



CITY COUNCIL AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: September 4, 2025
From: Christina Fernandez, Assistant City Manager
Subject: City of Brisbane Volunteer Initiative

Recommendation

Staff recommends that the City Council receive a report on citywide volunteer initiatives and provide direction to staff on the creation of a comprehensive citywide volunteer initiative.

Background

On March 22, 2025, the City Council discussed and provided staff direction on its top three Council priorities for Fiscal Year 2025-2026. Top priorities included (1) maintaining the Fiscal Health of the City, (2) Improving Existing City Facilities, and (3) emphasizing the creation of a coordinated and comprehensive volunteer initiative.

Existing Volunteer Opportunities

The City has a proud history of an engaged community willing to lend their talents for the greater good. City Manager's office staff requested city departments provide a list of their existing programs as well as potential volunteer opportunities.

Existing opportunities include:

- Invasive Species Removal
- Habitat Restoration
- Coastal Clean Up Days
- Assembling New Resident Packets
- Outreach for various low-income utility programs
- Photography volunteer opportunities
- Adopt-A-Drain Program
- Senior Programs
- Senior Lunches
- Special Event Support
- Youth Sports Coaches
- Leaders in Training
- Community Garden
- Age Friendly Task Force
- Commissions and Committees

The City of Brisbane Volunteerism Survey

In order to better understand the interests of community members and explore the potential expansion of volunteer opportunities, a citywide volunteerism survey was released to the public on August 4, 2025; the survey closed on August 22 and 43 responses were received. The results of the survey show that the majority of residents were aware of volunteer opportunities in the City, many learning of these opportunities through the STAR Newsletter and by word-of-mouth. (Table 1)

4. If yes, how did you hear about it?

25/43 - Multiple choice - choose many - optional

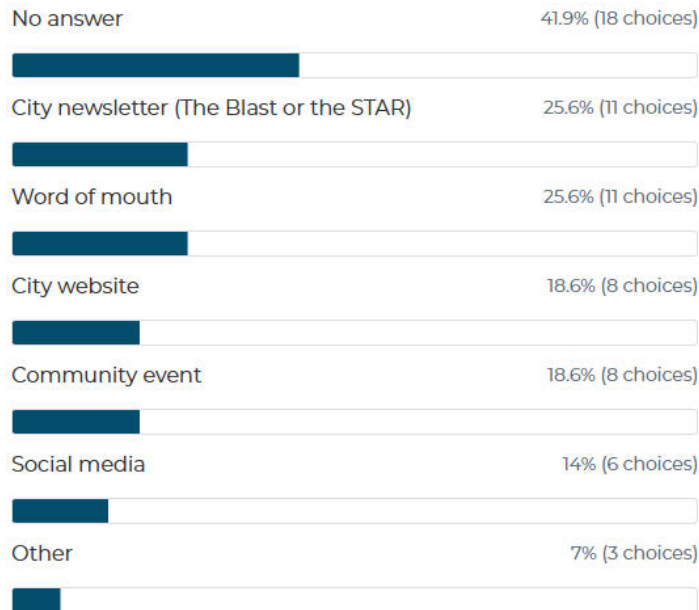


Table 1

Additionally, the majority of responding residents were interested in outdoor activities (46.5%), event-based opportunities (44.2%), or ongoing/regular commitments (27.9%). Approximately 25% were interested in indoor activities and 14% were interest in youth volunteer opportunities. Approximately 18% were undecided on the type of activity. (Table 2)

5. What type of volunteer activities are you interested in?

29/43 - Multiple choice - choose many - optional

Outdoor activities (e.g. park clean-ups, tree planting) 46.5% (20 choices)



One-time or event-based opportunities 44.2% (19 choices)



No answer 32.6% (14 choices)



Ongoing or regular commitments 27.9% (12 choices)



Indoor activities (i.e. office support, event planning) 25.6% (11 choices)



Not sure yet 18.6% (8 choices)



Youth or teen volunteer programs 14% (6 choices)



Other 4.7% (2 choices)



Table 2

Regarding the City's current volunteer opportunities, responding residents were interested in Special Event Support such as Day in the Park or Coastal Cleanups, as well as assistance in (1) Assembling New Resident Packets, (2) Adult Literacy, (3) Habitat Restoration and (4) Removal of Invasive Species. Approximately 23% were interested in participating in City Committees. The top choices are listed below in *Table 3*. For the full list of opportunities, please refer to the full survey results in Attachment 1.

6. The City of Brisbane currently offers a variety of volunteer opportunities. Which of the following would you be interested in?

28/43 - Multiple choice - choose many - optional

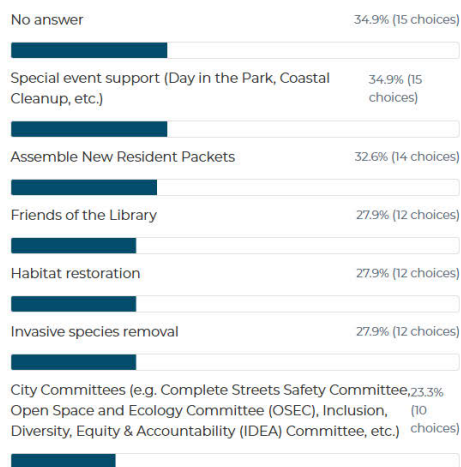


Table 3

When asked if there were other opportunities respondents would like the City to consider offering, respondents were interested in a Fix-It Clinic, Tree Care and Advocacy Program, Expanded stewardship of Open Spaces, School and Afterschool volunteering, and a skills-bank exchange.

Respondents also noted that they would be interested in contributing their talents to the community in the form of providing activities for teens/young adults with disabilities, grant writing, and protecting natural spaces.

Overall, there is strong interest in environmental stewardship, community events, senior support, and practical skill-sharing.

Potential Volunteer Programs

Based on direction provided at the City Council retreat in March, staff worked to identify potential volunteer programs or an expansion of existing programs. Some of these programs will be contingent on city resources and staff capacity. Additionally, some of these potential opportunities have been discussed informally by Council, staff, or committees in the past but have yet to be formally created. The potential programs listed below are categorized according to issue areas of interest as identified in the volunteerism survey.

<i>Beautification</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Benches• Plogging• Painting at Community Parking Seating Wall• Flower Planting at Community Park• Painting of concrete benches along the Bay Trail• Public Art Ambassadors	<i>Environmental Stewardship</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Ivy Removal• Community Hikes• Crocker Trail Trash Pick Up• Adopt a Planting Strip
<i>Outreach/Community Events</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Outreach with Bakfiet Cargo Bike• Public engagement/community outreach (like posting flyers around town)• Administrative support at the Sunrise Room• Distribution of Emergency Preparedness materials via door hangers• Youth Votes Project	<i>Skill-Sharing</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Skill bank/Talent Share• Fix-It Clinic• Tech and E-Waste Sorting Help• Staining of wooden benches at Sierra Point

Staff analyzed the citywide survey results and information provided by city departments to put together a workplan for a comprehensive volunteer initiative for Council review and feedback.

Discussion

Staff recommends that the City Council discuss the types of volunteer activities it wishes to include in a comprehensive volunteer program that includes both outward and internal facing tools to ensure a robust volunteer base in Brisbane.

Some of the potential tools include building a repository of volunteers, which would allow departments to have access to a list of known volunteers and their interests. This allows for more targeted outreach to those volunteers for specific events. It also ensures that the City is able to maintain necessary administrative paperwork such as volunteer waivers.

Staff recommends a standardized Volunteer Interest Form for all volunteer activities. This Volunteer Interest Form would include types of volunteer opportunities, days of the week available, preferred times, preferred methods of communication, and talents or skills volunteers may be able to offer.

The interest form would be made available on a dedicated City website specifically for volunteers. The City website is currently undergoing a refresh, and this provides staff the opportunity to create an integrated volunteer webpage which will include the volunteer interest form, available volunteer opportunities, and a volunteer repository to be created.

Staff will utilize the STAR newsletter to provide residents with information about volunteer events, the City's calendar of events, and other relevant information for volunteers like potential trainings.

Pending Council feedback and direction, staff anticipates creating a new dedicated webpage for publication during the unveiling of the new website in the Fall 2025. The creation of the standard volunteer template and interest form will begin in September and be finalized by October, in time for placement on the new webpage.

Concurrently, staff will also begin building a repository of volunteers through a coordinated effort with all city departments. A new volunteer section of the STAR newsletter will take place once the repository is built out and the webpage is live. Staff anticipates capturing the many holiday volunteer opportunities available. Through the use of new project management tools, staff will capture and track volunteer information, providing the City with a repository of volunteers to call upon when needed. Volunteerism may also help in future volunteer recruitment efforts and assist in the management of the volunteer corps.

Conclusion

Based on Council direction at the Council Retreat in March, staff surveyed the public and city departments to better understand existing volunteer opportunities and potential expansion of opportunities in the near future. The proposed workplan is a reflection of that data. Should Council wish to proceed with the workplan as outlined above, City staff will begin working on an expanded volunteer program with new volunteer opportunities, standardizing templates, a repository of volunteers, and a dedicated website.

Fiscal Impact

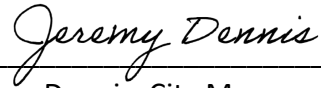
The volunteer initiative has budgeted staff resources. No additional fiscal impacts are known at this time.

Attachments

1. Volunteer Survey



Christina Fernandez, Assistant City Manager



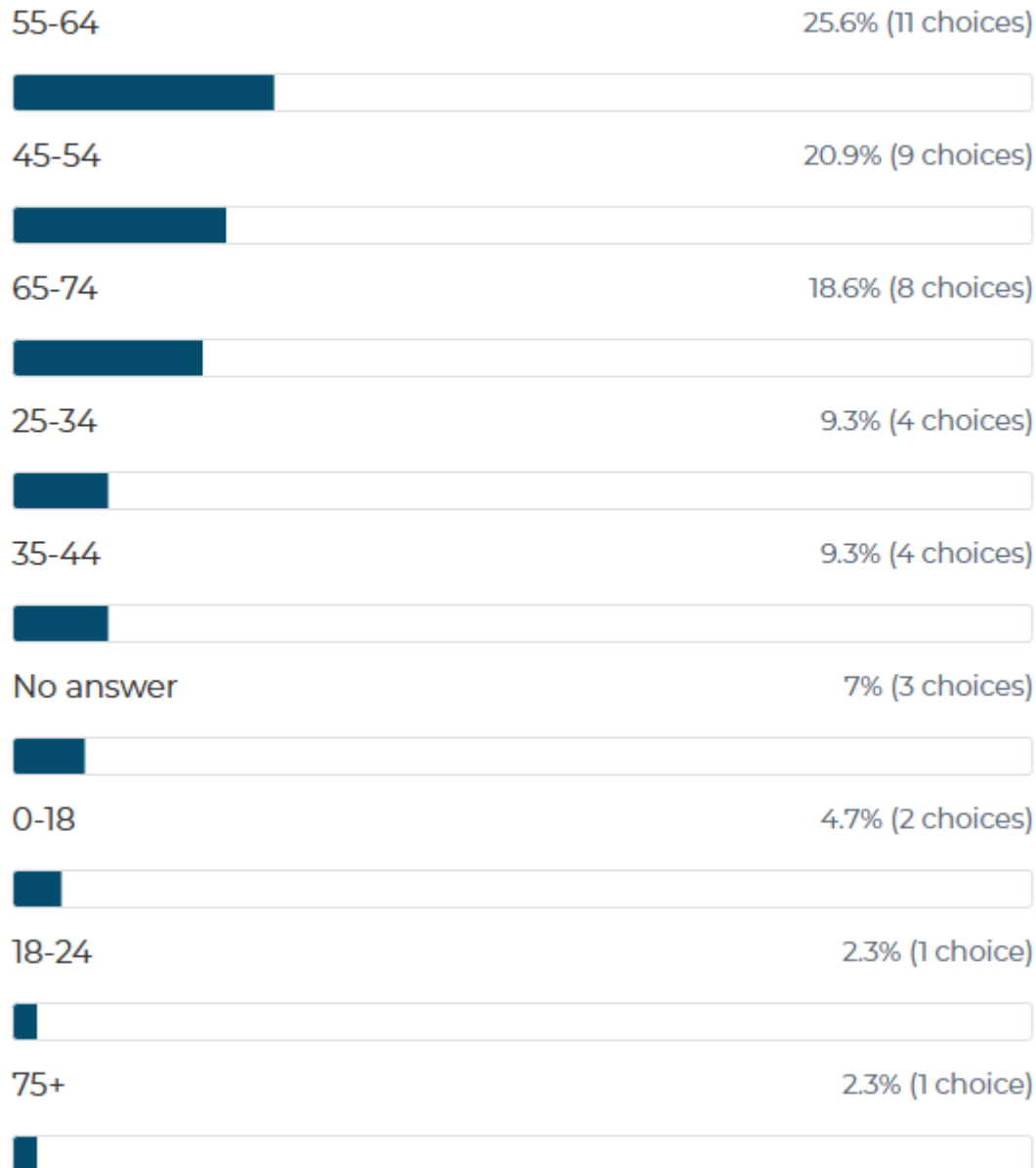
Jeremy Dennis, City Manager

Resident Interest in Volunteerism

August 4, 2025 – August 22, 2025

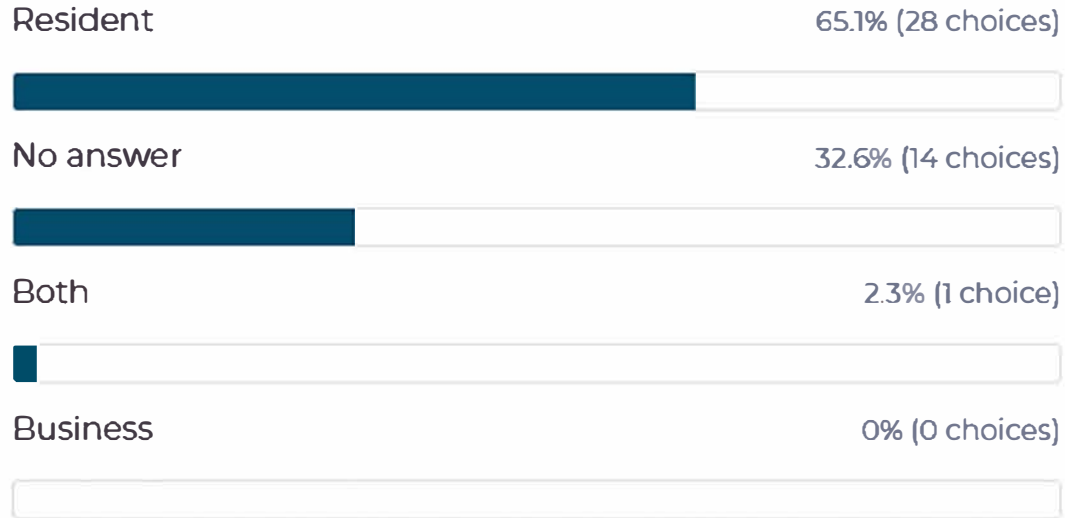
1. What is your age range?

40/43 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



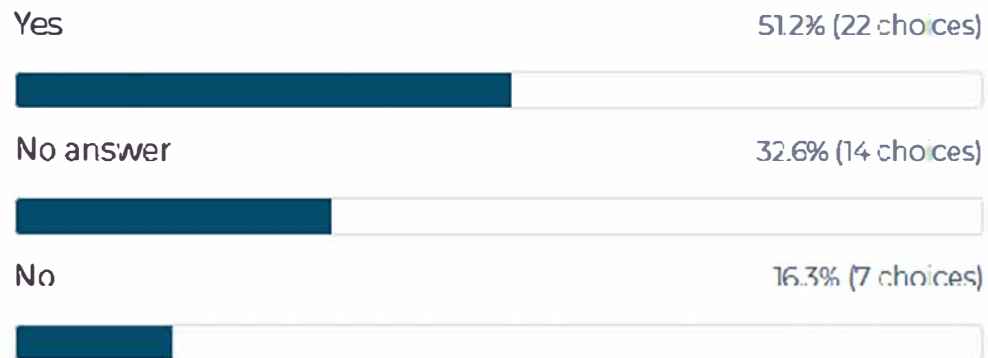
2. Are you a resident or a business?

30/43 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



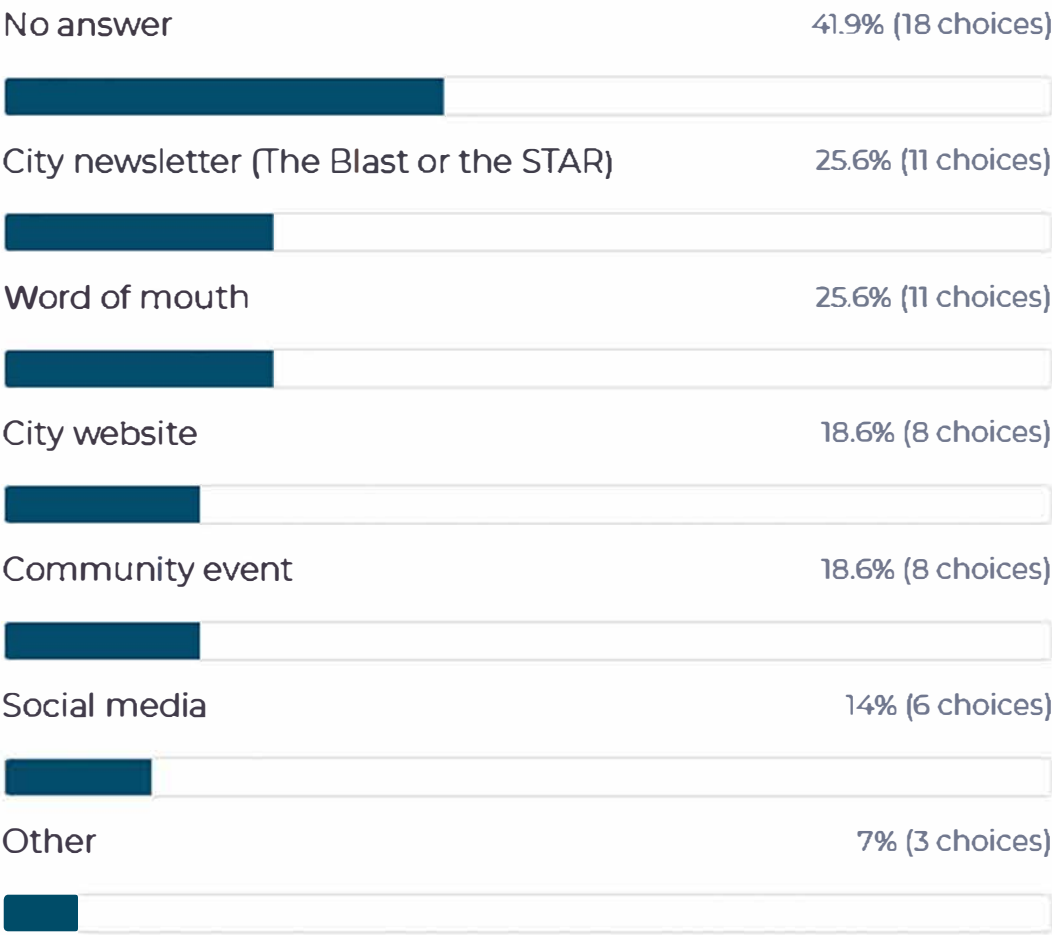
3. Were you aware that you can volunteer with the City of Brisbane?

29/43 - Multiple choice - choose one - optional



4. If yes, how did you hear about it?

25/43 - Multiple choice - choose many - optional



Other responses (3)

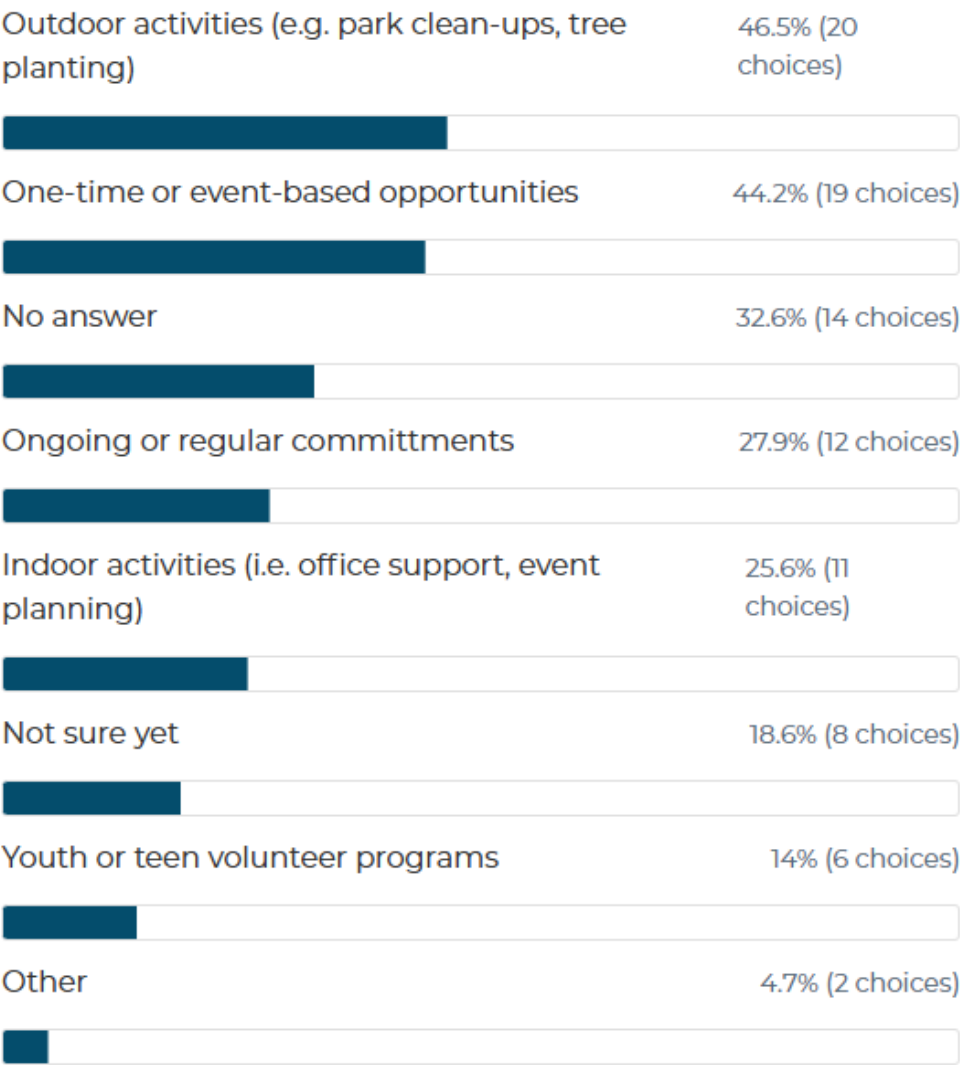
Former employee

Grew up with it.

Referral from a friend.

5. What type of volunteer activities are you interested in?

29/43 - Multiple choice - choose many - optional



Other responses (2)
Just about anything.
Tree health program. Open space advocacy program.

6. The City of Brisbane currently offers a variety of volunteer opportunities. Which of the following would you be interested in?

28/43 - Multiple choice - choose many - optional

No answer 34.9% (15 choices)



Special event support (Day in the Park, Coastal Cleanup, etc.) 34.9% (15 choices)



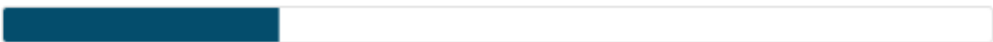
Assemble New Resident Packets 32.6% (14 choices)



Friends of the Library 27.9% (12 choices)



Habitat restoration 27.9% (12 choices)



Invasive species removal 27.9% (12 choices)



City Committees (e.g. Complete Streets Safety Committee, Open Space and Ecology Committee (OSEC), Inclusion, Diversity, Equity & Accountability (IDEA) Committee, etc.) 23.3% (10 choices)



Making, serving, &/or delivering Senior lunches 23.3% (10 choices)



Brisbane 101 (one-day learning event about the City) 18.6% (8 choices)



CERT (Community Emergency Response Training) 18.6% (8 choices)



Distribution of risk reduction materials for Fire Department 16.3% (7 choices)



Adopt-A-Drain 16.3% (7 choices)



Participating in Age-Friendly Task Force 14% (6 choices)



Senior programs (walking groups, tech support, classes, etc.) 14% (6 choices)



Taking photos of Brisbane for use on website, reports, etc. 11.6% (5 choices)



Leaders in Training (youth volunteers) 9.3% (4 choices)



Community Garden oversight 9.3% (4 choices)



Adult Literacy Tutoring 7% (3 choices)



Youth sport coaching 2.3% (1 choice)



LIRA (Low-Income Rate Assistance) or PG&E CARE Assistance 2.3% (1 choice)



7. Are there any other issue areas or volunteer activities you'd like the City to consider offering? (short-answer text box)

- a Fix-It Clinic where skilled residents can help others fix broken items, or a series of classes where they can teach people how to sew, etc.
- Form a volunteer Tree care and assist program to help people properly care for their trees and promote a healthy tree canopy.
- The city staff may need some assistance.
- Skill bank/exchange
- Contribute to a history of Brisbane
- Expanding volunteer events and stewardship opportunities at city open spaces (especially the Brisbane Acres, Costaños Canyon, Firth Canyon). Invasive plant removal, native planting, pathway and trail maintenance
- Beautification projects and clean up
- School and aftercare
- Recycling, Minimizing Waste, Resource Use

8. In what other ways would you like to contribute your time and talents to the community?

3/43 - Short answer - optional

All responses (3)

Activities that are appropriate for teens / young adults with disabilities

Grant writing

protecting natural spaces