



Department Source: Community Development - NS

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: December 18, 2017

Re: Annual report of Volunteer Service to the City

Executive Summary

Each year the Office of Neighborhood Services (ONS) provides to Council a report of the efforts of volunteers who support the City of Columbia. In FY17, volunteers shared 42,251 hours of service valued at greater than \$1 million.

Discussion

In FY17, volunteers shared 42,251 hours of service supporting eleven departments. This reflects an increase of 20% over FY16. Parks & Recreation had the greatest support from volunteers, with 21,473 hours contributed to 60 different programs and activities. The Community Development Department logged 9,385 hours and City Utilities including Solid Waste and Stormwater had 6,268 hours of service.

Highlights for FY17 included:

- Invasive plant removal: This year, invasive removal and habitat restoration accounted for the largest number of hours with 8,947 or 21% of all volunteer hours. A new Adopt-A-Trail Program initiated through Parks & Recreation with support from the Office of Sustainability has involved 29 individuals, families or groups adopting 8.25 miles of trail for vegetation management. Nearly 8,000 hours of service were shared by students from the Columbia Public Schools science program led by Mike Szydowski.
- Litter pickup: Trash pickup continues to be an important role for volunteers. Litter pickups are held along streets and in our streams and parks through special events like Cleanup Columbia, ongoing efforts through the Adopt A Spot Litter Control program and Columbia Crawdads and one-time pickups throughout the year. Volunteers contributed 8,381 hours, nearly 20% of all hours, to litter pickup estimated at more than 5,800 bags.
- Special events: Volunteers continue to play an important role the City's many festivals and special events. In FY17, volunteers shared contributed to the success of more than 25 events, most with Parks & Recreation including races, festivals, children's sporting events and Neighborhood Park Fun Days.
- Adopt-A-Spot Beautification: There are 100 spots and rain gardens cared for by volunteers. In FY17, the Public Works Street Division worked with staff in the Office of Sustainability and Volunteer Programs to establish more native plants in roundabouts and public right of way to reduce the City's mowing responsibility and make these areas more manageable for volunteers. This work will continue in the coming year.
- Recycling Ambassadors: Volunteers continue to educate the community about recycling and waste reduction. This year, 34 Recycling Ambassadors shared time to increase Columbia's recycling rate. They assisted with nineteen education



City of Columbia

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presentations for a total audience of 857 individuals. Tabling and education booths resulted in 1,072 quality engagements with the public about waste reduction and proper recycling. Four facilities were waste audited with the assistance of Recycling Ambassadors. Waste Audits are one of the most effective education tools in making an impact on the volunteer participant.

- Residential Composting Program: Three volunteer Compost Workshop Instructors conducted eleven Compost Workshops with a total attendance of 239. Program evaluations show that 83% compost workshop attendees are actively composting and diverting their kitchen and yard waste from the landfill, with the remainder indicating they plan to do so.
- CERT: A significant change was the transfer of the management of the Community Emergency Response Team or CERT from the Columbia Fire Department to the Boone County Office of Emergency Management. These hours are no longer reflected as City volunteer hours due to this change. However, some individual volunteers with CERT share their time on City of Columbia events.

Staff believes the contributions that residents share are tremendous and there is strong support among staff and the community for volunteer service with the City. Volunteer service to the City fluctuates from year to year due to staff changes, department priorities and volunteer preferences.

In addition to the hours and service represented in this report, hundreds of volunteers share time on more than 40 Boards & Commissions that advise the City council and staff.

Fiscal Impact

Short-Term Impact: Volunteers share time each year valued at \$800,000 or more.

Long-Term Impact: Volunteers have been serving the City of Columbia for many years and we anticipate their service well into the future.

Strategic & Comprehensive Plan Impacts

Strategic Plan Impacts:

Primary Impact: Social Equity, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Comprehensive Plan Impacts: ac

Primary Impact: Not Applicable, Secondary Impact: Secondary, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Legislative History

Date	Action
n/a	n/a

Suggested Council Action

Acceptance of this report.