and recent immigrants understand what is meant by wait list.”
- Both language groups expressed concern over accessing subsidy programs and how many people they need to see/talk to in order to get approved for the subsidy program. Many participants within the Refugee and other groups mentioned that the number of people they must talk too and the number of times they must reveal their financial records the more they are discouraged by the process.

Group 8 – PRCS needs and wants – People with a Disability

- Participants used a range of services including parks, trails, indoor spaces and a few programs (although not many).
- Awareness was reasonably high but they were much less aware of Gateway Theatre or the Arts Centre, and much less likely to use either.

- Cost was the biggest barrier to participation and they perceived the costs of the Gateway and the Arts Centre to be too high for them to use either.
- Participants felt that services and spaces (indoor and outdoor) were very accessible physically, and quite well dispersed so that they were generally close at hand. They liked the dispersed Community Centres and smaller park areas, coupled with the larger, more specialized city wide facilities and parks.
- They felt that indoor and outdoor spaces were not too congested, and that works well for people with mobility problems.
- They were concerned with dogs off leash where they were supposed to be on leash, insufficient parking close to amenities, and safety in parks (insufficient police patrols and lighting)
- They all had a storey to tell about menacing looking groups of young people in parks at night, but none had been personally attacked or hassled.
- They were concerned that provision of spaces wouldn't keep up with the growth, and were concerned about future congestion in the community and in the leisure spaces.
- A few had concerns about bus connections not well timed.
- The more they talked the more they came up with examples of how good leisure services were.

Group 9 – PRCS needs and wants – Youth (13-18 years old)

- All three were all very much involved in leisure services as participants or leaders.
- They had high levels of awareness and participation, in sports, informal activities and the arts. However, there was little exposure to skating.
- They used the internet to find out about leisure opportunities but not the City's website, which they said was too general and not user friendly. They are more likely to find out about opportunities from taking or texting with friends.

- They felt there was a gap in organized programs for mid-year teens. Lots for those 10 to 13 years and lots for over 18, but little in between.
- Identified a problem that programs were too general, and not focussed on their specific needs in terms of level of ability or interest. At that age, if a dance or art class was too general, they didn't get anything out of it.
- Mobility and weather were very likely to influence their level of activity and choices about what to do, but what their friends were doing was the primary driver.
- They really liked drop in opportunities at Community Centres and in gyms and in parks.
- While they were "into" fitness, they all chose private fitness studios. One reason was the gender separation.
- When asked what they wanted to do more of, examples included arts programs/courses, travel, risk taking activities, and "something that would make a difference".
- When asked about young people they knew that weren't involved in any leisure activities, they could only say that they were "lazy".

Group 10 – PRCS needs and wants – Older Adults (55-64 years old)

- Most of the Baby Boomers group have lived in Richmond for most of their lives and have seen considerable changes in the community. Some positive and some negative changes. There are mixed feelings on the densification of the urban core and the resulting loss of green space. Overall they feel positive about the direction that the community and the City is going especially in terms of public facilities.
- Their comments on the availability and quality of the parks, facilities and programs offered by PRCS are reflective of the core comments made by all focus group participants.
- They appreciate the depth and breadth of parks, facilities and programs available to them. In many cases they want more but understand there are limitations in terms of money to build and run everything.

- The key challenges this group and others commented on included:
 - Cleanliness of parks and pools and how some dirtiness and disrepair can lead to a further deterioration of the space and therefore use by the main stream residents.
 - Availability of programs – swimming times, skating time, badminton, table tennis: all related to more space and times available either with current facilities or through new facilities.
 - Capacity of all public buildings – many participants noted that they would like to see all public facilities including schools used for as many activities as possible – participants don't always see the solution to space challenges as building more buildings but doing more with what the City has available to it.
 - Safety of some parks and trails due to lighting, remoteness, equipment repair/condition (most notably the Minoru Swimming Pool).
 - Confusion over different operating and registration policies between the community centres – many participants don't realize that community centres are run independently by local organizations and are often confused by why there often seems a disconnect between centres.
 - Some commented that there are still some disconnects between cultures and that a better level of understanding and acceptance of each other is desired on both sides – one solution suggested was a simple program of all cultures sharing information on what's most important to them and what's behind some of their most misunderstood traditions so that there is greater understanding and therefore acceptance.

- With regards to the Leisure Guide this group uses it extensively both in paper and online. They did have some specific suggestions regarding the publication:
 - Add the URL on the cover and throughout to entice more people to access the information online.
 - Have more languages available online.
 - Have an Easy Reader version of the guide available either online or in print form with detailed guide online.
 - Maybe have specific sections that can be easily pulled out or produced/photocopied for handout.
 - Having an expanded version of the Leisure Guide that support workers throughout all other government agencies and non-profits can use/access to get information for their clients.
 - Organize the Leisure Guide by community centre and cross reference by activity as most participants seem to look for what's available in their own neighbourhood first and then go to other locations if the program they want is not available.

- Add space for all community activities and groups to advertise so that it truly is a complete guide of everything to do and see in Richmond as the purpose of the City and PRCS is to ensure that there is access to as many activities and opportunities as possible. If there are some things better suited to private groups or non-profits to provide then why not promote those groups and those options to all Richmond residents.

Group 11 – PRCS needs and wants – Seniors (74 years and older)

- The participants in this group were all quite active in a variety of programs at the Minoru Seniors Centre. The key issue that was raised over and over by the participants was the need for more space due to the popularity of the facility. Though many commented that the existing space could be utilized more effectively as the centre has developed over the years and when new things get added they don't always get placed in the best spot.
- In terms of staff the participants were very pleased with the level of service and attention they receive from staff and it seems that most see the staff as friends. There are some challenges with staff in terms of communication amongst themselves and with other facilities. And there may be times when miscommunication occurs either because much is done by word of mouth or because some staff may not take the time to clearly understand and answer very pointed questions by patrons.
- The variety of activities is impressive and it seems that the participants don't really want for much other than more of the same. Most participants that were involved in specific activities such as wood working commented that their program and space is so full that they need more space to accommodate everyone.
- There were some comments regarding the fairness at which some patrons treat the rules and possibly other patrons. There may be from time to time, in keeping with most groups of people, elements that don't always play by the rules and spend too much time playing a game or using certain areas. It appears to be more of a balance of too many and too few rules where most play by them and a handful sometimes push them.
- In terms of accessing the facility several seniors who drive indicated that the parking can be problematic at times. While those who must rely on other forms of transportation don't seem to have problems getting to the centre but know of others who do. They wish transportation could be improved for people living outside the core.

- Another point that was raised by a few members of the group was that some of their friends are leery about coming to a place called a seniors centre. This is more prevalent with people in their 50's and 60's as they see the facility being for old people and as one participant stated "a place to go and sit around". The seniors of today are not the seniors of yesterday; they are much more active and involved and should be approached as such. It may be wise to address this with some outreach to 55+ers supported by video clips of all the types of activities. And possibly the name needs to be addressed as the 'Boomers' may not consider themselves 'Seniors' ever.

Group 12 – Barriers to Increased Use, Public Outdoor Areas

- Participants were park and trail users and were quite satisfied overall with the number, quality and location of such facilities.
- They liked the fact that Richmond had such a good parks system, its ease of access to the waterfront, the cost of living in Richmond (which they perceived was lower than downtown Vancouver) and the relatively low levels of congestion.
- They really liked Minoru Park and felt it was an undervalued downtown amenity.
- However, they were concerned with increasing congestion and the fact that growth appeared to be outpacing the increased provision of public open spaces.
- While they were more likely to use parks close to them, they also appeared to be willing to travel distances to parks for specific purposes (e.g. walking their dog in an off leash park, or using the ocean front trail system).
- They were concerned about paying for parking to use Minoru Park if using the parking lot close to the Gateway Theatre.
- They wanted more dog off-leash areas in parks.
- They also wanted more lighting of trails for night use, wider trails as use increases, and larger playgrounds with lots in each one.

Group 13 – Barriers to Increased Use, Recreational and Cultural Facilities

- People liked the ease of access to everything in Richmond. They also liked the high quality of leisure facilities that they perceived they got in this City.
- They like the combination of dispersed and centralized facilities. With respect to the centralized, they liked the seniors facilities close to the Minoru campus of spaces and the Caring Place, and the Gareth Wellness Centre so close by.
- They liked the proximity to water, the trail systems along the water.
- They didn't like the growing congestion, and "what is being done to No. 3 Rd".
- They felt that pools were becoming too congested and we needed a lot more pool capacity. They don't like the chlorine at the pool and how dirty Watermania has become.
- With respect to arenas, they feel they are too congested and assigned too much to sport groups. What is needed is more informal, unstructured ice time for the general public.
- Participants were very supportive of the notion of co-location of facilities as in the Minoru model with a number of different facilities on one site maximizing use and better meeting needs.
- They didn't know much about arts facilities in general, and the Arts Centre in particular, and were much less likely to use them. They had the perception that the costs of Gateway Theatre were high.
- They used more than one Community Centre, depending on need, and over time.
- While they liked the Leisure Guide, they had some problems with it. They felt that the Leisure Guide didn't do justice to the arts facilities in Richmond, and that there was almost too much in it.

Group 14 – Barriers to Increased Use, Recreational, Cultural, and Instructional Programs

- Like much about what is available. Richmond has good programs and facilities. In fact, it is a leader in the Lower Mainland in many things including sports fields, Community Centres, parks and trails. Some positive references to friendly staff in Richmond.
- They like the dispersed facilities (i.e. Community Centres) combined with the centralized ones (i.e. more specialized ones).
- Some positive references also to heritage sites and services and interpretive signage. And for the chapel, which should be better advertised.
- Don't like the cleanliness of pools. Comments about using pools elsewhere because ours are too dirty.
- Have used arts facilities in Vancouver and elsewhere, but don't use Gateway nor the Arts Centre (what is it? Where is it?) – can't give a reason why but with further probing, nothing at Gateway interests me, and I believe it costs too much. Also, some concerns about the fact you have to pay to park there.
- Participants use the closest Community Centre (s) but also use others for a specialized program. They have examples of inconsistent policies which unfairly apply to Community Centres further away (my taxes pay for them too, why should I not get same priority there as more local residents).
- They get their information from the internet (but not City's website which is too -hard to find anything on), read-o-graphs, newspapers, but not the Leisure Guide.
- Would like more heritage services (e.g. free heritage walks, interpretive signage)
- While they were concerned about the cost of parking ("make sure we continue to provide free parking - don't charge for parking at public sites"), overall, cost did not seem to be a barrier to participation.

Group 15 – Parks and Trails Usage

- There were a number of parks and activities mentioned by the participants regarding their use of parks and trails such as:

- Walking dogs – Gary Point Park – participants expressed the need for more leash free areas
 - Rollerblading
 - Biking
 - Walking
 - Running
- Participants were varied with the parks they used based on the use they were going for. The local parks were most convenient but of course don't have all the amenities the larger ones do.
 - Some of the challenges participants see with parks include:
 - Need a better more complete system of paths.
 - More bike lanes on streets would be really helpful – many participants expressed safety concerns about riding on some roads (they mentioned the school teacher who was struck and killed).
 - Goose dropping in Minoru Park.
 - Lighting seems limited in some of the neighbourhood parks.
 - Accessibility and mobility throughout the parks hasn't been achieved yet.
 - The parks, especially larger parks, need bathroom facilities that are clean and have consistent times when they are open so that people know or can find out in advance before they use the park whether it's available.
 - The main reason why it seems people don't use the trail systems more often is due to the lack of facilities.
 - In assisting to reduce the environmental impact of urban growth the participants are very much in favour of Richmond not only preserving much of the tree growth they have but also adding trees with more plantings. And that more mixed plantings should be done with native plants instead of annuals or all grass. There was concern expressed that too much pesticide was still being used along main roads near and in the urban core and that simple solutions such as blow torching the unwanted plants wasn't being used or concerned.

- As a side discuss there were some people in attendance from groups who expressed concern about the long and involved grant writing process the societies must go through in order to get funds. There was a feeling that this process could be streamlined to reduce the amount of time required (and wasted) in completing the 30 page grant applications.

Group 16 – High Frequency Users and Information Sources

- Most participants in this group had a number of sources of information for their multi activities/uses of City of Richmond parks and recreation facilities and programs, including but not limited to:
 - Newspaper – specifically in the Richmond Review where the schedule for certain events gets posted
 - Word of Mouth
 - Other Parents of school aged children
 - Teachers
 - Neighbours
 - The Leisure Guide
 - Sometimes they heard about different activities on the radio
- Overall participants felt that they learn more information from word of mouth than from any advertising. The point to make hear is how many people passing along information from programs and facilities have gained that knowledge originally through the Leisure Guide instead of other sources such as advertising or word of mouth. One suggestion, after some discussion around the use of the website, is for the City to promote the website address on the cover of the Leisure Guide so a greater number of people begin relying on the website for information.

Group 17 – Cultural Facilities – Residents with a Chinese Background

- Participants liked Richmond's compact size and resultant ease of access to everything and the fact that there were so many Chinese people here.
- They disliked things related to traffic including insufficient parking, pedestrian/car conflicts, and lack of bridges. They also were concerned about personal safety in their homes.

- They use many arts and cultural services and facilities in the Lower Mainland.
- However, while they have all used Gateway Theatre at least once, they did not tend to use the Gateway generally (nothing of interest there). Had to probe to determine that they even knew it existed. Once probed they talked more about facility and could identify reasons for not tending to use it.
- One reason for not using Gateway is the cost of parking there, but they also said it was too small for shows that come from China, and that the sound system there wasn't very good.
- They have not used the Arts Centre (What is it? Where is it?) but have used the Library.
- They are attracted to culturally relevant programs and events like Chinese Opera. They were willing to go wherever such programs or events might be held in the Lower Mainland.
- To get them to use the Arts Centre, they suggested much better signage (so we know it exists) and then culturally sensitive programming for families. Should consider Chinese festivals at the Arts Centre, and activities that feature Chinese foods brought by older Chinese people.
- When asked what would be required to entice them to visit an art gallery, their answers all had to do with exhibit of historic artefacts (e.g. antique watches or furniture) rather than art. They seemed to perceive an art gallery as a museum. Wonder if there was a problem in translation?
- They don't use the Leisure Guide, and wouldn't unless it was translated.
- They suggested that Richmond staff and instructors at programs wear name badges which list which language they speak, and should be encouraged to use languages other than English with patrons, instead of pretending they can't speak another language.
- The participants also indicated that more, safe bicycle lanes were important to them, as well as more parking, larger facilities to reduce congestion and accommodate significant growth of the community.

- They also indicated that more could be done to respond to the needs of Richmond citizens with Chinese backgrounds and in languages other than English.

Group 18 – Cultural Facilities

- While most participants of this focus group were somewhat familiar with the performing arts community in Richmond they felt that the community needs to attain a higher profile within Richmond. One such example is the Art Gallery that does not have a very strong presence in the library entrance. All participants commented that it needs additional signage and a better entrance to highlight that it is there. The Art Gallery doesn't seem friendly or welcoming at all – it is sometimes hard to tell if it is open to the public or open at all.

Group 19 – Vancouver Coastal Health Staff

- Participants often refer their clients into many PRCS programs such as walking, swimming, and community centres. The programs seem very integrated and those in the know – know everything they need to about the programs. Often there is new staff and programs that are started and those staff are uncertain how to tap into the programs. In order to ensure everyone that requires to tap into the programs and resources know about them an annual information meeting would help especially if it had a tradeshow component and summary document or PowerPoint show.
- The staff has had very positive experiences with PRCS programs and staff. They have no complaints about dealing directly with PCRS staff but often their clients are confused by PCRS registration and programs. The primary barriers for their clients accessing PRCS services include financial, transportation, knowledge (a more easily understood version of the Leisure Guide – simple language clearer design), space within some programs and the inconsistency of process caused by independently operated community centres.
- The Healthy Heart participants have really gotten a lot of use out of the walk program. The pamphlets are great and the walks are wonderful with or without having walk leads though having the leaders is very important.
- Their clients would be able to get more use out of parks and trail systems if there were more outdoor play areas. There are so few outdoor swimming pools available and there is not a lot of cooling down places to go to.

- The Leisure Guide may be creating a barrier to parks, facilities and program use due to its complexity of layout and language. Creating an easy reader version would ease the barrier. One such group that finds the Leisure Guide difficult is lower income clients. One thing that would help with these clients is if the Leisure Guide was presented by community centres not activities as their access to transportation is limited.
- Simplifying and centralizing an annual application for subsidy will make it much easier and more comfortable for low income residents to access PRCS services. Many participants expressed concern over clients needed to jump through multiple hoops and share their financial information with many people before getting approved. Participants discussed how many of their clients fell just above the subsidy cut-off and were not able to access facilities as a result.
- Participants openly discussed whether or not the non-centralized community centre registration process actually creates multiple applications.
- Given that many of the lowest income families live in the urban core it was felt that better transportation maybe required in order for them to access public facilities. They indicted that families with small children cannot easily cross multiple lanes of very busy traffic to get to facilities. Either more effective transportation or wider more invited sidewalks would be helpful. There has been a sharp increase in the number of daycares popping up along the main routes but these locations offer very little outdoor space for the children to play. To address this it was felt by the participants that more park space needs to be added (as part of new buildings) when developers are give permission to build higher density developments. These outdoor spaces can take the form of rooftop spaces or ground level gardens. Many clients end up going to malls with their children as a safe place to go to get out of the house and as a place that their kids can play.
- Participants indicted that they used to use community centre space a lot more years ago but now the space is so limited at them that they don't have the ability to use them and do the outreach they want to for all Richmond residents. This includes both group and one-on-one space. As a result of these space restrictions there are no health related programs for youth.
- Participants discussed how many more families are having grandparents take care of grandchildren and as a result there are fewer options for both groups to participate in activities – whether fitness or fun. Having a more integrated offering of services would help this – coordinate seniors exercise/activities with exercise/activities for young children so that it draws both groups in, gives them a break from each other but also allows them to maintain outside connections. Looking outside the box to find places and times for people to connect and having more seating for parents and “grandparents” to connect with each other

while watching their children play at the playground was suggested. Participants mentioned how good some programs are at connecting people; connections that continue far past the organized program such as with Walk Richmond. They also expressed interest in seeing more programs that had a real “connections component” that encourages participants to continue connecting. Incorporating gathering places into future parks and spaces would further encourage these connections.

- Of course the participants also discussed the fact that many recent immigrants don’t understand what the word “play” means. They don’t have a definition for it nor do they understand the value it provides to children. And while all community centres have great programs they sometimes need to promote them differently as they come and “play” approach doesn’t work with all residents.
- The number of special needs children seems to be growing and as a result there is a greater reliance on the use of volunteers and it is felt may be too much reliance on volunteers.
- Youth need more after school space for youth related activities. This conversation spun off to a discussion regarding that instead of building more facilities let’s as a community figure out how to utilize all current capacity first as we have a lot of public space that isn’t utilized 100% or the time or even 50% of the time. And participants commented that the City should ensure that current and future public facilities are designed to allow for multi-purpose uses.

Group 20 – Vancouver Coastal Health Staff – Richmond Hospital

Rehabilitation Program

- The Rehab program treats between 250 and 300 patients per year. The main challenge the program faces is that the release of patients from their program when the patient doesn’t have the connection or support to continue getting the regular exercise that they require as a result of their injury or illness. One such solution that was mentioned was the Bridging Programs on the North Shore and in Burnaby.
- They try to keep the patients who don’t have that connection to ongoing activities in their program as long as they can because they know that if they don’t help them get the ongoing support that the patient will end up back in their program. The longer patients stay in the rehab program the more expensive it is to all taxpayers. It is a much more efficient use of funds if a bridging program can be structured so that patients don’t fall through cracks.

- The Rehab Program would be happy to work with PRCS to create pre-operation training programs and post-operation post rehab program training/exercise. If a program could somehow kick started PRCS would have a steady flow of new participants coming into the program giving the Rehab Programs 250 to 300 patients per year outflow.
- There is a need to create more adaptive fitness programs for rehab patients and older residents in general. These programs are also ideal for stroke, MS and Parkinson's patients. The Stroke Recovery Association sometimes has funding for these types of programs.
- Regardless of the program approach it is very important for rehab patients and for all residents to have access to both social and physical activity. The costs associated with these programs are far less than the continued patient care within health care.
- The continuity of staff at PRCS and in certain positions would facilitate better bridges being built between Richmond Hospital and PRCS. There was one example of a program that was initiated by the hospital and was near launch but then placed on the back burner when the staff member was switched out.
- One non-PRCS issue is that of Hospital and VCH staff not being able to get a parking pass that allows them to park longer in short term public spots. Given the increased scarcity of parking in the urban core health staff must spend value time driving around to find parking spots when they are on strict timelines to administer medication at specific times to patients. Having public parking passes would ease their schedules and increase the number of patients they could each manage to see in a day.

Mental Health

- There are two sides to the Mental Health Program one is publicly funded while the other is a non-profit. They share the same offices and work hand in hand to support many clients. As a result of their partnering they are open to and actively look for partnering opportunities to extend and boost the impact of their work in Richmond. One such partnership was a program with Garrett Wellness. Even though it was a one off program was very good for their clients and they would like to run the program again, more frequently.
- They use a transition process that takes clients from a focused recovery to an activity based recovery that is sustainable. As a result of this approach Mental Health is constantly looking to tap into and support programs that will assist their clients. As a

side note for this active search – many staff across VCH and Richmond Hospital are very busy managing their own projects and often either miss information on new programs or aren't even aware of new program launches. One such solution to this would be a non-public discussion board where program information, requests for input, offers of assistance etc could be posted between all public organizations. If a group was looking at creating a specific program and wanted to see what similar programs existing in the community or what other organizations maybe interested in participating in the programs they could tap into this resource. Volunteer Richmond does collate a directory of programs and resources available but it may add to the success of programs if sponsoring organizations can access information during program development and funding stages.

- Often for Mental Health the biggest need is access to space to run programs. And if community centres are interested Mental Health can sometimes offer training programs for community centre staff to manage programs. They are currently bringing in personal trainers and educating them on how best to offer their programs to Mental Health clients.
- Some other issues important to Mental Health representatives include:
 - Facilitation of groups so they can work together – Mental Health is very open to supporting groups working together to build better solutions.
 - There is a need to have a drop in centre for their clients and other people in Richmond.
 - Theo Richmond doesn't currently have any recreation or activity related programs though Theo Vancouver has a very good one but Richmond residents can't access it.
 - Mental Health is working to share ideas and resources as much as they can and is organizing monthly meetings through a Rehab, Recovery and Housing Committee.

Geriatrics Transition Nurses

- All people entering the Richmond Hospital that are 70 and over in age are seen by a Geriatrics Transition Nurse. Richmond Hospital recognizes that these residents may require additional support and connections within the community either for a full recovery or for continued healthy living.
- The biggest issue facing their clients is access to transportation so that they can get around the community. In order to resolve this issue, in part, the program coordinators have tapped into Volunteer Richmond to have drivers who can utilize corporate services. They would however like to tap into other shuttles available in the community such as those at the Auto Mall and BC Lottery Corp.

- They participated in the Decreasing Barriers – Increasing Wellness Program which they felt was a wonderful program. And related to transportation costs, which was a big barrier to start, it turned out that the transportation cost was only 4% of the overall program budget.
- Given these nurses need to have a real solid understanding of all resources available in the community the idea of having a resource book for community based support people was discussed. Instead of using the Leisure Guide which has the program information a resource book would have contact information for all programs and possibly even have preformatted easy reading material that nurses and others using the book could photocopy and hand out to clients.