

Lower Mainland – Vancouver



To form partnerships and develop and promote the program, Sutherland and Silva Tenenbein (of Peripheral Visionaries consulting organization) went into the community and built a rapport with Aboriginal agencies, schools, children and parents.



“What we’ve done as Active Communities Vancouver is we’ve really put forward our goal as a city to be 20% more active by 2010,” McKenzie said. “We put the word out and invited all interested organizations to join with us if that goal works within their mandate.”

“There is a great overlap between the Active Communities Initiative goals and what other organizations are trying to do,” he added. “So Helping Spirit Lodge Society was more than happy to work with us and help develop the program. Working closely with recognized and respected organizations in that community to enable us to engage the people of that community was really important. Between Helping Spirit Lodge, which had the entrée into the community, and the Aboriginal workers through the school, we were able to really reach out to the children, and then through the children to the parents.”

The Red Fox program has a website resource for families (www.ActiveOutreachActiveLiving.com). Next, to reach out to multicultural communities, the passport booklet (which Sutherland and Tenenbein designed) will be translated into two different languages, likely Chinese and Hindi.

Vancouver Info

Population: 583,267 (BC Stats 2005)

- Host City of the 2010 Olympic and Paralympic Winter Games
- 2006 Ipsos-Reid survey found 70% of Vancouver’s population is active for more than 30 minutes, 3 or more times a week
- Ranked third in livability in Mercer Human Resource Consulting’s 2007 Worldwide Quality of Living Survey
- City-wide network of bikeways and greenways
- Home to Coast Salish First Nations (Squamish, Musqueam and Tsleil-Waututh)
- 76 schools registered with Action Schools! BC in SD#39

(Sources: www.vancouver.ca, Active Communities Vancouver Strategic Plan)



Lower Mainland – Surrey

Surrey’s Go for 20 program partners with pillars of the community

February 2008



The City of Surrey and its partner organizations continue reaching out to communities within the city – from multicultural groups to schools – to develop the Go for 20 Active City initiative.

The Active City committee’s plan for 1999-2010 zeroes in on five pillars for its strategy: awareness and education; change in behaviour to increase physical activity; infrastructure/supportive environments; new and expanding partnerships; and benchmarking and measuring changes in physical activity.

“Right from the get go, community engagement and partnerships has been one of the key pillars of our Active City initiative,” said Lori Bowie, the City Parks, Recreation and Culture Manager for Newton and Active City. “A lot of the partners that we work closely with have initiatives that also support increased physical activity.”

The Go for 20 campaign focuses on increasing physical activity by 20% by 2010. By partnering with Sikh temples to offer recreation programs in Punjabi, the committee introduced activities to seniors, including new immigrants. Now, those seniors come together on a bus to use the City’s recreation facilities.



Surrey Highlights

- Developed an Active City plan for 1999-2010
- Community partners: School District 36, SportFit, Canadian Cancer Society, South Fraser Health Region, Guildford Town Centre, Harvest Box, Vancouver Area Cycling Coalition, BC Housing, Canadian Tire, Surrey RCMP, Surrey YMCA, Surrey Fire Fighters Charitable Foundation, Surrey Memorial Hospital, Heart & Stroke Foundation, Surrey Off-road Cycling Enthusiasts, SPCA, Red FM, Fort Langley Canoe Club
- Go for 20 website (www.gofor20.surrey.ca) and Go for 20 Challenge activity tracker website (www.healthycommunity.ca/Surrey)
- Display booth at community special events
- Go for 20 Reward Card program at recreation facilities
- Leisure Access Subsidy program for lower income access to facilities
- Move for Health day events on May 10
- Annual active living month fair in October
- Annual Ipsos Reid survey of physical activity
- SportFit (2010 Legacies Now program) testing in schools
- Running an I’m Game program to engage kids in sport and build self-esteem (with a \$25,000 Bell Community Sport Fund grant)
- Promotes Bike to Work Week
- Linking with Chill program offering snowboarding to at-risk youth
- 91 schools registered with Action Schools! BC in School District 36

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“We’ve been able to break down some of the barriers by really trying to reach groups that weren’t accessing our recreation services at all and trying to figure out how they wanted to be more active, and what we could do to facilitate that,” Bowie said.

A partner South Asian radio station, Red FM, has aired talk shows on fitness and physical activity, and listeners can call in with questions. The Active City committee also got the word out on the benefits of activity through its presence at the City’s Vaisakhi celebration parade.

At the parade and other community events, such as the Surrey Children’s Festival and Canada Day celebrations, the interactive Go for 20 booth engages passers-by in activities. For example, kids could do obstacle courses or SportFit testing, and adults could do a boot camp or line dancing.



The committee’s partnership with School District 36 has been a key element in its success with reaching children and youth. Along with many other programs it brings into the schools, Go for 20 hosts Move for Health Day events on May 10, offering activities and leadership opportunities for students.

“The response to some of the programs we’ve done with the schools has been huge,” Bowie said.

Throughout the year, activities such as dragon boating have also had positive results with the students, thanks to a partnership with the Fort Langley Canoe Club.

“[The parents] are so excited about it for the kids to come back and have such positive stories to tell about what they were doing and how they were engaged in it physically.”

Following the students’ outing, the teachers got together to go out in the boats on a professional development day.

“We’re trying to provide Surrey residents with opportunities that you sometimes wouldn’t think of having right in Surrey.”

To keep individuals motivated, Go for 20 has a website within the City’s website (www.gofor20.surrey.ca). The site includes tips and ideas for getting started; education on the health benefits of physical activity; programs and events offered; and resources and tools on fitness. The City has also launched an activity tracker site through Corehealth Technologies for its Go for 20 Challenge (www.healthycommunity.ca/Surrey).

Back in 1999, the City started up the committee to promote active living. To liaise with its community partners, the committee has formed subgroups depending on the event or activity, like the cycling subgroup which connects with bike shops and cycling organizations.

Bowie has been leading the committee for the past four years, bringing her enthusiasm and passion to the program. She credits the commitment of the dozen committee members for keeping it going strong.



“People from the audience can join in and get a little bit of instruction and just have fun trying a few minutes of something,” she explained. *“We’re trying to provide an experience as opposed to just information.”*

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“They’re already really busy with their ongoing responsibilities so the fact that they commit to the Active City initiative on top of that and the level of commitment is pretty impressive,” she said. *“It’s a passion of a lot of the people on that committee; they love what they do. They get invested in special events and the different promotions 110% so that’s a lot of what makes it work. And that fosters that spirit amongst the whole group.”*

As well, the committee’s work has support and interest from senior managers in the recreation department and mayor and council.

“I think ActNow [BC] and Active Communities has really helped raise awareness about [physical activity programs] in general,” Bowie said. *“I think more people in terms of council and our higher level management are aware of what’s happening and what’s important and that there is provincial support to try to continue these programs.”*

In 2005, the City of Surrey registered as an Active Community with the BC Recreation and Parks Association after council took the provincial government challenge to increase activity levels by 20% by 2010. Recreation program statistics show a 5% increase in participation numbers at the City’s recreation centres for both the years 2006 and 2007. The Active City committee plans to maintain or exceed that increase to reach its target for 2010 and beyond.

“As far as our activity initiatives, I think they’ll continue to expand,” Bowie said. *“When you’re talking to a city of 400,000 people, the task is never complete. There are always ways to build and improve and be more creative and be more innovative. And to engage more members of the community to try to meet specific needs of groups that perhaps are not aware of it yet.”*



Surrey Info

Population: 393,137 (BC Stats 2005)

- Second largest city in BC
- 2008 Cultural Capital of Canada in the over 125,000 population category
- Six communities within Surrey: Whalley, Guildford, Fleetwood, Newton, Cloverdale, South Surrey
- 259 athletic fields and 6 artificial turf fields
- 1 Kabaddi field, 2 cricket pitches, 2 running tracks
- Develops and maintains over 2,491 hectares (6,155 acres) of parkland
- Maintains 349 km. of trails and paths in parks
- 7 sheets of ice, 4 indoor pools, 8 outdoor pools, 7 recreation centres, 5 youth parks
- 8th sheet of ice under construction for fall 2008 completion – will be the 2nd sledge hockey-accessible sheet of ice in Surrey
- Bike routes, trails & pathways
- 3 seniors centres, 3 youth centres

(Sources: www.surrey.ca, Surrey Parks, Recreation & Culture)