



**To:** General Purposes Committee

**Date:** February 12, 2024

**From:** Kim Somerville  
Director, Community Social Development

**File:** 08-4057-11-03/2024-Vol 01

**Re:** **Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029: 2023 Update**

**Staff Recommendations**

1. That the Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029: 2023 Update, as outlined in the staff report titled “Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029: 2023 Update”, dated February 12, 2024 from the Director, Community Social Development, be received for information; and
2. That the Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029: 2023 Update be distributed to key community partners, local Members of Parliament, local Members of the Legislative Assembly and posted on the City’s website.

Kim Somerville  
Director, Community Social Development  
(604-247-4671)

Att. 2

| REPORT CONCURRENCE                 |                                     |                                |
|------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| ROUTED TO:                         | CONCURRENCE                         | CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER |
| Community Bylaws                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                |
| Community Safety                   | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                |
| Facilities and Project Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                |
| Parks Services                     | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                |
| Real Estate Services               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                |
| RCMP                               | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                |
| Recreation and Sport Services      | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |                                |
| <b>SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW</b>  | <b>INITIALS:</b><br>                | <b>APPROVED BY CAO</b><br>     |

## Staff Report

### Origin

Adopted by City Council on September 9, 2019, the City of Richmond Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029 (Homelessness Strategy) is an action-oriented framework that guides the City’s and community partners’ involvement in homelessness for the ten-year period.

Annual Homelessness Strategy Update reports are presented to City Council to ensure Council is apprised of initiatives that address actions outlined in the strategy and to provide a public report of their ongoing progress. This report provides an update of the implementation of the Homelessness Strategy in 2023.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Focus Area #2 Strategic and Sustainable Community Growth.

*2.2 Develop and implement innovative and proactive solutions that encourage a range of housing options and prioritize affordability.*

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Focus Area #6 A vibrant, resilient and active community.

*6.1 Advance a variety of program, services, and community amenities to support diverse needs and interests and activate the community.*

*6.3 Foster intercultural harmony, community belonging, and social connections.*

*6.4 Support vulnerable populations through collaborative and sustainable programs and services.*

This report also supports the City of Richmond’s Homelessness Strategy Strategic Direction #5:

*Communicate, research and monitor homelessness.*

*5.6 Report out annually on the progress of the Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029.*

### Analysis

Homelessness is a critical issue affecting an increasing number of Richmond residents. The causes of homelessness are complex and there are many factors that can lead to someone experiencing homelessness beyond a lack of access to stable, safe and affordable housing. Individuals experiencing homelessness often experience other common barriers to housing, including poverty, mental and physical health challenges, addiction or substance use issues and insufficient health and social supports.

The Metro Vancouver 2023 Homeless Count, conducted on March 7 and 8, 2023, estimated there were a minimum of 162 individuals who identified as experiencing homelessness in Richmond compared to a minimum of 85 people who had been counted in the previous Homeless Count, conducted in 2020. Over this three year period, homelessness in Richmond increased by 91 per cent and the circumstances related to it are much more complex than in previous years. Individuals

who participated in the Homeless Count in 2023 included many who identified as having mental health, physical health and/or drug use issues. This larger and more complex homeless population in Richmond has resulted in additional resources being required in order to address the increasing need in the community.

The Homelessness Strategy is guided by a vision that, by 2029, homelessness in Richmond is rare, brief and non-recurring. To achieve this vision, the strategy outlines five strategic directions:

1. Prevent pathways into homelessness;
2. Support residents who are experiencing homelessness;
3. Provide pathways out of homelessness;
4. Foster collaboration and community building among community partners; and
5. Communicate, research and monitor homelessness.

Under these strategic directions, the Homelessness Strategy identifies 32 actions with associated timelines to be completed over a 10-year period. The Homelessness Strategy provides an action-oriented framework to guide City and community partner involvement in homelessness initiatives in Richmond.

Throughout 2023, the City, together with its community service and public sector partners, continued to make progress in achieving the actions outlined in the Homelessness Strategy. This report provides a summary of the initiatives, services and supports provided by the City of Richmond and its community partners over the past year.

#### Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029: 2023 Highlights

The Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029: 2023 Update (Attachment 1) provides an overview of achievements relating to each of the strategic directions within the Homelessness Strategy undertaken or advanced in 2023. These highlights include:

- In October 2023, City Council approved the extension of Alderbridge Supportive Housing's ground lease for a period of approximately three and a half years until December 31, 2027. This extension will allow additional time for the development of a permanent supportive housing building on City-owned land and help prevent the 40 current tenants from potentially returning to homelessness.
- In November 2023, City Council approved the rezoning of City-owned lands at 4831 Steveston Highway to allow for the construction of a new affordable housing building. The project will be largely financed using funding made available through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation's (CMHC) Rapid Housing Initiative. BC Housing also partnered with the City and CMHC by providing additional capital and operating funding. Ultimately, the development will provide 25 units of affordable housing for women and women with children experiencing or at risk of homelessness and is being advanced on an accelerated timeline with construction completion anticipated in late 2024.

- In response to the increased number of individuals experiencing homelessness and increasingly complex challenges related to homelessness in Richmond, significant resources were approved in November 2023 for inclusion in the City's 2024 Operating Budget. These resources will increase the City's capacity and complement actions the City and its partners will take to respond to homelessness. These include two new Homelessness Outreach Workers, four new Bylaw Officers and funding for the continuation of the Brighthouse Pavilion Drop-in Centre and Shower Program.
- The City continued implementation of a range of initiatives to support Richmond residents experiencing homelessness using provincial funding from a \$3.35 million Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Strengthening Communities' Services grant received in 2021. Highlights of work in 2023 include:
  - **Warming Centres** provide a warm and dry place for individuals experiencing homelessness to access shelter, snacks, warm beverages and referrals to support services on nights of extreme cold throughout the winter months.
    - For the 2022/2023 winter season, The Salvation Army operated a 15 space Warming Centre at the South Arm Outdoor Pool building and Turning Point Recovery Society operated a second 15 space Warming Centre out of the Brighthouse Pavilion building in City Centre for a total of 30 spaces in the two locations.
    - For the 2023/2024 winter season, Turning Point Recovery Society operated Warming Centres at the Brighthouse Pavilion building and the South Arm Outdoor Pool building providing 30 indoor, warm overnight spaces.
    - In December 2023, the City provided additional funding to expand services in both Warming Centre locations to operate every night until April 15, 2024. In addition, the capacity of the South Arm Outdoor Pool site expanded from 15 to 21 spaces. Usage in both locations continued to increase between October and December 2023 and exceeded the usage for the prior year. A total of 619 visits took place during this period.
  - **Drop-in Centre and Shower Program**, located in the Brighthouse Pavilion building, continued operations in 2023 and were operated by Turning Point Recovery Society. They operated Monday to Friday during the day and provided daily meals, access to computers and the internet, service navigation and referrals, as well as shower and laundry services to Richmond residents experiencing homelessness. The total number of visits for the year was 7,318, which greatly exceeded the 2,607 visits in 2022. In December 2023, the City provided additional funding to expand services for the remainder of the 2023/2024 winter season and the Drop-in Centre began operating seven days per week, 12 hours per day. These expanded hours will continue until April 15, 2024.
- The City continued to work with BC Housing and The Salvation Army to support the operation of the Richmond House Emergency Shelter. In 2023, BC Housing approved permanent funding for 15 previously temporary beds to increase total capacity to 45 permanent beds. In addition, BC Housing provided funding for 10 additional extreme cold weather-activated spaces at Richmond House. These 10 spaces were activated only on nights of extreme winter weather. With these additional spaces, Richmond House Shelter

provided a total of 45 regular beds, 10 weather activated spaces, three meals a day, showers, laundry facilities, and assistance in locating housing, services and recreational opportunities for individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond.

- In 2023, The Salvation Army, the Richmond Poverty Reduction Coalition and local faith-based organizations provided nutritious meals to individuals experiencing homelessness who were unable to access community meal programs. The City, through the UBCM grant, provided \$39,500 in funding for food-related initiatives in 2023. This funding was in addition to over \$111,000 provided through the City's Health, Social and Safety Grants to support food delivery and community meal programs in Richmond.

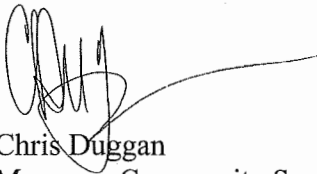
A complete list of the 32 actions outlined in the Homelessness Strategy and the status of each is provided in Attachment 2. Upon Council approval, the Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029: 2023 Update will be distributed to key partners, including local members of Parliament and local members of the Legislative Assembly, and published on the City's website.

### **Financial Impact**

None.

### **Conclusion**

The Homelessness Strategy continues to provide a framework to guide foundational work in supporting individuals in the Richmond community who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness. Throughout 2023, the City, other government agencies, local service providers and individual members of the community worked together to achieve notable progress towards addressing the strategic directions and actions identified in the Homelessness Strategy. While significant progress was made toward achieving a number of actions, homelessness remains a critical, complex and growing issue in the community. The City of Richmond is committed to taking a leadership role to make homelessness in Richmond rare, brief and non-recurring. This will be accomplished by utilizing strong relationships with service providers, and with access to provincial funding through grant programs and services.



Chris Duggan  
Manager, Community Social Development  
(604-204-8621)

- Att. 1: City of Richmond Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029: 2023 Update  
2: Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029 - 2023 Status of Actions





CITY OF RICHMOND  
**HOMELESSNESS  
STRATEGY**  
2019–2029  
**2023 UPDATE**



# CONTENTS

|  |    |
|--|----|
| INTRODUCTION .....   | 1  |
| GOVERNMENTS AND SERVICE PROVIDER ROLES.....                                | 3  |
| City of Richmond .....   | 3  |
| The Province of BC .....   | 4  |
| The Government of Canada .....   | 4  |
| Non-Profit, Social Service and Faith-Based Organizations .....             | 5  |
| HOMELESSNESS IN RICHMOND IN 2023 .....                                     | 6  |
| City Service Enhancements .....  | 8  |
| HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2023 .....                             | 10 |
| Strategic Direction 1: Prevent Pathways into Homelessness .....            | 10 |
| Strategic Direction 2: Support Residents Experiencing Homelessness.....    | 12 |
| Strategic Direction 3: Provide Pathways out of Homelessness.....           | 17 |
| Strategic Direction 4: Foster Collaboration and Community-building.....    | 19 |
| Strategic Direction 5: Communicate, Research and Monitor Homelessness..... | 21 |
| CONCLUSION .....   | 22 |







CITY OF RICHMOND  
**HOMELESSNESS  
STRATEGY**  
2019–2029

ADOPTED SEPTEMBER 2019





## INTRODUCTION

The City of Richmond and its partners are committed to preventing and reducing poverty and homelessness in Richmond, increasing affordable housing options, and fostering the mental health and well-being of its residents, especially those who are vulnerable or experiencing challenges in their lives. This approach aligns with City Council's Strategic Plan 2022–2026 and is related to the creation of a vibrant, active and resilient community that supports the diverse needs of residents and vulnerable populations, and community safety. Affordable housing is a critical factor in circumstances surrounding homelessness, therefore addressing homelessness directly aligns with both the Homelessness Strategy and the City's Affordable Housing Strategy. In addition, the City's 2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond further complements these strategies and together, they advance the City's actions aimed at reducing and preventing poverty and homelessness while also increasing affordable housing options along the housing continuum in Richmond.

The City of Richmond Homelessness Strategy (2019–2029), adopted by City Council on September 9, 2019, is an action-oriented framework that guides City and stakeholder involvement in homelessness initiatives. The Homelessness Strategy is driven by the following vision statement:

*By 2029, homelessness in Richmond is rare, brief and non-recurring. Richmond is an inclusive community that works in collaboration to provide a continuum of housing and support services.*

To achieve this vision, the strategy outlines five strategic directions:

1. Prevent pathways into homelessness;
2. Support residents who are experiencing homelessness;
3. Provide pathways out of homelessness;
4. Foster collaboration and community-building among community partners; and
5. Communicate, research and monitor homelessness.

Under these strategic directions, the Homelessness Strategy identifies 32 actions with associated timelines and priorities to be completed over a 10-year period. At the end of 2023, the City of Richmond reached the halfway point in implementing the Homelessness Strategy. Over the next five years the City is committed to continuing its leadership role to make homelessness in Richmond rare, brief and non-recurring. While any one level of government alone cannot solve homelessness, the City has taken significant steps, in collaboration with key community partners, to invest in an immediate response to homelessness and homelessness prevention.

The number of individuals experiencing homelessness in Metro Vancouver is increasing, including in Richmond, according to Homeless Counts that have taken place across the region every three years since 2002. The 2023 Homeless Count, conducted March 7 and 8, 2023, identified 4,821 people experiencing homelessness across Greater Vancouver. This was an increase from 3,634 in 2020 and represented an increase of 32% since 2020. Homelessness in Richmond also increased between 2020 and 2023, consistent with Greater Vancouver trends. There were a total of 162 people who identified as experiencing homelessness in Richmond in the 2023 count, compared to 85 individuals in 2020.

In addition to the increase in the number of individuals experiencing homelessness, the circumstances facing this vulnerable population have also become more complex. Challenges with mental health conditions, substance use, and physical disabilities within this demographic have resulted in increased demand for services and supports in the community.

Throughout 2023, the City and key stakeholders made significant progress towards advancing actions outlined in the Homelessness Strategy. The following section provides an overview of initiatives taken by the City and community partners over the past year. More information about the Homelessness Strategy, previous Homelessness Strategy Update Reports and additional homelessness resources are available on the City's website.



# GOVERNMENTS AND SERVICE PROVIDER ROLES

## City of Richmond

The City of Richmond is committed to working in partnership with senior levels of government and the private and non-profit sectors to create the appropriate mix of housing and supportive services for the community's diverse population, including residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Recognizing that senior levels of government have the primary responsibility for providing funding for homelessness prevention programs, services for individuals experiencing homelessness and affordable housing, the City is committed to remaining a local leader that works with community organizations to ensure that homelessness in Richmond is rare, brief and non-recurring. Specifically, these roles include:

- **Advocate:** The City works with community organizations to advocate to senior levels of government for funding and programs that work to reduce homelessness.
- **Analyst:** The City monitors local data and best practice research regarding homelessness to update its policies and plans to reflect current and emerging trends.
- **Communicator:** The City uses best practice research to educate and promote the benefits of an inclusive and mixed income community and the necessity to create a compassionate, non-judgmental response to experiences of homelessness.
- **Supporter:** The City assists non-profit housing and service providers by facilitating collaboration, enabling capacity building, and providing financial and in-kind supports.
- **Partner:** The City collaborates and partners with senior levels of government, and the private and non-profit sectors to develop a mix of affordable housing options and to elicit support for other services to assist individuals experiencing homelessness.
- **Planner:** The City gathers information, research and feedback on community needs regarding residents at risk of or experiencing homelessness in order to create policy and implement actions that support housing and homelessness focused services in Richmond.

Through the City's relationship-based approach, the City works with community partners, including Community Associations and Societies, to ensure that City facilities, including libraries and community centres, continue to provide safe spaces where residents experiencing homelessness are able to connect socially with others and receive information about supports and services in Richmond.



## The Province of BC

The Province's *Belonging in BC: A Collaborative Plan to Prevent and Reduce Homelessness (2022-2025)* outlines strategic goals, commitments and actions including the creation of more homes to support individuals and families experiencing homelessness and new coordinated, multidisciplinary actions to reduce encampments.

BC Housing is the provincial Crown Corporation responsible for providing funding and programs related to housing and homelessness. BC Housing funds various services, including shelter operations, homelessness prevention, outreach supports and services, and supportive housing projects for people at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

The Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction's (MSDPR) Community Integration Team plays an important role connecting vulnerable individuals, including those experiencing homelessness, with financial assistance and community supports. Services provided by MSDPR include assistance locating shelter spaces, case management and coordination of referrals to other services. MSDPR, in partnership with the City and other organizations, offer these supports through direct outreach in the community to individuals who are experiencing unsheltered homelessness in Richmond's public spaces including parks, wooded areas and under bridges.

Through the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Strengthening Communities' Services Grant Program, the province provided funding to support local governments and First Nations to respond to the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness in their communities, while keeping both individuals and communities safe and healthy. By March 31, 2024, a total of \$3.35 million of funding through this grant program will have been invested in Richmond community-led projects and the funding will end. This funding has supported services such as outreach and mental health supports, a drop-in program for people experiencing unsheltered homelessness where they can access referrals for needed services and receive meals, access to showers and laundry, and overnight shelter spaces during the winter.

## The Government of Canada

The federal government released *Reaching Home: Canada's Homelessness Strategy* in 2019. The Reaching Home program prioritizes data-driven homelessness plans that aim to reduce and prevent homelessness at a local level. Funding to implement the Reaching Home program throughout the Greater Vancouver region was allocated through Lu'ma Native Housing Society, the designated community entity responsible for administering the program across the region. Reaching Home mandates that funded communities develop and implement community-driven homelessness plans, coordinated access to services, and homelessness management information systems that drive data-informed decisions to improve programs.



Lu'ma Native Housing Society, in collaboration with community organizations and government agencies across the Greater Vancouver region, has developed and is implementing a coordinated access and referral system through the Reaching Home program. The Coordinated Access Homelessness Management Information System (CA-HMIS), which provides standardized procedures for client intake and assessment of need along with a community-wide housing support service database, was launched December 2023 and will be implemented across the region, including Richmond, in 2024. This program will be used by all community organizations who receive funding through the Reaching Home Program or BC Housing. Municipal governments, including Richmond, will also have the ability to use the system in the future for referral and case management by outreach staff.

## Non-Profit, Social Service and Faith-Based Organizations

Non-profit, social service and faith-based organizations, their staff and community volunteers play a critical role in supporting the needs of residents experiencing homelessness. These organizations deliver critical shelter and supportive services to clients to help promote independence, achieve housing stability, and ultimately participate fully in the community. Accordingly, the City of Richmond supports non-profit, social services and faith-based organizations in their effort to meet the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. Outreach and drop-in programming supports clients by working with them to develop individualized plans to help them advance their own goals and priorities while addressing any unique barriers to accessing appropriate types of housing. Among the tangible services provided are:

- Referrals to government programs, healthcare and mental health services;
- Supportive programming including life and employment skills training;
- Community meals and food outreach;
- Access to washroom facilities, hot showers and laundry;
- Social and community connection;
- Provision of affordable housing units; and
- Assistance in finding appropriate affordable housing units.

In addition to these important services, the non-profit sector continues to advocate on behalf of residents in need of a wide range of additional resources.

# HOMELESSNESS IN RICHMOND IN 2023



The number of residents experiencing or at-risk of sheltered and unsheltered homelessness in Richmond has significantly increased in recent years. Information collected during the 2023 Homeless Count on March 7 and 8, 2023 aligns with qualitative information provided by service providers in Richmond. There were 162 people experiencing homelessness in Richmond identified in the 2023 count, compared to 85 individuals in 2020. These counts provide statistics, trends and other information about the general characteristics of individuals in the community who are experiencing homelessness to help provide a better understanding of the variable and unique characteristics of this population over time. The counts are known to underestimate the number of people experiencing homelessness in each community because they only capture information about individuals who agreed to be surveyed within a particular 24-hour period. Individuals who access services and shelters are more likely to be included than those who do not. This methodology also does not reflect people who are vicariously housed such as those without housing who are staying with friends, family, and/or strangers often referred to as ‘couch-surfing’.



Of the 162 individuals identified during the 2023 Homeless Count, half were sheltered and half were unsheltered. Some of the individuals who had shelter on the night of the count had accessed Richmond’s Warming Centres. At the time, these Warming Centres provided temporary, emergency spaces and were only operational on nights of extreme winter weather. Had the weather been more favourable, additional individuals would have likely been unsheltered at the time of the count.

Of the people identified during the 2023 Homeless Count, one-third of the people experiencing homelessness in Richmond were seniors 55 years of age and over. This was higher than the percentage for the region, where 22% of those counted were 55 years of age and over. In addition to the high number of seniors, Indigenous individuals continue to be overrepresented. In Richmond, 15% or 17 respondents identified as Indigenous, compared with less than 1% of the Richmond population recorded in the 2021 Census. The overrepresentation of Indigenous individuals in the recent Homeless Count is present across the region with 33% of individuals identifying as Indigenous compared to 2% of the population.

Furthermore, two-thirds of people experiencing unsheltered homelessness were long-term Richmond residents who had lived in the community for at least ten years. Almost half of all respondents, including those who were sheltered and those who were unsheltered, had lived in the community for at least ten years. This trend was different when isolating responses for those who completed the 2023 survey at Richmond House Emergency Shelter. Of this group of respondents, 52% had been in Richmond for less than 30 days and an additional 15% for less than a year.



The causes of homelessness are complex and there are many factors that may lead someone to experience homelessness. Individuals interviewed as part of the recent Count lost their housing for multifaceted reasons, with the highest responses being not enough income for housing (54%), landlord/tenant conflict (22%), addiction or substance use issue (17%), building sold or renovated (13%), physical health issues (13%), mental health issues (11%) and unfit or unsafe housing (11%). The top three responses at the regional level differed slightly from Richmond. The regional responses were: not enough income for housing (35%), substance use (24%) and mental health issues (16%).

In addition to the increased numbers of people needing support, contributing social issues, such as mental health concerns, drug addiction or substance use and the toxic drug supply, have also increased the complexity of the challenges to be addressed in the community. Respondents reported multiple health concerns including mental health conditions, substance use, and physical disabilities. In total, 84% of respondents reported at least one health concern and 29% of respondents reported three or more health concerns. Of those who reported a health concern, the highest responses were: mental health issue (50%), addictions issue (47%), and medical condition or illness (43%). Although these numbers seem high, self-reported issues with addictions were lower in Richmond than in the region. In total, 47% of Richmond respondents reported an addictions issue compared to 63% in Greater Vancouver. Addictions issues may include substance addictions such as tobacco, alcohol, cannabis, stimulants and opiates, as well as behavioural addictions including gambling.

The combined challenges of increased numbers of individuals experiencing homelessness and increased complexity of circumstances have a direct interconnection to the housing continuum and the need for appropriate types of both supportive and affordable housing. The need for supportive housing to move individuals out of shelters or off the street has outpaced access to available units despite significant efforts by the City and BC Housing to increase these. Additional affordable housing units are needed in the community to transition individuals who are ready for more independent housing out of supportive housing thus freeing up units for those in need. An overall lack of affordable housing prevents movement along the housing continuum and creates a significant barrier for individuals seeking to transition out of homelessness.

The increasing complexity of factors contributing to poverty and homelessness combined with the multifaceted needs of individuals experiencing homelessness and the lack of appropriate affordable housing options have affected the ability of the City and its partners to adequately address the needs of some of Richmond’s most vulnerable. The City has taken significant action in 2023 to respond to the needs of individuals experiencing homelessness and the impacts on the community and public spaces.



Number of people experiencing homelessness who reported an addictions issue:



## City Service Enhancements

Throughout 2023, the City has continued to explore opportunities and initiatives to address homelessness in Richmond and to identify and secure the resources and supports needed to implement them. Over the past several years an integrated and proactive corporate strategy has evolved to respond to the prevention and management of homelessness in the community. A further coordinated process of resource allocation, implementation, research and evaluation involving the City, related government agencies and community service providers has been identified as the optimal approach to mitigate homelessness in Richmond and significant work has been done to date in this area. Recent enhancements to service levels and staffing expansion are also steps to further enhance this approach.

In late 2023, City Council approved additional resources to increase the City's capacity and complement actions the City and its partners have taken to respond to homelessness while also expanding services and supports to address the needs of individuals in the community who may be unsheltered. These supports include expanded daily hours of operation during the 2023/2024 winter season at the Brighthouse Pavilion Drop-in Centre to ensure supports and warm spaces were available 12 hours a day, seven days a week. To further extend the opportunity for individuals to be out of the cold, wet or snow overnight, the City expanded the operations of both the Brighthouse Pavilion Warming Centre and the South Arm Outdoor Pool Warming Centre. These programs operated 12 hours per night, every night during the 2023/2024 winter season instead of only operating on nights of extreme winter weather. Commencing in December 2023, these changes provided access to support over a full 24-hour period at the Brighthouse location and daily overnight support at the South Arm location until April 15, 2024. These expanded winter supports have a direct and critical benefit to individuals who are unsheltered in the community by providing access to warm spaces, shower, washroom and laundry facilities, healthy meals and access to referrals to government services and community supports.

Funding was also approved in late 2023 for two new Homelessness Outreach Workers who will be hired by the City in early 2024 to ensure proactive and timely outreach to people experiencing unsheltered homelessness. These positions will engage in field outreach in order to build relationships, provide referrals and connect people to services in the community. This is also expected to mitigate risk and reduce the need for more complex intervention from law enforcement or first responders, and reduce service delivery impacts on other City departments. In addition, funding for four new Bylaw Officers was approved. These staff will identify, monitor and enforce bylaw violations that may intersect with homelessness under the Parks and Unsightly Bylaw and Traffic and Parking Bylaws. Regular proactive patrols of public property with a focus on parks and publicly accessible crown land will be implemented, along with proactive patrols of streets and periodic bike patrols of parks.

Combined, the current approach and recently approved resources have enhanced the prior interventions in the realm of homelessness. Once these supports are fully implemented, they will result in increased capacity to respond to the increase in homelessness in Richmond. By working together, the City and its partners will continue to implement a range of significant initiatives to provide support to individuals experiencing deep poverty and complex situations that have resulted in homelessness. These initiatives are of critical importance in the community and supported by recent data. In 2023, the City has demonstrated leadership and commitment to support new and innovative approaches to responding to homelessness in Richmond.



# HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY HIGHLIGHTS IN 2023

## Strategic Direction 1: Prevent pathways into homelessness

The City and community partners are committed to taking a proactive approach to homelessness prevention. Prevention practices include reducing structural barriers (such as low income and lack of affordable housing options), providing intervention measures for households at risk of experiencing homelessness (such as rent supplements), and providing supportive housing and services for people who have experienced homelessness to help stabilize their experience and break the cycle of homelessness. This strategic direction aligns with the City of Richmond Affordable Housing Strategy and the City of Richmond Market Rental Policy, and aims to continue to create affordable rental options across the housing continuum. Prevention also involves coordinated local outreach and intake processes to help reduce barriers to navigating and accessing critical supports and services before a crisis deepens. From a municipal standpoint, the role of the City is to ensure the right mix of affordable housing options are available to meet the housing needs of vulnerable residents and to facilitate collaboration among community partners to develop prevention services.

## Actions and Achievements

- In 2023, the City continued work with BC Housing and Pathways Clubhouse for the development of a six-storey, 80-unit affordable housing building on City-owned land at 5491 No. 2 Road. The development's low rental rates will help provide housing stability for low-income residents who cannot afford market rental housing, including those who are experiencing or are at risk of experiencing homelessness. Construction will begin in 2024.
- In July 2023, the City supported Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives' application for provincial funding, allocated through the Seniors Services Society of B.C., to offer the Seniors Housing Information and Navigation Ease (SHINE) program in Richmond through March 2024. This new program facilitates timely access and housing navigation and support for vulnerable seniors who are at risk of homelessness, including those with mental health and addiction challenges. This program provides an additional, critical resource to support seniors to explore affordable housing options.

- In October 2023, City Council approved the extension of Alderbridge Supportive Housing’s ground lease for a period of approximately three and a half years until December 31, 2027. This extension will allow additional time for the development of a permanent supportive housing building on City-owned land and help prevent the 40 current tenants from potentially returning to homelessness.
- In November 2023, City Council approved the rezoning of City-owned lands at 4831 Steveston Highway. The purpose of the rezoning was to allow for the construction of an affordable housing building. The project will be largely financed using funding made available through the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation’s (CMHC) Rapid Housing Initiative. BC Housing also partnered with the City and CMHC by providing additional capital and operating funding. Ultimately, the development will provide 25 units of affordable housing for women and women with children experiencing or at-risk of homelessness and is being advanced on an accelerated timeline with construction completion anticipated in late 2024.





## Strategic Direction 2:

### Support residents who are experiencing homelessness

As each person's experience of homelessness is unique, communities require a variety of different services and supports to meet the diverse needs of residents experiencing homelessness. Richmond continues to strengthen its network of homelessness service providers that offer coordinated, compassionate, non-judgmental access to necessary programs and services to increase stability, health and safety for residents experiencing homelessness. Under this strategic direction, the City's role is to facilitate partnerships and collaboration among service providers and continue to advocate to senior levels of government for sustainable resources to support the complex needs of this population.

## Actions and Achievements

- The number of residents experiencing or at-risk of sheltered and unsheltered homelessness in Richmond has significantly increased as demonstrated in the findings of the 2023 Homeless Count. The Count was carried out on March 7 and 8, 2023 and found that there were a minimum of 162 people experiencing homelessness in Richmond compared with a minimum of 85 individuals in 2020. Of these 162 individuals, half were sheltered and half were unsheltered. This increase in the number of people experiencing homelessness in Richmond has resulted in a corporate strategic focus on this area and expanded services and additional supports being planned and implemented.
- In response to the increased number of individuals experiencing homelessness and increasingly complex challenges related to homelessness in Richmond, significant resources were approved in 2023 for inclusion in the City's 2024 Operating Budget. The Council-approved resources will increase the City's capacity and complement actions the City and its partners currently take to respond to homelessness. These include two new Homelessness Outreach Workers, four new Bylaw Officers and funding for the continuation of the Brighthouse Pavilion Drop-in Centre and Shower Program.
- The City continued to implement a range of programs and services to support Richmond residents experiencing homelessness using \$3.35 million in provincial funding received through the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) Strengthening Communities' Services Grant Program. 2023 project highlights related to service provision included two Warming Centres, the Brighthouse Pavilion Drop-In Centre and Shower Program, Food Outreach and Staff Training. Details of each of these programs are outlined below.
- In 2023, three City facilities, South Arm Community Centre, City Centre Community Centre and Minoru Centre for Active Living, remained open on Christmas day to ensure safe, warm spaces are available for residents 365 days a year.



- In the winter of 2022/2023, two Warming Centres, activated on nights of extreme winter weather, provided a place for individuals experiencing homelessness to stay warm and dry. Visitors received snacks and warm beverages as well as support with referrals to relevant services. The Salvation Army operated the 15-space Warming Centre in the South Arm Outdoor Pool building and Turning Point Recovery Society operated the second 15-space Warming Centre out of the Brighthouse Pavilion in City Centre. This provided an additional 30 spaces. These were both well-utilized as outlined in Table 1.

**Table 1: Warming Centre Usage Winter 2022/2023**

| Location               | Dates                               | Average Individuals Per Night | Total Visits |
|------------------------|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Brighthouse Pavilion   | Mid-December 2022 to March 31, 2023 | 13                            | 433          |
| South Arm Outdoor Pool | November 1, 2022 to March 31, 2023  | 12                            | 504          |
| <b>Total Visits</b>    |                                     |                               | <b>937</b>   |

- For the 2023/2024 winter season, two Warming Centres, operated by Turning Point Recovery Society, operated at Brighthouse Pavilion and South Arm Outdoor Pool building. At the start of the season, each centre provided 15 spaces on nights of extreme winter weather and were funded through the UBCM Strengthening Communities’ Services Grant. In December 2023, the City provided additional funding to expand services in both locations to operate every night until April 15, 2024. In addition, the capacity increased to 21 spaces at the South Arm Outdoor Pool building because the need for physical distancing has lessened since the pandemic. Usage in both locations has continued to increase between October and December 2023 and is expected to exceed the usage for the prior year (Table 2).

**Table 2: Warming Centre Usage October to December 2023**

| Location               | Dates                            | Average Individuals Per Night | Total Visits |
|------------------------|----------------------------------|-------------------------------|--------------|
| Brighthouse Pavilion   | October 15 to December 31, 2023  | 15                            | 468          |
| South Arm Outdoor Pool | November 28 to December 31, 2023 | 9*                            | 151          |
| <b>Total Visits</b>    |                                  |                               | <b>619</b>   |

\*This has steadily increased. The average for January 2024 was 17.57.



- The City continued to work with BC Housing and The Salvation Army to support the operation of the Richmond House Emergency Shelter. In 2023, BC Housing approved permanent funding for the additional 15 beds added to the Shelter during the COVID-19 pandemic to total 45 permanent beds at the shelter. In addition, in response to the 2023/2024 winter season, BC Housing approved funding for 10 additional spaces under the Extreme Winter Response Shelter Program at Richmond House. These 10 spaces were activated only on nights of extreme winter weather. With these additional spaces, Richmond House Shelter provided a total of 45 regular beds, 10 weather-activated spaces, three meals a day, showers, laundry facilities, and assistance in locating housing, services and recreational opportunities for individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond.

### Shelter and Warming Centre Options in Richmond, Winter 2023/2024

#### Richmond House Emergency Shelter and Extreme Weather Response Spaces

- ✓ Increased capacity from 30 to 45 permanent beds.
- ✓ Access to 10 mats providing new overnight, warm space on nights of extreme weather until April 15, 2024.

#### South Arm Outdoor Pool Warming Centre

- ✓ Expanded access to up to 21 mats on a nightly basis until April 15, 2024.

#### Brighthouse Pavilion Warming Centre

- ✓ Expanded access to up to 15 mats on a nightly basis until April 15, 2024.

#### Brighthouse Pavilion Drop-in Centre

- ✓ Expanded access to daily warm space, 7 days per week, 12 hours per day until April 15, 2024.



- The Drop-in Centre and Shower Program, located in the Brighthouse Pavilion building, continued operations in 2023 and both were operated by Turning Point Recovery Society. They operated Monday to Friday during the day and provided daily meals, access to computers and the Internet, service navigation and referrals, as well as shower and laundry services to Richmond residents experiencing homelessness. These programs were funded through the UBCM Strengthening Communities’ Services Grant. In December 2023, the City provided additional funding to expand services for the remainder of the 2023/2024 winter season. Effective December 27, 2023, the Drop-in Centre began operating seven days per week, 12 hours per day. This will continue until April 15, 2024 when the program will revert back to the previous hours and days. In 2023, the Drop-in Centre and Shower Program had significantly higher numbers of visits, meals and showers provided than in 2022 (Tables 3, 4 and 5).

**Table 3: Brighthouse Drop-in Centre Visits by Month in 2022 and 2023**

|             | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | TOTAL        |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| <b>2022</b> | 42  | 50  | 128 | 100 | 187 | 111 | 208 | 278 | 232 | 318 | 431 | 522 | <b>2,607</b> |
| <b>2023</b> | 454 | 490 | 547 | 398 | 562 | 531 | 552 | 680 | 568 | 887 | 902 | 747 | <b>7,318</b> |

**Table 4: Lunches Served at the Brighthouse Drop-in Centre by Month in 2022 and 2023**

|             | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug   | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | TOTAL         |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-------|-----|-----|-----|-----|---------------|
| <b>2022</b> | 600 | 525 | 762 | 700 | 686 | 781 | 685 | 873   | 710 | 840 | 829 | 868 | <b>8,859</b>  |
| <b>2023</b> | 983 | 941 | 841 | 631 | 900 | 968 | 770 | 1,018 | 755 | 640 | 920 | 708 | <b>10,075</b> |

**Table 5: Showers Provided at the Brighthouse Drop-in Centre by Month in 2022 and 2023**

|             | Jan | Feb | Mar | Apr | May | Jun | Jul | Aug | Sep | Oct | Nov | Dec | TOTAL        |
|-------------|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|-----|--------------|
| <b>2022</b> | 26  | 26  | 18  | 41  | 108 | 51  | 75  | 108 | 69  | 76  | 115 | 127 | <b>840</b>   |
| <b>2023</b> | 118 | 93  | 108 | 137 | 169 | 173 | 105 | 173 | 142 | 138 | 142 | 88  | <b>1,586</b> |

- In 2023, The Salvation Army, the Richmond Poverty Reduction Coalition and local faith-based organizations provided nutritious meals to individuals experiencing homelessness who were unable to access community meal programs. The City, through the UBCM grant, provided \$33,500 in funding for Food Outreach Program operated by The Salvation Army and faith-based organizations through June 2023. In addition, \$6,000 in grocery gift cards were provided to local organizations to support additional food outreach initiatives.
- Throughout 2023, the City continued to work closely with many organizations, including the Ministry of Social Development and Poverty Reduction (MSDPR), Richmond RCMP and Vancouver Coastal Health, to provide coordinated outreach to connect individuals experiencing homelessness with critical supports and services in the community. This included work with the Richmond RCMP Detachment's dedicated Vulnerable Persons Unit (VPU) whose mandate includes outreach to individuals experiencing unsheltered homelessness. From January to November 2023, the VPU conducted 46 joint outreach operations with MSDPR staff, representing more than a 150% increase over 2022 when there were only 18 joint outreach operations.
- The City's Joint Operations Team (JOT) currently serves as the primary group to coordinate and respond to concerns, complaints or issues that have an intersection with homelessness. This team consists of representatives from Community Bylaws, Building Approvals, Community Social Development, Community Safety Administration, Parks Operations, Richmond Fire Rescue, RCMP Operations, RCMP VPU, BC Emergency Health Services, MSDPR and Vancouver Coastal Health. From January to the end of November 2023, the JOT provided an integrated response to 24 complex homeless files. Eighteen of these files were successfully closed as the individuals involved moved on to other areas or other forms of shelter or housing.



### Strategic Direction 3: Provide pathways out of homelessness

Individuals are best able to transition out of homelessness when various types of housing and support services are available. The Housing First approach prioritizes moving people from homelessness into housing and then providing individualized supports and services as needed. This approach provides stability, which allows individuals to easily access resources and attend to their physical and mental health, education or employment goals. The City's role is to support service provider organizations to coordinate service delivery and to advocate to the provincial and federal governments for increased funding for affordable housing in Richmond.

The increase in homelessness, combined with the increased complexity of individual needs, has a direct connection to the housing continuum and the need for appropriate types of affordable housing. For example, the need for supportive housing to move individuals out of shelters or off the street is outpacing access to available units and non-market housing. These units are needed to transition those individuals who may be ready to move from supportive housing into more independent housing but are not available in the community. This lack of affordable housing prevents movement along the housing continuum and creates a significant barrier for individuals seeking to transition out of homelessness. Significant work has taken place on the expansion of this continuum of housing and has been a focus for the City in 2023.

### Actions and Achievements

- RainCity Housing and Support Society, the organization that operates Alderbridge Supportive Housing, continued to support tenants living in the building. This 40-unit supportive housing building provides 24/7 support services including daily meals, life skills training, and mental health and addiction recovery services. Tenants work towards individualized goals with the support of RainCity Housing staff, and the aim to achieve greater housing independence. In October 2023, City Council approved a 3.5 year extension to the ground lease to BC Housing in order to continue to operate this valuable program while a permanent location for a new supportive housing building on City-owned land is developed.
- Lu'ma Native Housing Society, the community entity responsible for implementing a coordinated access and referral system in the Greater Vancouver region through the federal Reaching Home program, provided an update to the Richmond Community Homelessness Table in September 2023 regarding the development of a new coordinated access and referral system. This system will provide standardized procedures for client intake and assessment of need along with a community-wide housing support service database. The system was launched in December 2023 in select communities and will be expanded to municipalities across the region, including Richmond, in 2024.



- In 2023, with funding from the UBCM grant, the City initiated work with community partners to explore enhanced solutions for discharge and transition planning practices for individuals experiencing homelessness leaving Richmond in-patient health care facilities such as Richmond Hospital. The project engaged in-patient hospital and addictions treatment providers as well as homelessness shelter and drop-in centre service providers to enhance processes to ensure that individuals exiting in-patient health care who had previously been or were experiencing homelessness prior to admission would have access to uninterrupted and seamless health care and supports in their communities. Key informants in this project included people with lived/living experience of homelessness who agreed to participate.

### Continuum of Supportive and Affordable Housing Options in Richmond

**Alderbridge Supportive Housing**  
40 units – occupied

- ✓ City Council endorsed a 3.5 year extension to enable a seamless transition into a permanent location for supportive housing.

**Aster Place Supportive Housing**  
40 units – occupied

- ✓ Ensures that supportive housing units continue to be available while a permanent site, which is in development, is constructed.

**Pathways Non-Market Housing**  
80 units – in development

- ✓ Construction will commence in 2024. Anticipated occupancy is early 2026.

**Rapid Housing Initiative Affordable Housing Project**  
25 units – in development

- ✓ Construction will commence in early 2024. Anticipated occupancy by the end of 2024.

**Permanent Supportive Housing**  
60 units

- ✓ Funding has been allocated by the province and planning is underway. Anticipated occupancy is December 2027.

**Affordable Housing Development**

- ✓ The City is in conversation with BC Housing about a comprehensive affordable housing development.



## Strategic Direction 4:

### Foster collaboration and community-building among community partners

Homelessness is a complex and multifaceted issue that cannot be resolved by one level of government or organization alone. Collaboration among government agencies, homelessness service providers and individuals with lived experience is essential to meeting the needs of residents experiencing or at risk of homelessness. Working together to coordinate services, share information and align resources is the most efficient and cost-effective means of meeting community need and enhancing community-based service delivery capacity. The City's role related to this strategic direction includes leadership for a Community Homelessness Table that connects key homelessness service providers to support collaboration and alignment on an ongoing basis.

## Actions and Achievements

- The City Grant Program's Health, Social and Safety Grant stream provided support towards community-based homelessness service provision and food security. In 2023, \$111,895 in grant funding was used to help support a number of initiatives. These included a food distribution program by Immigrant Link Centre Society; a Drop-in Centre operated by Turning Point Recovery Society; community food outreach initiatives supporting vulnerable members of the population by the Kehila Society of Richmond and Pathways Clubhouse; a meal program operated by Church on Five and meal programs for individuals experiencing homelessness and isolation operated by Parish of St. Alban's and The Society of St. Vincent de Paul Vancouver Archdiocesan Central Council.
- The Richmond Community Homelessness Table, comprised of government agencies and community-based homelessness service providers, met regularly throughout 2023. The Table's aim is to enhance collaboration, address community needs, share information and align resources. Discussions focused on challenges and barriers the organizations or their clients are facing, emerging trends in homelessness, and current and upcoming initiatives to support individuals experiencing homelessness in the community.
- Through the range of programs and services funded through the UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services Program (see pages 12 to 16) the City worked closely with various service providers to align resources and support program sustainability. Collaboration with partners in the community included Turning Point Recovery Society, The Salvation Army, Homelessness Services Association of BC, Vancouver Coastal Health and individuals with lived experience of homelessness.
- In 2023, the City continued to liaise with BC Housing, Vancouver Coastal Health, the MSDPR, RCMP, Richmond Fire Rescue and community and faith-based organizations to support individuals experiencing homelessness. Ongoing collaboration and advocacy on existing and enhanced services are key and ongoing.



- Advocacy continues with other levels of government for enhanced supports for the community including additional shelter and supportive housing options, enhanced outreach from other government entities, and increased access to mental health and substance use support including detox and treatment options.
- On December 6, 2023, City Council and senior staff met with the Honourable Jennifer Whiteside, Minister of Mental Health and Addictions; the Honourable Ravi Kahlon, Minister of Housing, and the Honourable Sheila Malcolmson, Minister of Social Development and Poverty Reduction and their ministerial staff. The City advocated to senior levels of government for additional funding for housing, mental health and substance use supports and supports to address the increased numbers of individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond. Continued advocacy for the Province's leadership to assist in responding to homelessness in Richmond is critically important.
- To further assist individuals experiencing homelessness, the City updated and disseminated resources to support access to information and referrals. Through regular weekly coordinated outreach conducted by members of the Joint Operations Team, vulnerable individuals received information and referrals to a range of programs to address housing, physical or mental health issues, substance use treatment and harm reduction supports.



## Strategic Direction 5:

### Communicate, research and monitor homelessness

Richmond is committed to creating an inclusive community for all residents. Because homelessness is not always visible, many residents may not be aware of the needs and circumstances of fellow community members who are experiencing homelessness. Where there is a lack of understanding, there can be misconceptions and stigma, which can act as barriers for individuals experiencing homelessness in accessing critically needed services and housing options. The City's primary role in this strategic direction is to promote opportunities to increase awareness and understanding relating to homelessness. Enhancing public awareness helps to foster a more welcoming, inclusive and safe community for all residents. Ensuring that the City and local service providers are up-to-date with information related to Richmond's residents experiencing homelessness helps to equip partners with the necessary information to align resources and effectively advocate to senior levels of government to meet Richmond-specific needs.

## Actions and Achievements

- The City continued to liaise with local service providers to monitor ongoing trends related to homelessness, particularly to understand the changing needs of individuals experiencing homelessness. Information regarding increasing rates of homelessness, the characteristics and identified needs of individuals experiencing homelessness in Richmond informed the City's advocacy with senior levels of government throughout 2023.
- Throughout 2023, the City implemented two targeted awareness and education programs using provincial grant funding received through UBCM's Strengthening Communities' Services Grant Program.
  - Community Conversations: In February 2023, the City hosted a community dialogue series titled *Home: A Community Conversation on Homelessness*. These sessions provided the opportunity for community members from diverse backgrounds to come together to discuss the complexities and common misunderstandings associated with the circumstances and experiences of homelessness. A total of 65 people attended the three sessions. A self-guided version of these conversations has been created and will be added to the City website in 2024.

City Staff Homelessness Training, 'Working with People Experiencing Homelessness': City staff worked with members of the Homelessness Services Association of British Columbia (HSABC) to develop and host two levels of homelessness training for City employees who work directly with the public. Level 2 was an in-person, two-day session, and built on the information and concepts from Level 1 which was delivered in an online, self-paced format. Level 2 was launched in January 2023 and was completed by 155 employees by the end of the year. Level 1 continued to be offered throughout the year and was completed by 246 employees and community partner staff. This important training will continue to be available to City staff in 2024.



## CONCLUSION

The Homelessness Strategy is guided by the vision that:

*By 2029, homelessness in Richmond is rare, brief and non-recurring. Richmond is an inclusive community that works in collaboration to provide a continuum of housing and support services.*

In 2023, the City, other government agencies, local service providers and individual members of the community worked together to achieve notable progress towards addressing the strategic directions and actions identified in the Homelessness Strategy. During this past year, the collaborative actions described in this report contributed towards achieving the Homelessness Strategy's vision.

Notable City actions in 2023 included the ongoing implementation of projects coordinated through the \$3.35 million UBCM Strengthening Communities' Services Grant, the ongoing provision of the Drop-in Centre and Shower Program, expanded Warming Centre spaces and the approval of new roles to support outreach to vulnerable members of the community who may be experiencing homelessness.

Further, the City continues to support the provision of non-market, affordable housing, through investments in temporary supportive housing for some of Richmond's most vulnerable populations, as well as the investments in more permanent affordable housing, which includes an 80-unit development led by Pathways. Finally, the City continues to support housing options for low to moderate income households through the continued implementation of its low-end market rental (LEMR) housing policy program, which has led to the construction of 517 affordable housing units, with many others having received preliminary approval in addition to those under review.

While significant progress was made towards achieving a number of actions outlined in the Strategy, homelessness remains a critical and growing issue in the community. The City of Richmond is committed to using its role as a leader to respond to the needs of Richmond residents at risk of or currently experiencing homelessness. Richmond-based service providers are well connected, understand the unique needs of members of the community who are experiencing homelessness and continue to build capacity to meet their evolving needs. While housing and homelessness is primarily a provincial mandate, the City continued to work with the tools available to municipal governments to reduce and prevent homelessness in Richmond and will continue to advocate to senior levels of government for affordable housing and supports for vulnerable Richmond residents who are experiencing homelessness.





## City of Richmond

6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1  
Telephone: 604-276-4000  
[richmond.ca](http://richmond.ca)



## Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029 – 2023 Status of Actions

The following table provides a status update on the actions defined in the Homelessness Strategy as of December 31, 2023.

### Legend

| Status of Actions |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Not yet initiated | Work towards this action has not yet begun.                         |
| In Progress       | Work towards addressing this action is underway.                    |
| Completed         | Work towards this action has been accomplished.                     |
| Ongoing           | Work towards this action has been initiated and will be continuous. |

| Timeframe and Status of Actions   |                  |               |
|---|------------------|---------------|
| <b>Strategic Direction 1: Prevent pathways into homelessness</b>  |                  |               |
| <i>Action</i>   | <i>Timeframe</i> | <i>Status</i> |
| 1.1 Continue to create affordable housing rental options across the housing continuum. (Priority)   | Ongoing          | Ongoing       |
| 1.2 Facilitate the creation of a collaborative homeless prevention program in Richmond.   | Short-term       | In Progress   |
| 1.3 Work with Vancouver Coastal Health and other community partners to explore opportunities to enhance wrap-around supports to increase housing stability. | Ongoing          | Ongoing       |
| 1.4 Explore solutions for discharge planning practices for individuals leaving Richmond-based institutions.   | Medium-term      | In Progress   |
| <b>Strategic Direction 2: Support residents who are experiencing homelessness</b>   |                  |               |
| <i>Action</i>   | <i>Timeframe</i> | <i>Status</i> |
| 2.1 Ensure accurate and up-to-date information on supportive services is available.   | Short-term       | Complete      |

|   |             |                   |
|---|-------------|-------------------|
| 2.2 Coordinate a Front-line Service Provider Working Group to coordinate support for individuals experiencing homelessness or at risk of experiencing homelessness. | Short-term  | In Progress       |
| 2.3 Secure permanent space and sustainable operating funding for an enhanced drop-in program for individuals experiencing or at-risk of homelessness. (Priority)    | Short-term  | In Progress       |
| 2.4 Enhance coordination of food programs and outreach for residents experiencing homelessness.   | Ongoing     | Ongoing           |
| 2.5 Advocate to senior levels of government to secure funding for the Extreme Weather Response Program or a Winter Shelter.   | Short-term  | In Progress       |
| 2.6 Monitor outreach services available in the community and advocate to senior levels of government for additional resources as needed.                            | Ongoing     | Ongoing           |
| 2.7 Explore the use of City spaces as Warming Centres.  | Short-term  | Complete          |
| 2.8 Dedicate appropriate resources in order to enhance service provision at City facilities for individuals experiencing homelessness.                              | Ongoing     | Ongoing           |
| 2.9 Continue to refine the City's approach to responding to individuals experiencing homelessness on City-owned property.   | Ongoing     | Ongoing           |
| 2.10 Explore opportunities to address storage needs for people experiencing homelessness.   | Medium-term | In Progress       |
| 2.11 Create shelter and transitional beds for youth experiencing homelessness in the community.   | Short-term  | Not yet initiated |
| 2.12 Explore opportunities to address the need for culturally-appropriate supports, services, and housing for people experiencing homelessness.                     | Ongoing     | Ongoing           |

| <b>Strategic Direction 3: Provide pathways out of homelessness</b>   |                  |                                |
|--|------------------|--------------------------------|
| <i>Action</i>  | <i>Timeframe</i> | <i>Status</i>                  |
| 3.1 Enhance the existing coordinated access and referral system in Richmond.   | Medium-term      | In Progress                    |
| 3.2 Work with service providers to create a Supportive Housing Action Plan.  | Short-term       | In Progress                    |
| 3.3 Explore the potential of creating a Housing First program in Richmond.   | Short-term       | In Progress                    |
| 3.4 Secure funding and a permanent site for supportive housing in Richmond. (Priority)   | Short-term       | In Progress                    |
| 3.5 Ensure that emergency housing services focus on achieving long-term housing options.   | Ongoing          | Ongoing                        |
| <b>Strategic Direction 4: Foster collaboration and community-building among community partners</b>   |                  |                                |
| <i>Action</i>  | <i>Timeframe</i> | <i>Status</i>                  |
| 4.1 Dedicate appropriate staff resources for homelessness service coordination at the City of Richmond. (Priority)   | Short-term       | In Progress                    |
| 4.2 Develop a Community Homelessness Table for collaboration among agencies working to prevent or addressing homelessness. (Priority)                            | Short-term       | Complete<br>(meetings ongoing) |
| 4.3 Engage with residents with lived experience when designing and implementing significant policies or programs related to addressing homelessness in Richmond. | Ongoing          | Ongoing                        |
| 4.4 Continue the annual Health, Social and Safety Grants to support local homelessness services.   | Ongoing          | Ongoing                        |
| 4.5 Monitor and pursue funding opportunities for support services for residents at-risk of or experiencing homelessness.   | Ongoing          | Ongoing                        |



| <b>Strategic Direction 5: Communicate, research and monitor homelessness</b>   |                  |               |
|--|------------------|---------------|
| <i>Action</i>  | <i>Timeframe</i> | <i>Status</i> |
| 5.1 Implement a local data system to track trends and the changing needs of individuals experiencing homelessness.   | Short-term       | In Progress   |
| 5.2 Provide training regarding homelessness service provision to City and community partner staff working in City facilities.  | Short-term       | Complete      |
| 5.3 Raise awareness and educate the community of the factors contributing to homelessness and the benefits of affordable housing and supportive services. (Priority) | Short-term       | In Progress   |
| 5.4 Work with community partners to ensure volunteer opportunities are communicated to the public.   | Ongoing          | Ongoing       |
| 5.5 Advocate to senior governments regarding the changing needs of people experiencing homelessness in Richmond and the need for additional funding. (Priority)      | Ongoing          | Ongoing       |
| 5.6 Report out annually on the progress of the Homelessness Strategy 2019–2029.  | Ongoing          | Ongoing       |