



BUILDING A CONCORD COMMUNITY VOLUNTEER CORP

REDUCING COSTS, STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY, AND EXPANDING SERVICES

Why This Matters

Mayor Champlin has warned that Concord faces "difficult choices" over the next several budget cycles. As taxpayers continue to face rising property taxes, we must explore innovative ways to maintain and improve city services without continuously increasing staffing costs.

One proven solution is the creation of a formal, citywide volunteer program.

Communities across the country have successfully leveraged volunteers to supplement municipal services, increase community engagement, and reduce pressure on operating budgets. Concord already has several successful volunteer-based programs. The opportunity before us is to expand and coordinate these efforts under a unified citywide initiative.





VOLUNTEER

SUCCESSFUL MUNICIPAL MODELS

Mesa, Arizona

Mesa operates a citywide volunteer program that places residents in parks, recreation, neighborhood cleanups, public events, libraries, museums, and public safety support roles. Volunteers contribute thousands of hours annually, allowing paid staff to focus on specialized responsibilities.

<https://www.gov1.com//finance/articles/mesa-saves-5m-using-volunteers-xHqepPbocpaQpJqE/>

Arlington, Texas

Arlington's Municipal Volunteer Program recruits, trains, screens, and places volunteers throughout city departments. The city uses volunteers to support public events, community outreach, tourism activities, and public safety initiatives.

<https://www.arlingtontx.gov/Government/Departments/Department-Directory/Parks-Recreation-Culture/Parks-Recreation-Culture-Resources/Volunteer-with-Parks-Recreation-Culture>

Lexington, Kentucky

Lexington's Parks and Recreation Volunteer Program engaged more than 4,600 volunteers who contributed over 26,000 hours in a single year.

Volunteers assist with park maintenance, beautification projects, community centers, golf operations, environmental monitoring, and special events.

<https://www.lexingtonky.gov/playing/parks-administration/volunteering-parks-recreation>



VOLUNTEER

WE HAVE THE FOUNDATION

Concord residents have repeatedly demonstrated a willingness to volunteer:

- The Audi relies heavily on volunteers to support operations and performances.
- Concord Public Library volunteers contribute approximately 1,200 hours annually.
- The Clean Up Concord Initiative mobilizes residents to improve neighborhoods and public spaces.
- Numerous Boards and Commissions depend entirely on volunteer service.
- Trail Stewards and the New England Mountain Bike Association help maintain recreational trails.
- Community groups routinely support city events, conservation projects, and recreational activities.

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The question is not whether Concord residents are willing to volunteer. The question is whether the City will create a coordinated system to maximize that willingness.



VOLUNTEER

POTENTIAL VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

A Concord Community Volunteer Corps could support:

Parks & Recreation

- Park cleanup and beautification
- Trail maintenance
- Event staffing
- Athletic program support

Beaver Meadow Golf Course

- Course marshals
- Starter positions
- Tournament support
- Landscaping assistance

Library Services

- (Already in progress)

Concord City Auditorium

- (Already in progress)

Environmental & Public Works Initiatives

- Stream monitoring
- Litter collection
- Tree planting
- Community cleanups



BENEFITS TO CONCORD

Reduce Cost Pressures

Every volunteer hour represents work that would otherwise require staff time, overtime, or future hiring.

Increase Community Ownership

Residents become active participants in improving their city rather than simply consumers of municipal services.

Build Civic Pride

Volunteers develop stronger connections to city facilities, programs, and neighborhoods.

Preserve Services

As budget pressures increase, volunteer programs can help maintain service levels without expanding payroll obligations.



RECOMMENDATION

Direct city manager to work with staff to develop a proposal for a Concord Community Volunteer Corps that:

1. Work with the Audi and library to create a volunteer recruitment and tracking system.
2. Identifies volunteer opportunities across all city departments.
3. Establishes training, screening, and risk-management procedures.
4. Quantifies volunteer hours and estimated taxpayer savings annually.
5. Returns to Council with an implementation plan and budget estimate.

Concord has a long history of volunteerism. By creating a citywide volunteer program, we can strengthen community engagement, preserve services, and help address the financial challenges facing our taxpayers.