



Volunteer Program and Volunteer Resource Centre

Rationale:

The *Volunteer Program* provides **skill development** opportunities for volunteers that are designed to appeal to the wide range of interests, abilities and availability among community members.

The *Volunteer Resource Centre* provides **support to organizations** looking to **locate volunteers** and helps to **match interested community members** to meaningful, local volunteer activities.

Both programs aim to promote **service learning** and **youth volunteering**.



Impacts:

- There is a current base of approximately **250 volunteers**.
- Volunteers are **essential and keep programs successfully operating** at Town House.
- Volunteers contribute approximately \$180,000 (in kind) per year.
- Many volunteers have been involved since the 1970s, showing satisfaction with their involvement.
- A structured *Volunteer Program* helps to **maintain the existing volunteer base while attracting new volunteers**.
- The *Volunteer Program* **promotes and enhances inclusion** (some volunteers are living with various disabilities, etc.).
- The *Volunteer Program* has played a role in helping people to complete their educational studies (placement hours) and secure employment via resume building and portfolio development.

Processes:

- A *Volunteer Coordinator* (a part-time position since 2010) recruits, screens, orients, trains, schedules, and provides feedback to volunteers.
- The Volunteer Coordinator maintains a database of active volunteers and past volunteers.
- Volunteers are matched to programs that suit their interests, availability and skill-set/abilities.
- Volunteers at *Town House* might help organize donated clothing at the *Clothing Depot*; set up and serve tables at *Seniors Brunches*; help with four year olds in the *Nursery School* classroom; manage a yard sale or fundraising table; cook or deliver meals with the *Meals on Wheels Program*; fill school bags with donated supplies through the *Backpack Program*. These are just some of the numerous available opportunities.
- Volunteers are recognized at Christmas buffets, through *Volunteer of the Month* and at a Volunteer Tea in September. Certificates and pins are awarded according to years of service.



Strategic Innovations:

Citizens Service League Board of Directors has **approved a strategic plan** to guide their work over the next number of years. Actions from the strategic plan that fall under the *Volunteer Resource Program* would be:

- ▶ Regularly advertise that there are many different ways to volunteer at *Town House* ranging from those shorter term in nature (e.g. yard sales) to more long term commitments (e.g. Seniors Contact Program) – in order to appeal to people with various lifestyles.
- ▶ Ensure that recruitment plans include reaching out to prospective volunteers of various ages, backgrounds and experiences -- e.g. youth wanting to learn about their community and build their resume; university/college students requiring a completion of practicum/placement hours; international students/immigrants/newcomers looking for connections in the area; retirees looking for new activity; or people recovering from addiction or mental illness looking for structured activity, as examples.
- ▶ Provide adequate and unique training sessions, workshops and professional development for volunteers.
- ▶ Remain informed of current best practices in the volunteer sector in terms of screening, recruiting, training, and maintaining volunteers.