Background

On March 12, 2007, the RCC – Norco Strategic Planning Committee unanimously approved the concept of developing an intercollegiate athletics program at Norco College. Accompanying this approval was a Mission Statement and Philosophy for Intercollegiate Athletics. This document sets forth a long-range strategy for implementing intercollegiate athletics at Norco College, detailing the steps to be taken and resources required in order to develop an athletic program consistent with the concept, mission and philosophy previously approved by NSPC.

Phase I (Implementation date fall 2010)

The initial phase of Norco’s intercollegiate athletic program will occur during the 2010/11 academic year. The first step toward implementation will be the accreditation of Norco College, anticipated in January, 2010. By the first week of April, 2010, Norco College will submit an application and supporting documentation for admission to the Foothill Athletic Conference. The first two sports in which Norco College will compete will be men’s and women’s soccer, beginning in the fall, 2010 season.

Establishment of the Norco College Mustangs men’s and women’s soccer teams will occur via one of two means: a) transfer of the Riverside City College Tigers soccer teams to Norco College; or b) establishment of new teams at Norco College. The determination of which of these courses of action to pursue will be made by the College Administration in consultation with Riverside City College and the Riverside City College District Strategic Planning Committee. In the event that the College decides to establish new teams, rather than accept the transfer of the Riverside Tigers soccer teams, club teams will be established for the fall, 2009 soccer season to facilitate the development of intercollegiate men’s and women’s soccer teams to compete in the Foothill Athletic Conference beginning in the fall of 2010.

Resources Required:

- Soccer Facility (funded and currently under construction; scheduled for completion, fall, 2009)
- Coaching Staff (transferred from Riverside under option a, newly hired under option b)
- Eligibility Clerk (either part-time classified or assigned to PE instructor via special project or reassigned time)
- Field Maintenance Personnel (additional groundskeeper budgeted for fy 09/10)
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- Locker Room Attendant (part-time, hourly)
- Athletic Trainer (part-time contract)
- Uniforms (Associated Students Norco College or General Fund)
- Travel and officials (Associated Students Norco College or General Fund)
- Administration (either VP, Educational Services or PE instructor compensated via special project or reassigned time)

Phase II (Implementation date fall 2012)

This phase entails the addition of softball (women) and wrestling (men). The softball team will compete on the existing RCC – Norco softball field. The wrestling team will utilize leased space off-campus until the completion of the Center for Health, Wellness and Kinesiology, scheduled for completion in 2015 or thereafter.

Additional Resources Required:

- Softball Facility Enhancements (from Measure C, scheduled maintenance or instructional capital equipment funds)
- Coaching Staff (transferred from Riverside for softball under option a, newly hired under option b)
- Uniforms, Travel, Officials, Support Staff, Administration (see above)
- Leased Space (until gym facility completed)

Phase III (Implementation date 2015 or upon completion of facilities)

During this phase the college will add men’s and women’s basketball, men’s and women’s volleyball and men’s and women’s track and field. These teams, in addition to the existing wrestling team, will compete in the College’s Center for Health, Wellness and Kinesiology, which will include a gymnasium and outdoor track and field facilities.

Additional Resources Required:

- Facilities (gym and track, currently on District Facilities Master Plan, requires State bond funding and local match with likely completion date no earlier than 2015)
- Coaching Staff (newly hired)
- Maintenance Personnel (additional staffing needed to maintain new facilities to be paid from general fund)
- Eligibility Clerk (full-time, classified position)
- Athletic Counselor (full-time faculty position, with 50% assignment to athletic counseling)
- Athletic Trainer (full-time, classified position)
- Athletic Director (full-time, management position with possible additional responsibilities)
Budgeting for Intercollegiate Athletics at Norco College

REVENUES

Support for intercollegiate athletics comes from a variety of sources, including state apportionment revenue, instructional capital equipment grants, student activities fees and revenue from tickets to athletic events.

State Apportionment Revenue (the primary source of general fund revenues) is by far and away the largest source of funding for community college athletic programs. Expenditure of these revenues in support of athletic programs is justified in light of the fact that athletic programs constitute significant generators of enrollment. Student athletes are required to be enrolled as full-time students. Each athlete, therefore, generates one FTES during the semester of competition and, should they remain enrolled in the off-season semester, two FTES per year, representing approximately $8,800 per athlete, per year. To the extent that athletics programs attract students who might not otherwise enroll at the college or, at a minimum, would not otherwise enroll as full-time students, these revenues represent funds that would not be available to the college in the absence of an intercollegiate athletics program. Apportionment revenues generated by athletic teams are, in large part, a function of the size of the team rosters. In general, sports with roster sizes that are large and, in some cases, virtually unlimited (such as wrestling, football, track and field and soccer), apportionment revenues derived from student athlete enrollments can exceed the cost of program operations by a significant margin. Other sports with limited roster sizes, particularly basketball and, to a somewhat lesser extent, volleyball, may not generate apportionment revenue sufficient to offset their costs and may, therefore, require subsidies from other sources. From this perspective, colleges should seek to balance the mix of sports offered, taking care to include several sports with large roster sizes and relatively low operating costs.

Because intercollegiate athletics is an instructional program, the state instructional capital equipment block grant is another important source of funding, although its use is limited to equipment that can be re-used, such as soccer goals, basketballs, wrestling mats and the like. To receive these funds, of course, intercollegiate athletics programs must compete with other instructional programs through the college resource prioritization process. Additionally, the availability of these funds tends to vary significantly from year-to-year.

Student Activities Fees are another important potential source of revenue for intercollegiate athletics programs. In the fy 1008/09 budget for the Associated Students, $232,000 of approximately $540,000 in student fee revenues are
allocated for intercollegiate athletics, all of which presently goes to support Riverside City College Tigers athletic programs. Once Norco becomes accredited, student activities fees paid by Norco College students (currently approximately 24% of the District total, or roughly $130,000 in 08/09) will be available to support various Norco College student activities programs, including intercollegiate athletics, at the discretion of the elected representatives of the Associated Students of Norco College.

Finally, at the community college level, gate receipts rarely comprise a significant source of funds for athletic programs. At best, they provide minimal support for game management staff (officials, etc.).

COSTS
From a budgetary perspective, successful implementation of a community college intercollegiate athletics program demands that close scrutiny be applied to the costs associated with program operations. Key principles to be employed by Norco College in this regard include the following:

1) *Use of Part-time Coaches* – many community colleges employ full-time, tenure-track faculty members to coach athletic teams. This approach has serious implications regarding cost containment. First, the budgeted cost of a faculty position falls in the range of $110,000 annually, including benefits. Secondly, because of the nature of faculty contracts, any work that must be done by coaches outside of the academic calendar, such as recruitment, requires that additional compensation be paid to the faculty member. Even more significantly, given the high propensity for burnout in the community college coaching profession, institutions that employ full-time faculty members as coaches often find themselves having to retain these individuals once they opt to resign their coaching duties or the administration decides to replace them as coaches. For all of these reasons, Norco College intends to rely exclusively on part-time coaches for its intercollegiate athletics program.

2) *Gradual Phase-in of Administrative and Support Positions* – full-time administrators (e.g., Athletic Director) and support positions (counselors, eligibility clerks, maintenance personnel) will be needed once the College begins to offer a broad range of intercollegiate athletic teams (i.e., Phase III). In the interim, the College will rely upon existing faculty, staff and managers or part-time personnel for human resources assigned to the athletic program.

3) *Avoidance of High Cost Programs* – athletics programs such as football, swimming, diving and water polo entail extremely high costs, particularly with regard to facilities, insurance and maintenance personnel. It is Norco’s intent to refrain from offering such programs.
4) Maintenance of Minimum Enrollment Thresholds – All athletic programs require that minimum enrollment thresholds be maintained in order to control costs relative to revenues generated by the program. In the event that a program fails to achieve or maintain an acceptable enrollment threshold for the sport, the program will be discontinued and possible replacement sports with more favorable enrollment prospects may be considered.

Summary and Conclusion

It is the intent of this long-range implementation plan that by 2015 (or the academic year immediately following the completion of the Center for Health, Wellness and Kinesiology), the Norco College intercollegiate athletics program will consist of the following sports:

- Men’s Soccer
- Women’s Soccer
- Softball
- Wrestling
- Men’s Basketball
- Women’s Basketball
- Men’s Volleyball
- Women’s Volleyball
- Men’s Track and Field
- Women’s Track and Field

Supporting the athletic program will be a full-time athletic director, athletic counselor (50% of a full-time counseling assignment), athletic trainer, eligibility clerk, grounds and facilities maintenance personnel and a compliment of part-time coaches. By offering these 10 sports, Norco College will have a range of intercollegiate athletics sufficient to fulfill its role as a comprehensive community college.