



Community and Seniors Centres Annual Report January - December 2014

Centre: Cook Street Village Activity Centre

Address: 1-380 Cook Street

Operating Association/Society: Cook Street Village Activity Centre Society (New Horizons)

Society Registration Number: 13946

Registered Charitable Tax Number (if applicable): 10737 1445 RR0001

Month of Annual General Meeting: February

Days of operation per year: approx. 300 (closed Sundays, all statutory holidays, and a few days between Christmas and New Years)

Total number of employees: FT 1 PT 5 Instructors 21

Programs Quantitative Analysis

Recreation Programs	# Programs Offered		# Unique visits
	Registered	Drop-in	(# of programs x # people attending)
Children			
Youth			
Adult			
Senior	3	21	(29,010 people attending) 609,210
Family			
Other			
Total:	3	21	609,210

	# spaces offered	# spaces filled
Non licensed Childcare		
Licensed Childcare		
Total:	0	0



Services Quantitative Analysis

Services	# Offered	# People Served
Special Events (list) (add more lines as necessary)		
Martin Luther King Jr. Day	1	10
Robbie Burns Day	1	86
Chinese New Year and Open House	1	Approx. 100
Valentine's Day	1	58
St. Patrick's Day	1	48
Spring Fling Tea Party	1	20
Easter	1	49
Volunteer Recognition	2	83
Mother's Day	1	26
The British Are Coming	1	44
Father's Day	1	23
Hawaiian Luau	1	39
Grandparent's Day	1	31
Welcome Back – Middle East Feast	1	39
Fall/Lumberjack Lunch	1	33
Oktober Fest	1	23
Thanksgiving	1	70
Halloween Lunch	1	21
Costume Party	1	19
Remembrance Day	1	12
Christmas Event	1	88
Birthday Socials	6	48
100 th birthday celebration	1	20
Workshops/Speakers	6	69
Coffee with Staff	12	98
Card Tournaments	6	130
Tea for Tutu (trip)	2	20
Rentals (total #)	51	5,865
Resource Referrals (total #)		
Social Support Services (list):		
Foot Care	Weekly	48
Biomagnetism	Bi-weekly	4
Hearing Clinics	2	9
Tax Preparation	March/April	185
Reflexology	Weekly	14

Diabetes Support	Bi-monthly	
Flu Shot Clinic	1	About 30
St. John Ambulance Therapy Dog		Approx. 20
Blood Pressure Clinics	12	27
Neighbourhood Development (list):		
Community Day BBQ	1 (annual event)	Approx. 300
Silent Auction and Craft Fair	1 (annual event)	321
Chili Cook Off	1 (annual event)	117
Total		8,247

Leverage Model

A

Direct City of Victoria Investment for 2014	Amount in cash
Operating grant	40,000
Youth grant	
Custodial grant	
Neighbourhood Dev. Base grant	
Neighbourhood Dev. Matching grant	
Shape Your Future grant	
Community Art grant	
Greenways grant	
Special Projects grant	
Other City grants	
Total A	40,000

B

Indirect City of Victoria Investment for 2014 (to be completed by City)	Value
Custodial Service	40,130
Utilities	12,512
Permissive Tax Exemptions	0
Maintenance & repair costs	11,553

Other (Capital Improvements)	10,300
Other (Strata fees)	16,533
Total B	91, 028

C

Association Annual Operating revenue for 2014 (excluding in kind)	Amount in cash
Grants (not including City Grant)	45,952.63
Drop-in Activities	25,050.95
Kitchen	25,189.75
Courses	10,669.50
Membership	13,215.55
Rentals	28,727.25
Donations and Fundraising	10,824.74
Events	16,617.55
Wellness Services	12,485.50
Total C	188,734.42

D

Volunteer opportunities:	# people	X	# hours	Total Volunteer hours
Programs	28	X		3,510
Services	15	X		3,765
Events	15	X		1,072
Other	36	X		4,498
Total	94	X		12,845

Volunteer Valuation

a)Total volunteer hours (value unskilled labour)	X	80%	X	\$18.73	=	12,686,952
b)Total volunteer hours (value skilled labour)	X	20%	X	\$40.00	=	35,024

Total Volunteer valuation D (a+b)	=	12,721,976
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Leverage Valuation

C (Association Operating Revenue)	+	D (Volunteer Valuation)	=	Leverage
A (Direct City Investment)	+	B (Indirect City Investment)		
C 188,734.42	+	D 12,721,976	=	98.53
A 40,000	+	B 91,028		

Per Person Valuation

C (Association Investment)	Divided by	#visits per year	=	\$ value per person served
18,734.42	/	29,010	=	0.65
A + B (Total City of Victoria investment)	Divided by	# recreation visits per year	=	\$ invested per person served
\$131,028	/	11,263	=	11.63

Per Person Valuation

1. Please speak to your centre's day to day vitality as a hub for the neighbourhood.

The Cook Street Village Activity Centre (CSVAC) believes access to recreation facilities is essential for an equitable society where everyone has opportunities to participate in meaningful activities regardless of their socioeconomic level or ability.

The neighbourhood consists of many small, local businesses and a charming area of a variety of housing options. There are heritage homes, condominiums, rental units of many sizes and varieties. In this area there are many people of senior age, but also young families and single adults. CSVAC works hard to provide recreational access to programs and activities to as many participants as possible.

The centre is open six days a week for fun, friendship and community. Each day a variety of programs and services are offered to support participants' physical, emotional and cognitive health. There are a number of fitness programs, opportunities for socialization and connection with peers and games and activities that promote brain health. The centre also makes space available to a variety of community groups such as a church and Weight Watchers. These community based groups invite people who would not normally come to the centre to enjoy the hospitality that is shared with all participants. The centre also participates in community events such as the community barbeque and Christmas silent auction as ways to connect with the Cook Street Village and Victoria neighbourhoods.

The centre also reaches out to organizations in the greater Victoria community for partnership events. These organizations include the ICA, Mustard Seed, and seniors' centres.

2. Please provide up to 3 impact statements via testimonials, survey results or accomplishments directly related to your centre's programs and services.

I enjoying coming to the Men's Coffee group because we have a unique perspective on life. It is wonderful to talk about our shared lived experiences. I learn so much from these guys. ~Alan, Men's Coffee Group Participant, CSVAC Member ~

I have been playing cards here for 16 years. I come for the people and the camaraderie and the card games are mentally stimulating. I wouldn't know what to do if the Centre was not here; I can't see myself not coming here. ~Joyce, Cribbage player and CSVAC Member~

I started coming 4 years ago for the chair yoga group. I have a disability and this is the best exercise for me because it is a good working and very relaxing. I have now expanded the activities that I participate in because the people are wonderful. I enjoy everything I do because it stimulates my brain and I have improved in some areas like my fine motor skills ~Jean, Yoga and Cribbage participant and CSVAC Member~

I came when the Centre first opened and decided to stay because it is a very friendly place ~From comments at the coffee with staff~

Health and Wellness

1. How does your centre promote health and wellness? (Please cite up to 3 examples)

Seniors are key members of the community. To ensure the vitality of our communities, we need to support and encourage active citizenship and citizen participation. With this comes the responsibility of ensuring that seniors continue to be engaged and involved. This means providing seniors with opportunities to influence and shape their communities and meet needs more effectively.

CSVAC in the past has served mainly seniors. However, efforts have been underway in recent years to encourage participation from a broader demographic. The centre has been working hard to develop programs and opportunities for the dynamic generation of baby boomers who have increased leisure time as they move towards retirement as well as programs for younger, working aged adults.

The centre hosts a wide array of fitness opportunities through classes such as Fun and Fitness, Tai Chi, and Stretch and Strength. These classes are not only good for the body but also help in reducing isolation and loneliness, the early stages of depression (increased endorphins and opportunities to socialize with others). These classes are provided with a very low fee in order to minimize any financial barrier that may prevent people from participating.

Many seniors, particularly those who live alone, find it difficult to prepare healthy meals regularly. The centre supports nutritional health with their lunch program which provides healthy meals at low cost at the centre.

The activities at the centre encourage socialization through participation. People attending activities look forward to meeting old and new friends each time they come. They support each other through life's ups and downs. Without the centre, many participants would not have a place to develop friendships and share experiences.

2. What new health and wellness initiatives have you implemented, supported and/or maintained this year?

In addition to existing programming, in the past year a group of men requested additional card game programming. The centre now hosts a Texas Hold 'Em group that has proved very successful and is looking to expand. From the initial once a week, there has been discussion about increasing this activity to two or three times per week. This opportunity for men to meet has expanded their social horizons. The men also have a daily coffee group during which they discuss a wide variety of topics, and men's billiards and all these activities promote friendship and support.

The centre continues to support and maintain all its programs for both men and women. It has maintained low member and non-member fees. The annual membership cost has been unchanged for several years in order to ensure that as many people as possible can enjoy the events and activities that are offered at CSVAC at a reduced rate.

CSVAC not only supports the mental and physical well-being of members through regular programming, but also provides opportunities to assist in medical concerns through the Foot Care clinic, diabetes support group, bio-magnetism and healthy meals programs.

2014 was an exciting year at CSVAC as we were able to bring back an active euchre group and poker group. We are looking forward to seeing the return of darts and introducing pickle ball and weekly parlour games.

3. What are your community's health and wellness concerns and how are you addressing them?

CSVAC strives to address community health and wellness concerns as they arise. Isolation and loneliness are particular concerns within the seniors' community. Providing opportunities for regular leisure activity that is cognitively, physically, and socially stimulating is good for overall health. An increase in social contact may provide enhanced emotional and instrumental support during times of crisis, illness or stress and increase quality of life.

A recent initiative has been to address the issue of senior abuse, including physical, mental and financial concerns. The program we received a grant for has finished but was so popular we have continued these discussions through the Journey Program in partnership with Silver Threads.

The community has been changing and seeing a growing younger population. We are working on ways to encourage them to the centre and the biggest challenge has been overcoming the idea that the centre only serves seniors and not the broader community. The centre has heard that additional programming is needed to provide more activities for younger seniors and other adults. There is discussion about changing hours of operation and increasing programming to meet this need.

Sustainable Community Development

1. How does City funding allow you to address the sustainability of your organization?

The City of Victoria funding is critical to the survival and development of CSVAC. Without this support the organization would not be able to provide a venue for residents to meet and participate in activities that promote their wellbeing. The City funding helps maintain current programs, initiate new opportunities and partnerships with other agencies and contributes significantly to staff wages.

2. What are you doing internally to address the sustainability of your organization? (i.e. - environmental, economic, social etc.)

We have many key partnerships with the merchants on Cook Street that we work with on community events and promoting events that we host at our Centre. We have strong partnerships with the groups that rent space from us such as a church, Buddhist meditation group, Weight Watchers, and many more. We have also maintained our partnerships with the Victoria International Exchange Centre who send us outstanding students for practicum/work study opportunities. We have maintained and strengthened our partnerships through agencies such as the ICA, Amica, the Victorian at McKenzie, and all of the sponsors for our fundraising community events.

CSVAC applies for several grants each year to help support the smooth running of the organization. We have applied for grants for multi-cultural and multi-generational and multi-cultural opportunities such as the shared stories circles, which we hope will find out our success in the spring. We were successful in applying for funding for the seniors abuse prevention program. Through this program we are going to be hosting some workshop/discussions, have a resource table at our next open house, and have information and materials available throughout the year.

3. How does your centre align with the City of Victoria's Sustainability Action Plan directions?

A) Reduce - reduce waste and emissions & increase efficiency

Part of the centre's waste management strategy is to fully participate in the City of Victoria kitchen scraps program and to recycle as much as possible.

Many participants come to the centre using public transit, cycling, walking and carpooling, which are key ways to reduce emissions.

B) Transform - transformation and leadership

A new program has been developed to partner with a local school to create a community garden as a beautification project. The concept is to match garden volunteers from the centre with youth to learn from each other and create something all can be proud of. The garden volunteers will provide leadership and experience and the youth will contribute energy and enthusiasm to transform the existing gardens into a more vibrant part of the community.

C) Thrive - creating a livable city for everyone

The centre is working hard to develop more partnerships with organizations such as the ICA, James Bay New Horizons, Goward House and Silver Threads. Programs such as the Seniors Abuse workshops will be offered to participants from these groups and the community as well as centre members in order to encourage interaction and greater knowledge among a diverse population. This initiative is seen as encouraging increased livability in the City of Victoria.

When reviewing the number of unique visits to our Centre this year through our courses, workshops, drop-in opportunities and special events we learned that we have welcomed people 29,010 times. We also know that we had approximately 600 hours of rental time with nearly 6,000 visitors from these opportunities.

Community Responsiveness

1. How does your centre identify community need and respond to community feedback?

Once a month CSVAC staff provides an open forum coffee hour at which anyone is free to share any community or centre concerns and provide input. Recently the centre has been told that the community would like to see expanded hours and programs at CSVAC to accommodate younger seniors and working adults. Their suggestions include providing fitness classes earlier in the morning so that people could participate before the start of their working day. Younger seniors are interested in more physically active opportunities. The centre is trying to respond to this feedback by investigating the potential for providing a wider variety of programs and activities such as bicycling, walking or running groups, additional dance programs, etc.

The centre has also heard that there is a need to keep fees low so that current and future members will not face a barrier to participating in activities due to financial constraints.

CSVAC is broadening its communication strategies by developing a more active social media presence. A new web site is under development and recently new Facebook and Twitter accounts have been launched as tools to engage technically knowledgeable community members. The centre is also reinvigorating the newsletter, program boards and digital signs for those who drop by or who do not have access to digital media.

2. What modifications or implementations have you made in response to community need in these categories?

- i. Programs (new)
- ii. Services (new)
- iii. Infrastructure (facility, neighbourhood)
- iv. Organization
- v. Accessibility
- vi. Diversity & inclusion
- vii. Demographic Diversity

A. Programs (new)

This year we have taken on several new initiatives that have included two new programs. We are half way through our Senior's Abuse Prevention series. This program has reached out to seniors in our community and to caregivers. Our staff and volunteers have undergone training to recognize if someone is experiencing abuse and how to support them as they move towards a safer future. We will be doing this through workshops and are in the process of planning an open house that will include information on this very important topic.

We are working with Silver Threads to offer the Journey's program. This is an outreach program that helps support seniors so they can age in their homes and communities as long as possible. This program also helps to connect seniors with services to that support being independent.

B. Services (new)

Over the years our connection with the ICA has not been as strong as it once was. This year we have rejuvenated our connection with the ICA and have started a senior to senior pen pal program. The seniors at ICA who are learning English are becoming pen pals with our members. After several weeks of writing to each other the group will meet to share a potluck meal. This relationship will continue in the New Year with joint recreational activities that both writers will enjoy.

C. Infrastructure (facility, neighbourhood)

Our building is open to centre members and the community six days a week for recreational activities, socialization, meals, and fun. We also provide low cost rental space for other members of our community searching for a warm and friendly location that is easily accessible for their clientele.

The centre is the Emergency Social Services (ESS) site for the community. ESS is the group that plans for the needs of evacuees forced to leave their home due to an emergency and need assistance. ESS provides short term (emergency) help in the way of lodging, food, clothing, and various other services. In case of an emergency the centre will be used for shelter and to provide other services as needed.

D. Organization

Our organization has undergone some significant changes in the last year. We are very pleased that we now have a full complement of staff, who will be working with the Board of Directors, Members, and the Cook Street Village community to implement exciting opportunities over the next several years. Our staff comprises of a Program Manager (part-time), two Program Assistants (both are part-time), a Kitchen Manager (part-time), and an Administrative Manager (full-time).

E. Accessibility

The Cook Street Village Activity Centre is an accessible building using mobility aids. We have washrooms that can accommodate a wheelchair and all have grab bars to assist when needed. Our members access our facility by car, public transit, bike, and by foot. We also keep our membership and drop-in fees, as well as our rental amounts low so that as many people as possible are able to participate in the programs and services that we offer.

Volunteerism

1. What types of volunteer opportunities do you have in your centre?

Volunteering keeps older adults active and engaged; positive activity is key for health aging. It is important that they are seen, and see themselves, as contributing, valued and active members in their community. They have rich experiences from their paid work and community involvement. They want a variety of ways to participate and stay involved.

Many dedicated volunteers support the operation of CSVAC through participation on the Board of Directors, student/work study opportunities, providing front desk/reception staffing, leading programs, working in the kitchen and assisting with special events.

CSVAC provides opportunities for students to volunteer and develop skills and leadership abilities. International students have hosted workshops (origami and calligraphy), given presentations about their home countries, done research, gathered statistics and supported the day to day running of the centre. They have the opportunity to improve English skills while socializing with participants and assisting them during activities.

2. Please provide up to 3 impact statements via testimonials, survey results or accomplishments directly related to your centre's volunteers.

Volunteering provides health benefits to older adults. It offers them significant physical, emotional and cognitive benefits. It also enhances social support, social inclusion and civic engagement. Volunteering helps seniors stay active and connected to their communities, helps maintain social contacts, and promotes a sense of value and self-worth.

CSVAC volunteers are the cornerstone of the organization. Volunteers greet people as they come to the centre, help create delicious meals in the kitchen, lead programs, participate on the board and help out at special events. To say they are priceless is an understatement because they are the lifeblood of CSVAC. Volunteering benefits all centre members and provides meaningful participation to the volunteers who know their contributions are appreciated. They become more connected to the centre, their fellow participants and their community.

Volunteering has given me a new interest in life and has allowed me to fill my retirement hours with something that has meaning for me. I believe that by continuing to learn through my volunteering has helped stave off dementia. I have a lot of fun learning and participating in the activities and opportunities at the Centre. ~Ivan, Board of Director, CSVAC Member, and Snooker Player.~

"I come to the Centre four days a week. This (volunteering) gives me a chance to give back. I enjoy coming and the people." ~Marilyn, Front Desk volunteer and CSVAC Member~

"I promised my sister I would do it and she retired and I stayed on. I like the groups that are here when I volunteer." ~Jane, Front Desk volunteer and CSVAC Member~

I was attracted to the Centre when I retired. I attended many special events such as Christmas dinner, summer barbeque, and craft fair. I come to the drop in painting, and enjoy the library and the jigsaw puzzle in the lounge. The staff are always very pleasant and helpful. ~Connie, Painting Group participant and CSVAC Member~