



Subject: VIBE Youth Space – Communities Building Youth Futures Program

Report Number: RCP 24-036

Department: Recreation, Culture and Parks Department

Submitted by: Andrea Greenway, Acting Director of Recreation, Culture & Parks

Meeting Type: Council Meeting

Meeting Date: Monday, September 9, 2024

RECOMMENDATION

- A. THAT report RCP 24-000 titled “VIBE Youth Space – Communities Building Youth Futures Program” be received as information; and
- B. THAT Council approved the Town of Tillsonburg recreation department assuming responsibility for the VIBE Youth Space at no cost to participants; and
- C. THAT the program costs for the VIBE Youth Space be included in the 2025 budget

BACKGROUND

Communities Building Youth Futures (CBYF) Oxford County is a youth-led community driven initiative with a mission of improving high school graduation rates and youth outcomes in Oxford County. Through a process of community engagement to determine needs a neutral youth social space in a rural community was identified as a key activity to increase sense of belonging in the community, improve protective factors, and decrease risk of falling off track to graduate.

The Town of Tillsonburg participated as a partner in the pilot project of creating a youth space in Tillsonburg. The Tillsonburg Library provided the space for the program and Town recreation staff provided the programming. The Library donated the space and the Town was reimbursed by CBYF for all wages associated with programming the youth social space. All other costs associated with the social space (i.e., equipment, food, transportation costs, etc.) were funded by CBYF, incurring no additional costs for the Town of Tillsonburg.

All promotion, logistics planning, evaluation, and any other work associated with the social space outside of the recreation aspects were completed by the CBYF team of youth volunteers, and staff. CBYF staff completed the evaluation of the Social Space and reported back to Tillsonburg Town Council at the May 27, 2024 council meeting.

CBYF staff also presented to the Youth Advisory Council at their April 2, 2024 meeting and the committee supported the Town continuing to support this program. The Youth Advisory Council has expressed that youth in the Town need more spaces to gather,

other than schools. They noted that there is a large emphasis on sports for youth but not so much on other forms of recreation and gathering spaces. Communities Building Youth Futures provides a safe space for youth that is barrier free and accessible. Food and drinks, hygiene supplies and resources are available for youth to access. The Youth Advisory Council supported these initiatives and would like to see more available in the Town to further support youth. The following resolution was passed:

Resolution # 3

Moved By: Sorraya Buchanan-St. Gelais

Seconded By: Naima Sandoval

THAT the Youth Advisory Council are in full support of the social space for the Communities Building Youth Futures - Oxford County in Tillsonburg.

AND THAT the Youth Advisory Council strongly recommends to Council to further support the Communities Building Youth Futures to provide space for youth in the Town.

Carried

This recommendation was brought forward to Council at the May 13, 2024 meeting and Council supported through the following resolution:

Resolution # 2024-218

Moved By: Councillor Spencer

Seconded By: Councillor Luciani

A. THAT report titled Youth Advisory Council Recommendation – Support Communities Building Youth Futures be received as information; and

B. THAT Council approve the recommendation of the Youth Advisory Council as follows:

THAT the Youth Advisory Council recommend that Council further support the Communities Building Youth Futures to provide space for youth in the Town.

Carried

DISCUSSION

The youth social space, VIBE, was successful in accomplishing its goal of reducing risk factors for youth attending the program. The program had a positive impact on physical

health, mental health, support from peers and adults, having a better outlook on life and feeling positive about the future.

Given the success of the pilot project and the impact on youth, staff recommend that the youth social space continues to be offered as a Town program at no cost to participants. The recreation department has found the target age for this program (15-19) a difficult demographic to engage in programming and this program allows for a space where youth can help determine the programs that they would like to participate in. The final Parks and Recreation Master Plan includes a recommendation that the Town explores the development of a youth leisure space. The Oxford County Library – Tillsonburg Branch would continue to provide free space for hosting the program. The Town's recreation department has successfully partnered with the library in the past and the library is a neutral space that youth have appreciated.

CONSULTATION

Oxford County Library – Tillsonburg branch, Communities Building Youth Futures staff, Tillsonburg Youth Advisory Committee, Supervisor of Recreation Programs.

FINANCIAL IMPACT/FUNDING SOURCE

The VIBE social space operates at no cost to participants. Town staff would run the program and wages are accounted for in the 2024 budget. Staff time for the program would be approximately 4 hours a week which would be \$128 in wages per week that the program runs. For 2024, the program would run from September 26 – December 19 for a total cost of \$1664 in staff wages. Program supplies will not be required for 2024 as there are supplies provided to the Town as part of the transition that will last until the end of the year.

Program costs will be included in the 2025 budget as follows:

Staff wages*: \$4480 (21 weeks January – June, 14 weeks September – December)

Program supplies: \$1200

Total 2025 cost to support the program: \$5680

*Note that the program will be run by the Full-Time Recreation Facilitator and wages are already accounted for in the 2025 Full-Time recreation staff budget. There will be no additional part-time wages added to support this program.

CORPORATE GOALS

How does this report support the corporate goals identified in the Community Strategic Plan?

- Lifestyle and amenities
- Customer service, communication and engagement
- Business attraction, retention and expansion
- Community growth
- Connectivity and transportation
- Not Applicable

Does this report relate to a specific strategic direction or project identified in the Community Strategic Plan? Please indicate section number and/or any priority projects identified in the plan.

Goal – Within the community Tillsonburg will strive to offer all residents the amenities, services and attractions they require to enjoy balanced lifestyles.

Strategic Direction – Maintain and enhance programs and facilities to support an active, engaged youth population; Expand community partnerships in the delivery of programs and amenities.

Priority Project – N/A

ATTACHMENTS

CS 24-060 – Youth Advisory Council Recommendation re: Support Communities Building Youth Futures