



BC Healthy Communities
People. Place. Potential.



CITY OF VICTORIA YOUTH COUNCIL

2015-2016 Annual Report

To: City of Victoria

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REPORT SUMMARY

The 2015-2016 City of Victoria Youth Council had an exciting term as it marked the Council's tenth year!

The most comprehensive recruiting strategy to date turned up **35 applications**, from which, a new CVYC Executive Youth Council of **24 members** was established. Through participation in workshops, the development of meaningful community projects and the planning and execution of major events, this term has been an incredible source of learning and personal growth for returning and new Council Members alike.



This year's **10 returning members** (retention rate of 41.6%) demonstrated the skills and confidence they developed last year in their desire and ability to mentor new Council Members. Such mentorship meant an already eager group of newcomers was able to quickly grasp what the CVYC is about and contribute significantly early on in the year. Amongst other accomplishments, this diverse group of Members engaged in stimulating conversation at the Youth Council table; started working with a **new staff liaison** from the City of Victoria's Citizen Engagement department; and experimented with an exciting new direction of advocacy through motion writing.

The CVYC hosted several events this year, including the *Ten Year Celebration*, *Employability Skills Fair* and *Life Hacks 2.0*, and partnered to support the *Earth Walk for Peace and the Planet*. These events took place over a six-month period and attracted approximately **250 event participants**. The high value placed on the theme of collaboration by this year's Council meant that new partners were brought on board; almost every event was supported by other youth programs which enabled the projects to grow in their impact and reach, making them more effective (including cost) due to shared workload. At each event, the CVYC strived for **inclusion** by offering free admission and creating a safe place for LGBTQ+ and differently abled young people. Our hard work has been rewarded both by **media coverage** and encouraging responses from the community.

What follows is a fulsome review of our 2015-2016 Term, enjoy!

1. BACKGROUND

A. INTRODUCTION

The City of Victoria Youth Council (CVYC) is a youth-driven initiative that offers opportunities for civic engagement to young people (ages 14-24) who live, work, hang out or go to school in the City of Victoria. The CVYC is hosted through a partnership between BC Healthy Communities Society (BCHC) and the City of Victoria and receives the support of BCHC staff as well as City Council and City Staff liaisons. This initiative focuses on youth empowerment, leadership development, community partnerships and capacity building as key mechanisms for enabling youth voices to be heard, understood, and shared with the City of Victoria Mayor, Council, City staff and the community at large.

"The role of CVYC in Victoria is to act as a liaison between what people, particularly youth, say they need from their city and the resources/actions that can be put into place to help them." - 2015-2016 CVYC Member

B. VISION AND MISSION

The Vision and Mission were refreshed by the CVYC in 2012-2013:

Vision:

The CVYC envisions a vibrant and inclusive city where youth voices and perspectives are heard and valued.

Mission:

The CVYC leads the community in enhancing youth engagement in the City of Victoria. We are a youth-led council advocating for social change and opportunities to empower youth within the community.

C. ROLES

The **CVYC Coordinator** fulfills the role of ally and champion to Youth Council Members as they turn ideas into action by providing administrative, budgeting, logistical and project-specific support. The CVYC Coordinator also plays the role of connector, bringing together partners and collaborators with similar visions to work together to enhance the CVYC's impact in the community. Sarah Graham has been the CVYC Coordinator since August 2014, however a new Coordinator will take over in September 2016.

BC Healthy Communities provides mentorship and counsel to the CVYC Coordinator, meeting space for CVYC meetings, grant-writing support, CVYC member trainings and financial oversight. Furthermore, due to BCHC's provincial network and social media reach, they have been able to enhance promotion of CVYC events and initiatives. BCHC's Program Coordinator, Michelle Sandsmark, works most closely with the CVYC.

The CVYC's **City Council Liaison**, Jeremy Loveday, was appointed mid-way through the 2014-2015 term and continues to be an enthusiastic and supportive champion for youth in Victoria. This year, Councillor Loveday organized a workshop for the CVYC on motion writing as well as offered a great deal of support throughout the year, which was appreciated by all CVYC Members.



Over the summer, the CVYC started working with a new **Staff Liaison** from the **Citizen Engagement department**, Bridget Frewer. This new relationship led to many exciting opportunities, specifically, the opportunity for the CVYC to get involved with City initiatives such as the Youth Engagement Strategy, *Biketoria* and Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan. Frewer also offered capacity building support such as organizing a social media training and offering feedback on the CVYC's communications strategies.

D. GOVERNANCE



The **Executive Council** met on a monthly basis in the Union of BC Municipalities' boardroom (525 Government St., which is the office space rented by BCHC) to cover higher-level topics including budget, strategic direction, project updates and evaluation. We also held workshops and invited guests to these meetings.

In addition to the Executive Council, **project-based meetings** were held in the community every few weeks depending on the scope of the project and were often held in local coffee shops. Reflecting on challenges from previous years, the CVYC agreed that it would be advantageous to Members and the Coordinator to ensure a two week gap between each event / project. This decision allowed for better promotions, more

coordinated efforts amongst partners and for Member to be involved in the planning of multiple projects.

2. MEMBERSHIP

A. RECRUITMENT STRATEGY

In August and September of each year, the CVYC Coordinator implements the CVYC Recruitment Strategy, which involves multiple strategies to advertise a call for applications to the CVYC. For example, the CVYC designs and distributes a poster (to high schools, universities, the public library, cafes, recreation centers, etc.) to get the word out. Other strategies include, but are not limited to: using BCHC's extensive network to spread recruitment information via their website, newsletter and social media, **word of mouth by former members**, CVYC Facebook and Twitter pages, and, postings on various volunteer listings.

In the summer of 2015, the CVYC Coordinator assembled a group of four other Youth Service Provider Network (YSPN) members to discuss the possibility of pursuing **joint recruitment**. That informal committee decided to create a two-page document that featured information about a dozen different youth engagement opportunities. The "Get Involved" campaign also included a legend that labeled each opportunity with a topic area, age range and other information. This document was turned in to a visually appealing flyer that was distributed online to schools, through social media and, in print copies, at community events. In future years, the committee is considering expanding the number of opportunities listed and using an online platform, such as a website, to disseminate information.

B. MEMBERS

The CVYC Coordinator and 10 returning CVYC Members screened, interviewed and invited 14 new **Members**¹ to join the Council. Group interviews were held to foster a welcoming envi-

¹ CVYC 2015-2016 Members were: Alexandra Ages, Emily Tsao, Erin Sylvester, Indigo Smart, Jelayna Van Dyke, Jenna Jiang, Jenna Ren, Jessica Izard, Robert Lee, Sara Bhandar, Hanan Abousaleh, Paige Collins, Sahra Abdulahi, Emma Jane, Jane Lu, Nelly Tian, Shae-Linn Davies, Solomon Lindsay, Isabella Lee, Callum MacDonald, Lynaea Korol-Filbey, Emily Wiesenthal, Megan Rees, Sammy Ross.

GET INVOLVED:
OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH 2015

Legend

Project:	Group size small (under 10 people):
Advisory:	Group size large (over 10 people):
Civic:	Non-profit:
Bring a friend:	Philanthropic:

The City of Victoria Youth Council

BC Healthy Communities
The City of Victoria Youth Council is a youth driven program that brings together young people who live, work, hang out, or go to school in the City of Victoria.
Ages: 14-24 / Contact: info@cvyc.ca, cvyc.ca

Teen Council

Greater Victoria Public Library
We strive to foster communications between generations, contribute new perspectives, develop the connection between the community and teens, assist in improving library services, and enhance interest in books with today's youth.
Ages: 13-18 / Contact: teens@grpl.ca, grpl.ca/teen-council

ISH Youth Committee

Island Sexual Health Society
A place for youth to provide direction to the organization and community on how to be supportive of youth and sexuality through inspiring and engaging change using creative, meaningful projects.
Ages: 15-25 / Contact: youth@islandsexualhealth.org, islandsexualhealth.org

YELP- Youth Environmental Leadership Program

Sierra Club BC
Interested in environmental justice, hiking, camping, conservation, and meeting new people? Want to take action on environmental issues in our community? We meet weekly in downtown Victoria and get outside on weekends!
Ages: 13-18 / Contact: youth@sierraclub.bc.ca, sierraclub.bc.ca/yelp

Youth Now Council & UnitedNOW! Council

United Way Greater Victoria
Youth Now (ages 15-19) and UnitedNOW! (ages 20's -30's) are about leadership, volunteering, and having fun engaging with community conscious peers to raise awareness of issues impacting people in Greater Victoria and create change in our community.
Contact: youth@uwgv.ca, uwgv.ca

The Meet Up

ICA (Inter-Cultural Association of Greater Victoria)
A free program for newcomer teens. Enjoy games and activities that focus on arts, sports and exploring the community. Have fun and make new friends!
Ages: 13-19 / Contact: Claire Kelly, Settlement Youth Worker (ckelly@icavictoria.org, 250-388-4728 ext. 123), icavictoria.org

ronment and applicants were encouraged to ask the Coordinator and returning Council Members' questions to determine if the CVYC was the right fit for them.

"I have learned so much about the city and it has made me feel capable to enter into other community roles." – 2015-2016 CVYC Member

Nearly half of this year's Council was made up of returning Council Members, a **41.6% retention rate**. The returning Members were able to lead and mentor the new members in a way that was empowering and motivating for all involved, and led to a more cohesive, participatory Council.

In order to ensure that the CVYC provides an adequate representation of the diverse youth in Victoria, the CVYC, to the best of its ability, brought together a diverse group of young people including international students, First Nations, differently abled and LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Queer) individuals. This year, the **average age of Council Members was 17**; with the majority being in grade 11 or 12, and the remaining a split of younger high school and post-secondary students.

An overview of Members' bios can be found on the CVYC website at <http://cvyc.ca/Members>.

3. CAPACITY BUILDING AND TRAINING FOR MEMBERS

A. ORIENTATION RETREAT

This year's Orientation Retreat was held on Saturday, October 17 and provided the newly formed Council a day of learning, socializing and bonding. The Members participated in icebreakers, created a participation agreement, underwent teambuilding exercises, expressed their definition of success in a journaling exercise and were introduced to the Youth Council's History and to BC Healthy Communities.



During the retreat, Members also discussed issues facing Victoria's youth, areas where the group collectively hoped to build **capacities**, such as **facilitation, time management, motion writing and advocacy skills**.

On January 30, the Council also participated in a Mid-Year Check-In that incorporated capacity building opportunities as well as evaluation exercises. Specifically, the group discussed what

had been achieved so far, if there was still space for growth and how the Coordinator could continue to offer support to the group.

B. WORKSHOPS

This year's CVYC Mid-Year Retreat included two workshops. CVYC Coordinator, Sarah Graham, led the first workshop on "**Combatting the Busy Culture**" and the second was facilitated by Jodi Mucha, Executive Director at BC Healthy Communities, and was on the topic of "Productivity Training". Other capacity building workshops were held throughout the year and include a workshop by CVYC's Council Liaison, Jeremy Loveday, on motion writing, a workshop by the CVYC's Youth Program Quality Initiative Coach (more information in Section 8) called "**Facilitation 101**" and another by a Citizen Engagement staff member on social media.



C. PASSING FIRST MOTION

At an executive meeting in February, Jeremy Loveday gave a workshop on how to write effective motions as a collective. After much debate, it was concluded that almost the entire council

I am most proud of the CVYC for..."starting some very important youth advocacy work and using that to bring direct change where youth need it." - 2015-2016 CVYC Member

felt strongly about the issue of **transit affordability and accessibility**. Jeremy helped the CVYC to clarify the language and, by the end of the workshop, the Youth Council completed a collaborative draft of a motion. The motion touched on issues such as the number of busses during peak hours, busses late at night, and the comparable expense of other modes of transportation. This workshop was an exciting and important step towards the CVYC increasing its advocacy role in the community.

D. MEETING GUESTS & COLLABORATION

Throughout the year, the CVYC was able to strengthen its community bonds through a number of new and existing partnerships. These included the Quadra Village Community Center, the Youth Program Quality Initiative, Work BC, and the Saanich Youth Council. These partnerships were highly valuable for all projects.

At the CVYC's executive meetings throughout the year, the CVYC welcomed many guests. Council and Staff liaisons Jeremy Loveday and Bridget Frewer were frequently in attendance, with several other community members sharing information or offering workshops throughout the year.

E. RESULTS - CAPACITY BUILDING

A core principle of the CVYC is to build the capacity of its Members. The CVYC fosters this process through proactive experiential learning in the context of event and project planning, developing strategic direction and working with City Council and Staff and other community members/organizations. Through participation in the CVYC, many Members see their ideas become tangible action for the first time; not only does this process build the capacity of these youth, but it is also inherently **empowering**.

"The CVYC has helped me develop skills such as organization, responsibility, and communication. It has helped me grow as a leader, and has connected me with like-minded youth."— 2015-2016 CVYC Member

Between January and August of 2016 the CVYC and BC Healthy Communities underwent the process of developing a new evaluation framework (more information in Section 7. Evaluation). During the development of this framework, it was decided that many of the data collection processes that were in place needed to be strengthened to produce more rigorous data. Next year, as an example, the **personal development** of CVYC member's during their term will be quantitatively tracked; however, that data is not available for this year. This year, there is a selection of qualitative data, which can be found in Appendix C in the form of quotes from CVYC Members.

4. CORE INITIATIVES

A. 10 YEAR CELEBRATION

This year marked 10 years since the inception of the CVYC. To celebrate the Council's successes and to honour the original CVYC Coordinator and Members, the CVYC held a "10 Year Celebration" in the lobby of City Hall. Former CVYC Members, Coordinators, City of Victoria Council Members and other community were invited; in total, approximately **40 people attended**.

During this time, information was gathered about how the CVYC has impacted the community over the past ten years. Two common themes arose: 1) the CVYC has greatly impacted its Members who have grown as a result of their participation in the Council, and 2) adult partners reported learning and being encouraged by their interactions with the Youth Council and its

Members. Additionally, the CVYC asked what the Council could accomplish in the next 10 years. Some of the responses from CVYC Alumni and other community members include:

- “Share knowledge and learning with other groups on a province wide scale.”
- “Start amazing initiatives that get taken on by other organizations and become permanent fixtures in the city.”
- “Hosting a free youth hang out space (all hours) that is safe and welcoming; a ‘third space’.”
- “Integrate CVYC alumni members into CVYC activities.”



These comments, plus many more, encouraged and inspired current Members, and helped them to realize how much the CVYC benefits Members long after their participation in the program. Finally, BCHC’s Communications Specialist, Jen Nichols, supported the event by providing **graphic facilitation** (above) to articulate the impact of the CVYC visually as discussed at the 10 Year Celebration.

B. EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS FAIR

On March 30, the CVYC hosted the third annual Employability Skills Fair. The goal of the Fair was to provide young people between the ages of 14 and 24 with the skills and resources they need to find employment. Rather than providing information about specific job openings, the Fair helped youth to navigate the requirements and qualities of various entry level industries. Other opportunities included cover



letter and resume writing help, sector specific employment advice (for example, in retail or hospitality), **mock interviews**, how to dress for an interview, volunteer opportunities and more. Free snacks and pizza were available for all participants at the Fair.

To share the event planning workload and to create a higher event capacity, the CVYC contin-



ued its partnership with Work BC and GT Hiring, and was successful in developing a new community partnership with the **Quadra Village Community Center (QVCC)**. Work BC and GT Hiring not only graciously provided a free venue, but their experience, connections and knowledgeable staff added immense value to the event overall. QVCC provided volunteers for the event and took a lead on promotions; overall, this partnership brought new energy and perspective to the event.

Most Fair participants were of high school age and the most commonly reported employment status was “unemployed”. During the three-hour event, approximately 80 people came through the doors and reported that talking with employers and mock interviews were particularly valuable.

C. EARTH WALK

This year, many CVYC Members expressed interest in working on a project that supported environmental sustainability. After brainstorming and discussing possibilities, Members recognized that the CVYC has limited capacity to take on the responsibility of creating an entirely new event. The CVYC decided that a more effective direction to take would be to partner with one of the many exciting environmental organizations within Victoria. After some research and outreach, CVYC Members decided to partner with the “Earth Walk for Peace and the Planet” event.

With the hope that other youth would be encouraged to join the “Earth Walk”, Members supported this event through promotion on social media and by setting up a booth. Additionally, the Members set up a speaker’s corner, whereby event participants were invited



to answer questions about how they would make their communities greener. This activity proved successful and many interesting conversations were started.

In total, CVYC Members talked to approximately **75 people** at the event representing a diverse group of people, especially in age, which was a positive difference from other events. Overall, this event was a great starting point for getting involved with environmental sustainability and will hopefully provide next year's Council with direction for where the CVYC might go next on the topic.

D. LIFE HACKS 2.0

In the 2014-2015 year, the Life Hacks conference was inspired by a desire for **peer-to-peer** learning about subjects skipped over in school. It was very successful, and in fall 2015 the Saanich Youth Council approached the CVYC with the idea of partnering to host a second Life Hacks event. This idea was eagerly received by the CVYC. Life Hacks 2.0 was held once again in City Hall, was entirely free of charge, and was catered by Juma, a local food truck. CVYC Member, Hanan Abousaleh, started off the day as the MC, which was followed by an equally moving and humorous performance by this year's **Youth Poet Laureate**, Ann-Bernice Thomas.



Throughout the day there were six workshops offered around the themes of personal growth, self-care and advocacy. The workshops included (workshops with an asterisk were facilitated by someone under the age of 24):

- ReadyRent Finances and Tenancy (facilitated by ReadyRent BC which offers tenancy programs to youth)
- Combatting the “Busy Culture” (facilitated by a Saanich Youth Council Member) *
- Sexual Health (facilitated by a City of Victoria Youth Council Member) *
- Retail Action Network’s Workers Rights 101 (facilitated by the newly founded Retail Action Network which brings together retail workers and labour activists)
- Speak up for Yourself (facilitated by a Youth Program Quality Initiative coach and very experienced youth worker)
- Breaking up with Stress (facilitated by a former CVYC Coordinator) *

Throughout the day, community organizations such as Island Sexual Health and the Headwaters Youth Collective set-up booths to share information and promote other opportunities. To finish

off the event, the **City of Victoria's Youth Engagement Strategy** team hosted a conversation about how local governments can engage and support youth populations. In all, over 50 participants attended Life Hacks 2.0 and left overwhelmingly positive reviews.

E. AVICC CONFERENCE

"The opportunity to meet with every elected official across Vancouver Island is a once in a lifetime thing which gives rise to life changing connections and experiences." – Solomon Lindsay on AVICC Conference, 2015-2016 Member

In early April, one CVYC member, Solomon Lindsay, attended the Association of Vancouver Island and Coastal Communities (AVICC) Conference in Nanaimo. In this afternoon-long session, organized by the Duncan Youth Council, Lindsay had the opportunity to network with multiple Youth Councils from across the island. The day finished off with a presentation to all of the **elected officials** at the event, including some Victoria City Councilors.

In future years, we hope that the CVYC can be involved with this conference and other similar initiatives in order to support municipalities across the province involve young people in civic processes and events.

5. CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Over the past few years, the City of Victoria and the CVYC have been working to strengthen their relationship and improve communication and collaboration. This year, significant steps were taken to meet these goals.

A. CITY COUNCIL MEET & GREET

This term's Council Meet & Greet with City Council, held on January 14, 2016, was another success. Nearly all Victoria City Council Members were in attendance, as well as the majority of CVYC Members. After introductions were made, an icebreaker provided an opportunity for Councilors and CVYC Members to share what they are passionate about; an exercise that proved inspiring for both parties as individuals' hopes, dreams and passions were voiced and heard. Next, a video was shared with the CVYC (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZAre9kD7AH4>) about what the City of Victoria does, and CVYC members shared

"The CVYC/City Council meet and greet was a great success again this year. This event gives Youth Council members an opportunity to meet and ask questions of Mayor and Council and for Council to listen to the ideas of Youth Council members. Councillors directly engaged with Youth Council members about their project ideas, connections were made, and the shared passions were palpable." – Jeremy

about the events they were planning for the winter/spring of 2016.

B. CITIZEN ENGAGEMENT DEPARTMENT

Over the summer of 2015, the CVYC started working with a **new Staff Liaison from the Citizen Engagement Department**, Bridget Frewer, to better align the CVYC's work with initiatives emerging at the City level. This new relationship led to more effective communication and increased opportunities for the CVYC to be included in City initiatives, like Biketoria and the Burnside Gorge Neighbourhood Plan. The Coordinator was also involved in the early planning stages for the Youth Engagement Strategy. Through this partnership, the CVYC was also provided with increased support, including a workshop on social media training by Kelly Conlin.

C. COMMUNICATION WITH CITY OF VICTORIA

Another important development this year was the creation of a single point of contact between the City and Citizen Engagement. Rather than the CVYC Coordinator reaching out to various staff in different departments, and similarly, various staff reaching out to the Coordinator, all request and opportunities were funnelled through the CVYC City Staff Liaison directly to the Coordinator. This development created a much more effective and organized communications system, which both the City and the CVYC have benefitted from.

What surprised you about your experience on the CVYC?

"How many connections I have made with other people in the city." – 2015-2016 CVYC Member

D. COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Throughout the 2015-2016 Council year the CVYC Coordinator regularly passed on information about opportunities for CVYC members. Many of those opportunities were related to specific events in the community or programs for youth, while others featured exclusive invitations for



CVYC Members only or international programs that required applications. CVYC Members widely reported that this dissemination of information was greatly beneficial.

Aside from CVYC Members attending events in the community, the CVYC Coordinator also sat on the **Youth Service Provider's Network Steering Committee**. Being directly involved and helping to lead a network with hundreds of members allowed the Coordi-

nator to build stronger connections with other programs and individuals; for example, the joint recruitment initiative and a partnership with Quadra Village Community Centre to co-host the Employability Skills Fair both emerged out of the YSPN steering committee.

The Council also attended the United Way Youth Council Development Day for the fourth year in a row and the Coordinator attended the Helping Youth Programs Excel Conference as well as multiple Community Partnership Network Meetings.

6. MEDIA

This year, the CVYC was well represented in the media. The CVYC received some excellent TV and print news coverage, increased the number of followers on Facebook and Twitter and had t-shirts created with the CVYC logo, which were great to use at the events.

A. CVYC IN THE MEDIA

I. CTV Interview

In April, CVYC Member, Jelayna Van Dyke and Coordinator, Sarah Graham, had the exciting opportunity to speak to CTV's nightly news team about the City of Victoria's Youth Engagement Strategy launch and the importance of hearing the youth voices in City decision-making processes.

Access full video here: <http://vancouverisland.ctvnews.ca/video?clipId=852198>



II. Saanich News Article

In May, CVYC Member Shae-Linn Davies wrote an article for the Saanich News covering the CVYC event, *Life Hacks 2.0*. This was an exciting opportunity for the CVYC to be put on display and a great example of a CVYC Member showing her capacity to contribute high-quality work to a local news publication.

Access the full article here: <http://www.saanichnews.com/community/380025701.html>

COMMUNITY

Youth take over Victoria City Hall



Victoria Youth Council members Jenna Jiang, left, and Shae-Linn Davies host the registration table for the LifeHacks 2.0 conference at Victoria City Hall. — Image Credit: Photo Submitted

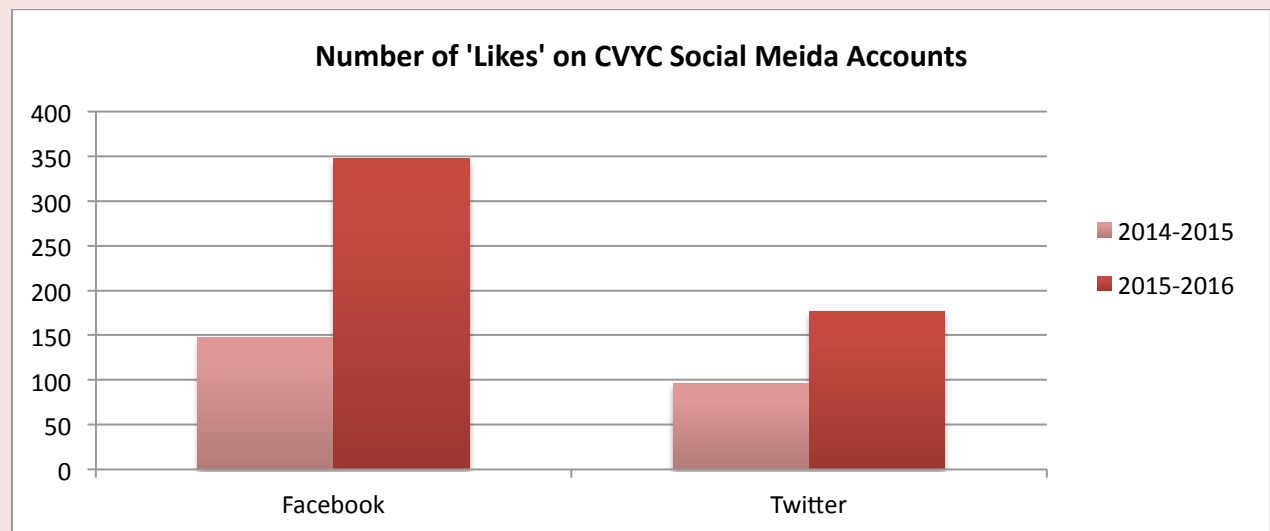
by Shae-Linn Davies - Saanich News
posted May 19, 2016 at 11:00 AM

If you passed by Victoria City Hall on April 30 you might have expected to see city employees clad in business attire or an elected official if you were lucky. What you would not expect to find was a large group of youth gathered in council chambers, at 9:30 a.m. no less.

III. Social Media

Using many of the new skills that Members learned in the social media training, the Media Team implemented new strategies to improve the CVYC's Facebook and Twitter pages. Specifically, the team created **more back and forth conversations with community** members on Twitter and used the Facebook page as a plat-

form for Victoria-wide opportunities for youth, rather than simply to promote CVYC events. The team was able to greatly improve the number of followers on both Facebook and Twitter sites (see graphic below). In the future, the CVYC is hoping to make their social media accounts even more engaging and to function as a hub for information.



8. EVALUATION

The CVYC is excited to announce the development of a **new evaluation framework**, which will kick off in September 2017. The new evaluation program incorporates successful practices from past years, such as data collection methods, into a more rigorous, overarching plan. The intent of the evaluation program is to ensure that consistent, meaningful data is being collected throughout the year so that the effectiveness of the CVYC in meeting its goals and objectives can be assessed to inform the future direction of the CVYC. The framework establishes a plan

and timeline for the Coordinator to follow each term, which will allow for a more seamless transition for Members, the Coordinator and other stakeholders from year-to-year.

On top of creating and formalizing the evaluation program, the CVYC also participated in the Youth Program Quality Initiative, which offered an opportunity for all Council Members to attend capacity building workshops and for the Council to be externally assessed. At the last Council meeting, Members decided on three goals for the Council to work on next year, which include incorporating more mentorship opportunities, offering more time for reflection and allowing Council Members to determine exactly “how” they would like to work, rather than just deciding between a set of “choices” or options. Participating in the program has also been an opportunity for the CVYC to celebrate all the things that are going well, especially that **the Council scored in the 88th percentile** overall.

“I feel most proud of the amazing projects CVYC has organized over the past year. It feels empowering to be able to directly tackle issues facing youth in Victoria.” – 2015-2016 CVYC Member

9. FINANCIALS

In the fall of 2015, the CVYC Coordinator and BCHC submitted a letter to the City of Victoria requesting a budget increase for the 2016-2017 Council year. The **additional funds** were request-



ed after BCHC and the CVYC Coordinator determined that the CVYC’s budget, which had been set at \$20,000.00 for many years, had not maintained the same purchasing power due to rising costs, especially for snacks at member meetings, and the new Living Wage standard. See **Appendix C** for a copy of the letter submitted to Council. **City Council approved a budget increase** to \$26,000.00 and the increased funds will be used for the Coordinator’s hours, operational expenses and BCHC’s support.

See **Appendix A** for a detailed financial report and break down of the expenses and revenues received through the City of Victoria, additional fundraising and partnerships.

THANK YOU!

The CVYC is continually overwhelmed by the support and encouragement of such a variety of community members and organizations. The CVYC would like to first acknowledge that we do our work on the lands of the **Esquimalt, Songhees, Lekwungen and Coast Salish people**.

Secondly, we are incredibly grateful for the support of **City of Victoria Staff and City Councilors**; their mentorship and guidance has been invaluable and we look forward to strengthening our relationship in the coming years. We would especially like to thank Lisa Helps, our City Council Liaison, Jeremy Loveday, and our City Staff Liaison, Bridget Frewer for their tireless energy, ideas and support throughout the 2015-2016 Term.

Thirdly, we would like to thank our dedicated, hard working and energetic **Members**; without them, we would not be what we are! We would like to express many thanks and congratulations to the 24 Members that made the 2015-2016 term what it was. Each and every one of them contributed unique skills and ideas.

Fourthly, a special thank you to our **collaborators and funders** this year! As our cornerstone funder, we so appreciate the City of Victoria for valuing the contribution youth make to our City.

To finish, a fifth and final thank you to **BC Healthy Communities**, our host organization! BCHC has been incredibly supportive of the CVYC, providing hands on help to the CVYC Coordinator and providing provincial scope and perspective to our initiatives.

APPENDIX A – CVYC FINANCIALS 2015-2016

CVYC REVENUES 2014- 2015 (Date: July 15, 2015)		REVENUES
City of Victoria - Annual Grant	20,000.00	
TOTAL REVENUES:	20,000.00	
CVYC EXPENSES 2014- 2015 (Date: July 15, 2015)		EXPENSES
CVYC Coordinator		13899.02
Office Supplies		85.42
CVYC Meetings (snacks, supplies etc.)		871.04
Travel		94.10
Printing		88.69
Marketing & Design		90.00
Web Costs (hosting, domain, web support)		367.44
Telephone (CVYC Coordinator's phone)		150.00
Training & Development (CVYC Retreat, Presenter Honorarium, etc.)		196.83
Special Youth Projects:		
> Employability Fair		482.45
> Life Hacks 2.0 Event		1321.69
> Earth Walk		103.32
CVYC Evaluation Framework		250.00
BCHC Administrative Support		2000.00
TOTAL EXPENSES:	20,000.00	
	Difference:	0.00

APPENDIX B – CVYC PARTICIPATION AGREEMENT

November 2015

To ensure that everyone in our group feels accepted and heard, we will abide by the following guidelines.

Group Dynamics

- Be open minded and respect everyone's diverse perspective
- Ensure that we all feel comfortable and that we foster a welcoming environment
- Understanding that everyone can have a bad day or two
- Use "I" statements, rather than "we" statements when speaking on behalf of the group
- Maintain an inclusive vibe, that keeps some personal things personal
- Make sure that we are recycling/composting when possible, reducing waste (i.e., water bottles, using compostable materials, unpackaged food), supporting other organizations that do the same and use the TV rather than printing out documents

Meeting Structure

- Select a facilitator, but not a dictator
- Set a clear agenda in advance of meetings and ensure that everyone agrees, and is aware, of the goals of a meeting
- Equal sharing of work across members, and frequent check-ins to make sure that everyone still feels good about their commitment
- Work in small groups, as well as large ones
- Frequently check-in with the group about the mood in the room
- Meetings should end on time, or the facilitator should check in about an extension
- Cell phones can be used as tools, but they shouldn't distract from what is happening in the room (i.e., No Candy Crush)
- Acknowledge that meetings are taking place on Indigenous/Coast Salish territories (take turns doing this and explaining the significance to you)
- Introduce new people with their name, as well as their pronoun
- Start meetings with personal check-ins and ensure that there is time for socializing
- Set a tone that allows anyone to speak out if they don't feel good or comfortable

Decision Making

- Ideally, decisions should be made by consensus (everyone agrees or can live with the decision)

- Decisions on projects should not require a consensus because if someone disagrees, then they don't necessarily have to work on that project
- Decisions made in meetings should be documented and included in minutes that are sent out to everyone. If someone disagrees with a decision, then they can bring it up at the next meeting

Conflict Resolution

- No public shaming, rather take an individual aside and create a safe space for sharing concerns
- Call in, instead of calling out: everyone can learn from their mistakes and explaining why something is offensive or disrespectful is much more productive than launching an attack
- Disagree with the idea, not the person

APPENDIX C – SELECTED QUOTES FROM THE END OF TERM SURVEY

My favourite thing about the CVYC this year was:

- “Meeting like-minded youth who were committed to positively impacting the community through youth-driven initiatives.”
- “I loved being able to speak about issues I feel passionate about. I enjoyed working with a team to bring these ideas to life!”
- “The really amazing and welcoming people who are so devoted to their community and to creating a fun, positive environment.”
- “Talking to people that I otherwise wouldn't have met, and learning more about city council and Victoria.”

In your opinion, what is the role of the CVYC in Victoria?

- “To represent a youth voice.”
- “The CVYC has the role of being an avenue for youth to express their ideas on how to improve Victoria in a place where they may actually become real events and projects”
- “I believe the CVYC gives youth a voice in the city. It also provides an engaging environment to kick-start an interest in politics or being the change one wants to see in the world.”

The most significant change I have experienced through my participation in the CVYC is:

- “Through CVYC, I have developed a greater understanding of how to present topic-sensitive ideas to large audiences in a respectful and positive way. This knowledge changed my perspective on how to communicate with others.”
- “I feel more comfortable speaking in front of a group of people.”
- “A closer connection to my local government and city.”
- “I know that I'm capable of more than I thought before, and that encourages me to take more opportunities and volunteer.”

APPENDIX D- INCREASED FUNDING REQUEST

November 4, 2015

Re: Request for increase funding – City of Victoria Youth Council

Dear City of Victoria Mayor and Council,

On April 14, 2005 the City of Victoria Council approved the establishment of the City of Victoria Youth Council (CVYC). The mission of the CVYC is to be a diverse group that offers a voice for the youth of Victoria. Now, 10 years later, the CVYC has more than proven to be an effective voice for youth across the City and has strongly demonstrated what youth engagement looks like. The CVYC has an impressive track record of projects and initiatives that support moving from dialogue to action and supporting the City of Victoria to be a friendlier place for all youth. BC Healthy Communities Society (BCHC) acts as the host organization for CVYC and provides overarching supports to the Youth Council including: high level supervision and mentoring, safe and accessible meeting spaces, contribution to strategic visioning and planning sessions training supports, review and feedback on action plans and review of reports to fulfill requirements to the City. BCHC is submitting this letter to you as the host agency on behalf of the City of Victoria Youth Council.

With the support of an annual grant of \$20,000 from the City of Victoria and the efforts of BCHC and the CVYC Coordinator we were able to grow the CVYC from a small group of members to an annual average membership of 25 members. The success of the CVYC has resulted in many ongoing enquiries and invitations for collaboration, which are requesting more capacity and supports from BCHC and the CVYC Coordinator. As the CVYC is growing we had to take a moment to reflect on the program's sustainability, specifically considering the increased costs for meeting and project related expenses as well as offering a more competitive wage for the CVYC Coordinator position in line with Victoria's Living Wage standards. This year the CVYC had challenges to recruit and attract a new Coordinator given the large amount of hours and the flexibility required to fulfill the role for the reimbursement provided.

In order to support the CVYC in a more sustainable matter and continue to build on their great work in the Victoria community we're asking City Council to increase funding for the City of Victoria Youth Council by \$6,000.00 (from \$20,000.00 to \$26,000.00 starting September 2016 (for the 2016-2017 term). Of this \$26,000.00 we will allocate \$15,000.00 to cover the CVYC Coordinator's wages and related costs, \$7,609.00 to CVYC's project and operational expenses and the remaining \$3,391.00 to BCHC's time to support the CVYC.

Important to note is that we have been working more closely with our City staff liaison and City staff to explore additional ways that the City can support the CVYC to address some of the capacity constraints. Current efforts have been made around streamlining City staff requests to the CVYC, providing communication supports, offering meeting space and more efficient ways of information sharing.

We are thankful for the support provided by City Council and staff that has allowed the CVYC to grow and flourish for 10 years. The CVYC is excited to contribute to the implementation of the strategic plan and we see a great role for youth in the City to make it a vibrant and inclusive place to live, work and play.

Thank you for your consideration.

Best regards,

Jodi Mucha,

Executive Director
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