



Department Source: Community Development - NS

To: City Council

From: City Manager & Staff

Council Meeting Date: December 19, 2016

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 FY16, volunteers shared 35,180 hours of service valued at nearly \$829,000.

Discussion

In FY16, volunteers shared 35,180 hours of service supporting twelve departments. Parks & Recreation had the greatest support from volunteers, with 14,342 hours contributed to 60 different programs and activities. The Community Development Department logged 8,812 hours and City Utilities including Solid Waste and Stormwater had 5,803 hours of service.

Highlights for FY16 included:

- 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 more than 7,500 hours, nearly a quarter of all hours, to litter pickup.
- Invasives removal: Thanks to many passionate volunteers, 2,259 hours of service was given to remove invasive plant species along trails and in our parks. Many hours were contributed by students with the Columbia Public Schools through their science program. The CHiRP (Columbia Habitat Restoration Project) group has had regular work sessions throughout the year. The Parks & Recreation Forestry staff has also worked on several invasives removal projects and is ramping up to start an Adopt A Trail program in 2017.
- Historic preservation: The Historic Preservation Commission along with community volunteers led a project to salvage items from the James Hotel. These items were sold to the public in September. Volunteers shared 685 hours of service in FY16.
- Recycling Ambassadors: This program started in FY14 to educate residents about recycling and waste reduction and involve them in teaching others. Twenty-three Recycling Ambassadors shared more than 430 hours of service.
- Sign Sweepers: Seven volunteers started as Sign Sweepers in FY16 to assist the City in removing illegal signs from our right-of-way. These volunteers will help beautify our City and hopefully discourage the placement of illegal signs.

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. Overall volunteer hours are up 2% from the previous year with eight departments with increased or steady



City of Columbia

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volunteer support from the previous year. An exact number of volunteers is difficult to calculate due to many group activities but we estimate more than 6,000 individuals volunteer with the City each year. 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 approximately \$800,000.
Long-Term Impact: Volunteers have been serving the City of Columbia for many years and we anticipate their service well into the future.

Vision & Strategic Plan Impact

Vision Impacts: Volunteering is essential in our overall vision of a “Connected, Informed, Engaged Community”

Primary Impact: Parks, Recreation & Greenways, Secondary Impact: Community Pride & Human Relations, Tertiary Impact: Tertiary

Strategic Plan Impacts:

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

Comprehensive Plan Impacts:

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.