City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To:	Planning Committee	**Date:**	July 25, 2022
From:	Kim Somerville Director, Community Social Development	**File:**	08-4057-04/2022-Vol 01
Re:	**City of Richmond Seniors Strategy 2022–2032**		

Staff Recommendation

That the City of Richmond Seniors Strategy 2022–2032 as outlined in the report titled, "City of Richmond Seniors Strategy 2022–2032," dated July 25, 2022 from the Director, Community Social Development, be adopted.

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

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	**CONCURRENCE**	**CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER**
Communications	☑	
Arts, Culture & Heritage	☑	
Parks Services	☑	
Recreation & Sport Services	☑	
Community Safety Administration	☑	
Emergency Programs	☑	
Building Approvals	☑	
Development Applications	☑	
Policy Planning	☑	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	**INITIALS:**	**APPROVED BY CAO**

Staff Report

Origin

On March 28, 2022, City Council approved the following items with respect to the draft City of Richmond Seniors Strategy 2022–2032:

1. *That the draft Seniors Strategy 2022–2032, as outlined in the staff report titled "Draft Seniors Strategy 2022–2032," dated January 27, 2022 from the Director, Community Social Development, be approved;*

2. *That staff be authorized to seek public feedback on the draft Seniors Strategy for the purposes of finalizing the strategy; and*

3. *That staff report back to City Council with the final Seniors Strategy, including a summary of the public feedback received.*

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the public feedback received in April 2022 on the draft strategy and to seek City Council's adoption of the Seniors Strategy 2022–2032.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018–2022 Strategy #6 Strategic and Well-Planned Growth:

> *Leadership in effective and sustainable growth that supports Richmond's physical and social needs.*

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018–2022 Strategy #8 An Engaged and Informed Community:

> *Ensure that the citizenry of Richmond is well-informed and engaged about City business and decision-making.*

This report also supports the following action outlined in the Social Development Strategy 2013–2022:

> *Action 7 – Implement, monitor and update the Older Adults Service Plan*

Analysis

Seniors are the fastest-growing age demographic in Richmond (and globally) and are living longer and experiencing better health than previous generations. Currently, 32% of Richmond's population are 55 years or older; this percentage is projected to increase to 39% by 2036.[1] The average life expectancy of seniors living in Richmond continues to be the highest in both BC and Canada at 85.7 years (compared to the provincial average life expectancy of 82.6 years and the national average of 81.1 years). While a positive trend in health and life expectancy in Richmond is encouraging, it also highlights the need to ensure proper planning and supports are in place to meet the evolving needs of a growing senior population.

[1] Statistics Canada. Semi-custom order, 2016 Census.

Project Process

The City of Richmond has a long history of investing in the health and well-being of residents, including seniors. The Seniors Strategy 2022–2032 (Attachment 1) builds upon previous plans and strategies that have guided the work of the City and community partners related to supporting seniors, and provides a vision and strategic directions for the next 10 years to continue this work and prepare for the future.

The Seniors Strategy was developed based on extensive consultation and research, including:

- Consultation with the Seniors Strategy Advisory Committee, consisting of representatives from organizations that support seniors in Richmond.
- A needs analysis that included a review of the progress made on previous seniors-related plans and strategies, analysis of current trends and demographic research, a literature review and consultation with key stakeholders including seniors.
- A variety of public engagement activities completed in April 2022, including a survey offered online, by phone and as hard copies available in-person at drop-in information sessions.

The Seniors Strategy represents a variety of perspectives on the priority needs of seniors in Richmond and was informed by best practices and research, and reaffirmed by public feedback.

Vision Statement and Strategic Directions

The Seniors Strategy is an action-oriented and collaborative framework intended to guide City and stakeholder involvement in priority initiatives to enhance the lives of seniors in Richmond. The Seniors Strategy outlines the vision that, "seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities."

In order to achieve this vision, the Seniors Strategy identifies five strategic directions:

1. Age-friendly neighbourhoods that support seniors to age in place;
2. Diverse, accessible and inclusive programs and services for seniors at all stages;
3. Communication and awareness of programs and services available for seniors;
4. Education and understanding about healthy aging; and
5. Planning for a growing population of seniors.

Each strategic direction includes several actions for the City, in collaboration with other levels of government and key community stakeholders, to embark on to achieve the desired outcomes. Each action identifies who will be involved, what the City's role is and the anticipated timeline for implementation, classified as: short-term (0-3 years), medium-term (4-6 years), longer-term (7-10 years), or ongoing.

Engagement Input and Strategy Revisions

Public engagement was an important component of finalizing the Seniors Strategy to ensure the proposed vision, strategy directions and identified outcomes and actions resonated with the community. The public engagement process took place in April 2022 and included the following:

- An online survey hosted on the City's Let's Talk Richmond website;
- Drop-in Seniors Strategy information sessions at community facilities and seniors-serving organization locations which included paper-based versions of the survey and translation support; and
- Phone surveys conducted in English, Cantonese and Mandarin.

In total, community members aged 55 years and older, family members and caregivers of seniors, and representatives from community organizations that support seniors in Richmond completed and submitted 501 surveys.

Overall, public input indicated a high level of support for the vision, strategic directions and actions outlined in the Seniors Strategy with 96% of respondents indicating they 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' with the overall vision of the strategy. There were no major revisions to the Seniors Strategy, however language was strengthened to further highlight themes that emerged from the public engagement activities:

- An opportunity to apply a social equity lens to how the City defines and delivers programs and services to seniors.
- A continued focus on researching best practices and engaging with seniors to ensure programs and services are meeting the diverse needs and interests of the population, including exploring needs based vs age-based programming.
- Increased emphasis on the accessibility of City communication methods and platforms to improve connection and support potentially isolated seniors who experience barriers with current communication channels.
- A broader focus on a community-wide system of seniors-related program and services delivery to reduce gaps, identify opportunities and ensure the most effective use of community resources.

In addition, survey respondents indicated a desire to better understand how specific initiatives will be developed, evaluated and funded in order to achieve the actions and outcomes identified in the strategy. Many respondents expressed appreciation for the development of the new Seniors Strategy and the priority focus placed on supporting seniors in Richmond.

A summary of the public feedback received on the Seniors Strategy is provided in Attachment 2.

Actions and Implementation

While all 29 actions identified in the Seniors Strategy are important in addressing the needs of seniors in Richmond, plans to implement short-term and ongoing actions will begin following the strategy's adoption. Examples of these actions include:

- Create a working group to support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the Seniors Strategy.
- Research and explore best practices, and further engage with participants to better understand and serve the diverse needs and interests of the large seniors age group (e.g. the definition and use of the word "senior" and using a needs-based vs. age-based approach to programming).
- Analyze the community-wide delivery system of seniors-related programs and services in Richmond to reduce gaps, identify opportunities and ensure the best use of community resources.
- Explore and implement new, accessible and barrier-free communication and promotional vehicles about programs and services available to seniors of all ages, stages and abilities (e.g. 55+ Citywide Program Guide).
- Identify, remove and prevent barriers for seniors to enable them to participate fully in programs and services that support healthy aging.
- Expand on the development of age-friendly neighbourhoods (e.g. outdoor areas and public buildings, transportation, housing) in Richmond by implementing the framework created from the 2019 Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning project in all neighbourhoods.

These actions and others outlined in the Seniors Strategy will continue to guide City planning in collaboration with community partners. While many of the actions will be accomplished using existing resources, some may require additional funding. Financial considerations for these initiatives will be submitted in future City budget cycles.

Communications

Following adoption by City Council, the Corporate Communications and Marketing team will develop and implement a communications strategy to build community awareness. Copies of the strategy will be distributed to key stakeholders, local Members of Parliament, and Members of the Legislative Assembly. An update on the Seniors Strategy outlining the progress made towards achieving the strategic directions and actions will be provided to Council and shared with the public every two years.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The Seniors Strategy 2022–2032 demonstrates the City of Richmond's commitment in creating a safe, respectful, healthy and engaged community for seniors. Seniors in Richmond are diverse, vibrant and provide meaningful contributions through their unique experiences and perspectives. Building on past plans and strategies, and the robust social infrastructure in Richmond, the new Seniors Strategy will guide the work of the City and its key stakeholders over the next decade. It will ensure seniors are supported to live long healthy lives with increased social connection, access to needed supports and services, and experience high levels of overall well-being.

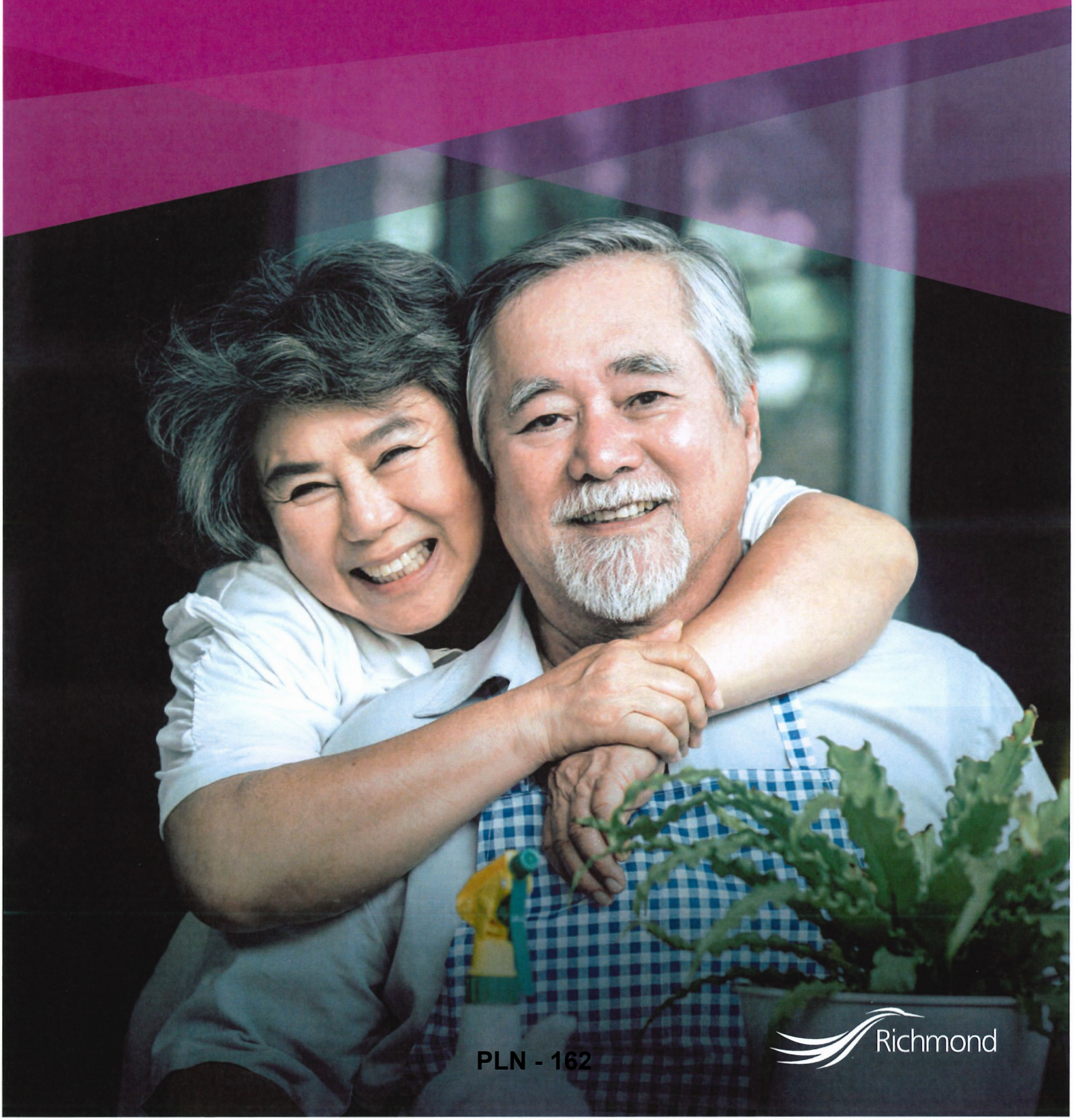
Claire Adamson
Manager, Community Social Development
(604-247-4482)

Att. 1: City of Richmond Seniors Strategy 2022–2032
2: Seniors Strategy 2022–2032: Public Engagement Overview

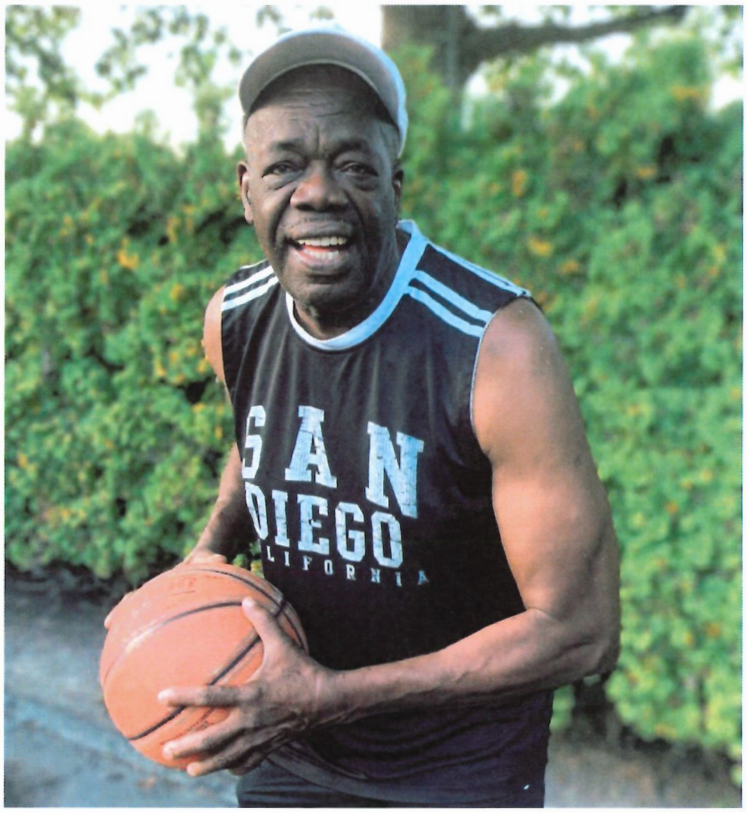
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City of Richmond

Seniors Strategy 2022–2032



Richmond



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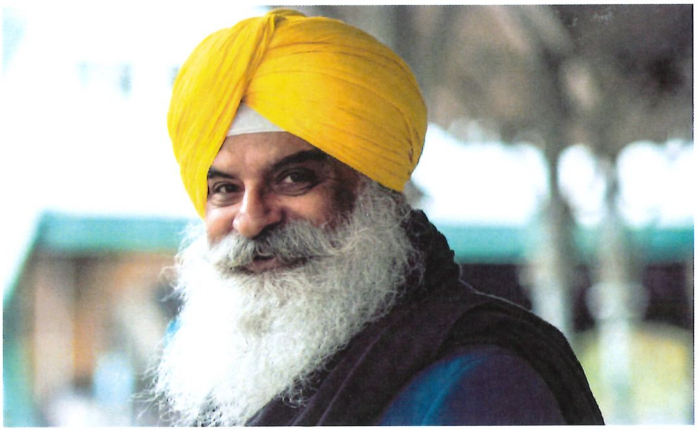
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Glossary of Terms

Age-Friendly: Describes environments that promote access to services, programs and opportunities for people as they age, and promote the inclusion and participation of seniors in all aspects of life.[1]

Age in Place: To live safely and independently in one's home or community for as long as one wishes and is able.[2]

Ageism: Stereotyping, prejudice and discrimination directed toward others or oneself based on age.[3]

Diversity: The representation, recognition and celebration of individuals who possess a combination of visible and invisible differences and lived experiences that shape their view of the world, perspective and approach.

1. Age-Friendly Communities, Public Health Agency of Canada, 2016
2. Employment and Social Development, Government of Canada, 2016
3. Global Report on Ageism, World Health Organization, 2021

Healthy Aging: The process of developing and maintaining functional abilities that support well-being in older age. Functional ability is about having the capabilities that enable all people to be and do what they value.[4]

Home and Community-Based Services: Supportive services designed to help older people live independently in their own homes. Examples are seniors centres, transportation, delivered meals or congregate meal sites, visiting nurses or care aides.[5]

LGBTQ2S+: An acronym used to refer to Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, Two-Spirit (2S) and additional (+) sexual orientations and gender identities.

Low-Income Measure After Tax (LIM-AT): A comparative measure of low income that is defined by a household's earnings after tax being below 50% of the median income of comparably sized household in the same geographic region.

Racialized Communities: The term 'racialized communities' encompasses all people that are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour and is considered preferable to the term 'visible minorities.'[6]

Senior: In terms of chronological age, seniors living in Richmond are defined as those aged 55 years and older.

Social Infrastructure: Physical spaces, services and structures that bring people together and help enhance relational networks, community resilience and social well-being.

Social Prescribing: A structured way of referring people who access Primary Health Care, generally delivered by family physicians and general medical practitioners, to non-medical/clinical community-based programs and services.

Vulnerable Housing: Housing that is considered unsuitable due to size, condition or affordability.[7]

Vulnerable Seniors: Seniors who experience challenges accessing programs, services or amenities due to a variety of determinants such as physical, cognitive or mental health issues, isolation, discrimination, financial, transportation or language barriers.

4. Healthy ageing and functional ability, World Health Organization, 2021
5. Glossary of industry terms, International Council on Active Aging, 2021
6. Racialized communities, Canadian Observatory on Homelessness, 2021
7. Core Housing Need, Statistics Canada, 2017



2022–2032 Seniors Strategy | City of Richmond

Executive Summary

Seniors are the fastest growing demographic globally, and are living longer and experiencing better health than previous generations. It is projected that close to 40% of the population in Richmond will be 55+ years by 2036, emphasizing the importance of creating a 10-year strategy to address the needs of seniors. The *City of Richmond Seniors Strategy 2022–2032 (Seniors Strategy)* represents the City's ongoing commitment to addressing the needs of the seniors population in Richmond. The *Seniors Strategy* is an action-oriented framework intended to guide the City and stakeholders in supporting seniors in Richmond over the next decade. The vision for this collaborative strategy is "that seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities."

Supporting seniors to age well requires the collaboration and commitment of the City and many organizations and groups, including Community Associations and Societies, community service organizations, health agencies and the private sector. A solid foundation of supports and structures are already in place in Richmond to enable seniors to remain healthy and active in their communities. This is achieved through innovative, accessible and inclusive program and service delivery, collaborative partnerships and shared accountability. The *Seniors Strategy* builds upon the achievements of previous City plans, strategies and initiatives, and guides the City's planning and policy development, while continuing to take a collaborative approach to program and service delivery for seniors in Richmond.

The *Seniors Strategy* outlines five strategic directions:

1. Age-friendly neighbourhoods that support seniors to age in place;
2. Diverse, accessible and inclusive programs and services for seniors at all stages;
3. Communication and awareness of programs and services available for seniors;
4. Education and understanding about healthy aging; and
5. Planning for a growing population of seniors.

The *Seniors Strategy* will guide annual work planning for those serving seniors in Richmond and, with the support of a dedicated working group, will be implemented and evaluated for effectiveness in achieving its strategic directions.



Introduction

The *City of Richmond Seniors Strategy 2022–2032 (Seniors Strategy)* outlines the City's priority strategic actions related to seniors over the next 10 years. Seniors are the fastest growing demographic in Richmond and are living longer, healthier lives than ever in history. By 2036, almost 40% of Richmond's population is expected to be 55 years or older. The *Seniors Strategy* is a collaborative and action-oriented framework intended to guide the City and stakeholders in supporting seniors in Richmond to age well. The strategy is the result of a solid foundation of structures, supports and ongoing commitment provided by the many seniors-serving stakeholders in Richmond.

The *Seniors Strategy* builds on the success and learnings of previous strategies and plans, and information gathered through an analysis of trends and needs in the community. Through extensive community consultation and the guidance of a Seniors Strategy Stakeholder Advisory Committee, the *Seniors Strategy* aims to achieve the vision that "seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities."

Background

The City of Richmond is committed to addressing the needs of the growing population of seniors by building upon a solid foundation of structures and supports that enable and empower seniors to be healthy, active and connected to their communities. This includes continuing to focus on a variety of innovative, accessible and inclusive program and service delivery options available to seniors in Richmond through collaborative partnerships and shared responsibility for creating a community that enables residents to age well. The City has successfully adopted and implemented several plans and strategies to support seniors in Richmond. A brief history of strategic planning for seniors is described below and presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: History of Strategic Planning for Seniors in Richmond



In 2008, City Council adopted the *2008–2012 Older Adults Service Plan* to address the service needs of those aged 55+, an important and growing demographic. The *Service Plan* aimed to ensure that effective, meaningful and appropriate programs, services and opportunities were provided for seniors in Richmond. The development of the *Service Plan* provided an important framework to meet the needs of seniors in Richmond.

In 2015, Council adopted an updated *2015–2020 Seniors Service Plan* that built upon the achievements and learnings of the previous *Service Plan* with new research, a review of emerging practices and extensive community consultation. The vision of the updated *Service Plan* was, "for the City of Richmond to be a nurturing, connected community that promotes healthy and active aging." In the same year, the *2015–2020 Age-Friendly Assessment and Action Plan for Richmond* was adopted by City Council with a vision, "for Richmond to be the best place to age, at all stages, for all residents." The intent of the *Action Plan* was to complement the *Service Plan* and guide the City's efforts to further develop age-friendly policies and programs in Richmond. Age-friendly policies focus on the social and physical environments within the community that promote healthy aging by adapting services and structures to ensure accessibility and inclusion for all residents. The City received Age-Friendly BC Recognition in 2015 from the B.C. Ministry of Health for fulfilling the actions outlined in the *Action Plan* and for its ongoing commitment to make Richmond age-friendly. Other age-friendly initiatives include the creation of the *2019 Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan,* which is ongoing and the *Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning* project, completed in 2020.

The previous plans have been integral in guiding the City's work and in building a solid foundation for seniors to remain healthy, active and connected to the community. The *Seniors Strategy* builds upon the achievements and learnings of previous plans and applies a broader focus to guide City and community stakeholder planning, policy development and program and service provision using a collaborative, systems-based approach to best support seniors in Richmond over the next 10 years.



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Stakeholder Roles and Responsibilities

The City is not able to achieve the aims of the *Seniors Strategy* alone; collective action among stakeholders is essential. The *Seniors Strategy* outlines a collaborative and action-oriented approach for the City and local community-based organizations to align in achieving the desired outcomes for seniors in Richmond. There are a number of formal and informal structures already in place to support this work. The roles of the City, senior levels of government, and community-based stakeholders are summarized below.

The Government of Canada

The Government of Canada plays a role in providing a number of supports to ensure seniors stay healthy and well. Services for seniors that fall under the jurisdiction of the federal government include: elder abuse prevention, financial supports and benefits, health care funding, safety, financial literacy, Veteran programs and services, and fraud prevention. The federal government also facilitates funding programs including the New Horizons for Seniors Program that organizations can access to deliver local programs and services for seniors in the community. In 2019, a Minister of Seniors was appointed to help the federal government better understand and make informed decisions to support the needs of Canadian seniors. The Minister of Seniors also supports other government ministries with federal initiatives that impact and provide Canadian seniors greater security and a better quality of life.



The Province of B.C.

The provincial government supports seniors and their families to plan and live healthy and active lives as they age through the provision of programs and resources on topics including: health and safety, caregiving, financial and legal matters, transportation, housing, and home and community care. The provincial Office of the Seniors Advocate monitors services and issues in B.C. and makes recommendations to the Province to address systemic issues for seniors related to: health care, housing, income supports, personal supports and transportation.

City of Richmond

Local governments are uniquely positioned to support the needs specific to seniors living within the,city's boundaries. The City of Richmond works in partnership with senior levels of government and community-based organizations to ensure that programs and services support seniors to stay healthy and active in the community. The City also allocates resources to support work that addresses the specific needs in the community by:

- Developing, monitoring and evaluating the implementation of strategies and plans to align Richmond's priorities related to supporting seniors;
- Creating and updating policies that address the needs of seniors in Richmond;

- Researching and analyzing data to determine trends, needs and potential gaps in services;
- Providing City-owned community facilities that provide programs and services for seniors, including a dedicated Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living;
- Providing dedicated staff resources to support seniors initiatives;
- Leading initiatives that support seniors and their families;
- Representing Richmond at community tables and on regional committees relating to the needs and issues of seniors;
- Securing grants and funding from senior levels of government to further initiatives and projects that benefit seniors in Richmond; and
- Designing and delivering programs and services for the 55+ population in areas such as aquatics and the arts.

Community Associations and Societies

The City works with Community Associations and Societies to design and deliver recreation, sport, skating, arts, cultural and heritage programs, services and events that best meet the community's needs. The following eight Community Associations and Societies employ Seniors Coordinators or other designated staff dedicated to the delivery of programs and services for seniors:

- City Centre Community Association
- East Richmond Community Association
- Hamilton Community Association
- Minoru Seniors Society
- South Arm Community Association
- Steveston Community Society
- Thompson Community Association
- West Richmond Community Association

Community Service Organizations

Not-for-profit community service organizations provide valuable services to seniors living in Richmond and are well positioned to identify barriers to participation, participate in joint planning initiatives and advocate on behalf of seniors in Richmond. These organizations deliver services that support the diverse needs of seniors. Examples include the following:

- Advocacy and outreach
- Caregiver support
- Crisis counselling
- Dementia support services
- Friendly visiting
- Grocery shopping and meal delivery
- Information and referral
- New immigrant support services
- Peer counselling
- Prescription pick up
- Support groups
- Technology programs
- Translation and interpretation
- Transportation

Vancouver Coastal Health

Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) provides health care services through a network of hospitals, primary care clinics, community health centres and residential care homes. In Richmond, VCH delivers programs and services for seniors through Home and Community Care, Primary Health Care and Community Mental Health. VCH provides a range of support options designed to help seniors with ongoing health conditions to remain in their homes and to be as independent as possible. Home and Community Care programs and services available to seniors include:

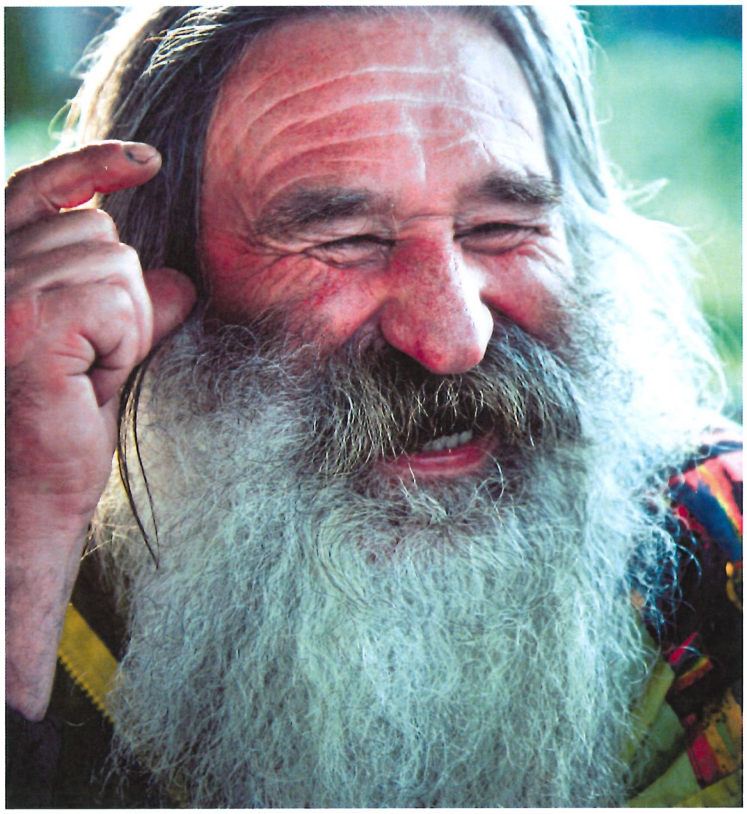
- Adult day care
- Assisted living and long-term care
- Caregiver support
- Dietitian
- Home care and support
- Home medical equipment
- Mental health
- Nutrition
- Palliative care

Alignment with other City Strategies

Richmond City Council has adopted a number of strategies and plans that have one or more strategic actions or outcomes that are specifically focused on supporting the aging population in Richmond. The strategic directions and actions outlined in the *Seniors Strategy* build upon and align with currently adopted strategies and do not duplicate the focus or actions contained within these strategies. The City strategies and plans listed below further support seniors in Richmond and are summarized in Appendix A:

- Official Community Plan: 2041 OCP - Moving Towards Sustainability;
- 2022 Parks and Open Space Strategy;
- Social Development Strategy 2013–2022;
- Affordable Housing Strategy 2017–2027;
- Community Wellness Strategy 2018–2023;
- Volunteer Management Strategy 2018–2021;
- ArtWorks Richmond Arts Strategy 2019–2024;
- Recreation and Sport Strategy 2019–2024;
- Cultural Harmony Plan 2019–2029; and
- 2021–2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond.





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Developing the Strategy

Seniors Strategy Stakeholder Advisory Committee

The *Seniors Strategy* was developed through extensive consultation and research. A Seniors Strategy Stakeholder Advisory Committee was created to provide advice and guide the development of the *Seniors Strategy*. The Committee helped to establish the vision and a set of guiding principles to focus decisions and inform the overall strategy development.

Vision

The vision for the *Seniors Strategy* is that:

Seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities.

Guiding Principles

Five guiding principles were developed by the Seniors Strategy Stakeholder Advisory Committee and approved by City Council to help shape the development of the *Seniors Strategy* and to guide implementation and evaluation.

Principles include:

- Complement City and seniors-serving organizations' strategies, plans, and practices that address the needs of the 55+ years population to keep seniors active, healthy, feeling safe, and connected to their communities.
- Develop actions that are culturally appropriate, promote accessibility and inclusion, and reflect the unique diversity of seniors aged 55+ years.
- Promote and facilitate active engagement of a diverse cross-section of seniors aged 55+ years and seniors-serving organizations in the design, implementation and evaluation of the *Seniors Strategy*, allowing for ongoing and accessible opportunities for feedback.
- Ensure ongoing, collaborative cross-sector partnerships in the creation, implementation, evaluation, and accountability of the *Seniors Strategy*.
- Develop actions that are based on research and best practices, realistic and achievable, and measurable in the context of available resources and are responsive to current and future needs and demographic trends.

Committee Membership

Committee members included representatives from the following organizations and groups:

- City of Richmond
- Richmond Addiction Services Society
- Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives
- Richmond Centre for Disability
- Richmond Multicultural Community Services
- Richmond Public Library
- Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee
- S.U.C.C.E.S.S
- Vancouver Coastal Health

Needs Analysis

A needs analysis was conducted to inform the development of the strategic directions and actions outlined in the *Seniors Strategy*. Information was gathered from multiple sources including:

- Progress made on previous seniors plans;
- Analysis of trends and demographics related to seniors in Richmond;
- A literature and best practices review;
- Key stakeholder consultation; and
- Focus groups with seniors in the community.

Progress made on Previous Seniors Plans

An evaluation of the progress and achievements towards the *2015–2020 Seniors Service Plan* and the *2015–2020 Age-Friendly Assessment and Action Plan* was conducted to determine the initiatives that were most effective and where there were any gaps or areas of improvement. These initiatives were identified as strengths to build on and areas of improvement for the *Seniors Strategy*. Progress reports on each of the previous plans were prepared regularly and are published on the City website at **www.richmond.ca/seniors**.



Analysis of Trends and Demographics Related to Seniors

Demographic data was gathered from a number of sources including Statistics Canada; the VCH My Health, My Community report and the BC Community Health Profile. The demographic profile provides information on trends regarding the seniors population and the neighbourhoods within the city that seniors reside in. This analysis also provides trends and information on income and living status, language and ethnicity, health status and behaviours and vulnerability of seniors.

Literature and Best Practices Review

A review and thematic analysis of literature published after 2012 related to seniors, age-friendly communities, and evaluation of services was conducted to identify considerations for topic areas and strategic design of the *Seniors Strategy*. In addition, a best practices review was conducted to better understand different practices and approaches related to the development, implementation, and evaluation of plans and strategies related to seniors. This review included an analysis of 23 relevant seniors-focused strategies endorsed by municipal governments, provincial governments and international jurisdictions. A thematic analysis of the outcomes, strategic directions and actions within these strategies was also conducted.

To gather more detailed information about the lessons learned from developing and implementing seniors strategies, telephone interviews were conducted with representatives from the following seven municipal governments and community organizations within the Lower Mainland. Questions focused on success factors, challenges and areas for improvement.

- City of Coquitlam
- City of North Vancouver
- City of Surrey
- City of Vancouver
- District of West Vancouver
- Lionsview Seniors Planning Society, North Vancouver
- Silver Harbour Centre, North Vancouver

Key Stakeholder Consultation

Extensive consultation was conducted with key stakeholders representing a variety of organizations and with individual seniors in the community.

The consultation consisted of:

- Telephone interviews with 33 individuals representing community and health service organizations including seniors;
- Six focus groups with community members aged 45 and older;
- One meeting with Community Associations and Society board presidents; and
- One meeting with members of the Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee.

Several stakeholder groups participated in City-led discussions and also hosted telephone interviews with their program participants using a telephone interview guide, created to gather information on the delivery of programs and services in Richmond. A total of 57 online and paper-based surveys with seniors were completed.

Questions focused on:

- Strengths and potential gaps related to seniors services and programs in Richmond;
- Potential strategic directions and outcomes to include in the *Seniors Strategy*; and
- Resources and partnerships necessary for implementation, sustainability and evaluation of the *Seniors Strategy*.

Stakeholders included representatives from:

- Alzheimer Society of British Columbia
- BC Housing
- Chimo Community Services
- City Centre Community Association
- City of Richmond
- East Richmond Community Association
- Family Services of Greater Vancouver
- Hamilton Community Association
- Metro Vancouver Housing Services
- Minoru Seniors Society
- Richmond Addiction Services Society
- Richmond Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Group
- Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives
- Richmond Centre for Disability
- Richmond Chinese Community Society
- Richmond Division of Family Practice
- Richmond Food Bank Society

- Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee
- Richmond Multicultural Community Services
- Richmond Public Library
- Richmond RCMP
- Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee
- South Arm Community Association
- Steveston Community Society
- Thompson Community Association
- Vancouver Coastal Health
- West Richmond Community Association

Draft Strategy Public Engagement

A draft of the *Seniors Strategy* was approved by City Council on March 28, 2022 with a plan to engage the public and gather feedback on the strategy's vision, strategic directions and actions. During the subsequent public engagement process, the public was asked to comment on their level of agreement that the *Seniors Strategy* will support and address the needs of seniors living in Richmond over the next decade. The public engagement process included the following activities:

- An online survey was hosted on the Let's Talk Richmond website from April 4 to 24, 2022 with phone support in English, Cantonese and Mandarin. Translated materials in Traditional Chinese were provided to those that faced barriers to completing the online survey.
- Seven drop-in sessions were hosted at community centres, community organizations and the Richmond Public Library (Brighouse Branch) in conjunction with ongoing seniors activities and programs. Sessions promoted the online survey, provided paper versions of the survey and offered opportunities for dialogue. Multilingual volunteer interpreters were available to assist with completing the survey and to facilitate dialogue at all drop-in sessions.

The public engagement process was widely promoted through a variety of methods, including online, in print and across various community organizations that provide programs and services for seniors including:

- A City of Richmond news release and an advertisement in the Richmond News;
- City of Richmond social media channels and websites, including the Let's Talk Richmond platform where the *Seniors Strategy* survey was hosted;
- Postcards and posters with information about public engagement opportunities and a link to the *Seniors Strategy* survey; and
- Through community organizations' email blasts, newsletters and social media accounts, as well as existing seniors programs and groups.

In total, 169 people attended the drop-in sessions and 501 surveys were received. Findings from the survey were used to refine and prioritize the strategic directions and actions outlined in the *Seniors Strategy* with the Seniors Strategy Stakeholder Advisory Committee contributing their expertise and recommending minor adjustments based on the public engagement results.



Key Findings and Themes

The needs analysis highlighted a number of key findings about demographics and trends related to Richmond seniors and focused on the strengths and potential gaps in the delivery of seniors-related services. The findings created the foundation for development of the *Seniors Strategy* strategic directions and actions.

Demographics and Trends of Seniors in Richmond

Demographic Profile

Seniors are the fastest growing age demographic globally and are living longer and experiencing better health than previous generations. Currently, 32% (63,630) of Richmond's population are seniors and by 2036, this number is projected to increase to 39% (106,295) (Table 1). Of the current seniors population, 54% are female and 46% are male (Figure 2). The life expectancy of seniors living in Richmond is 85.7 years, which is 3.6% longer than the average life expectancy of 82.6 years for BC and more than four years longer than the national average of 81.1 years.[8]

In terms of chronological age, almost half (47%) of seniors in Richmond, or 29,985 individuals, are aged 55 to 64 years, followed by 31% or 19,580 in the 65 to 74 age category; 16% or 10,000 in the 75 to 84 age category and 6% or 4,065 are 85 years or older (Figure 3). This finding demonstrates the broad age range of seniors living in Richmond.[9]

Among the planning areas in Richmond that vary in size and population, the greatest percentage of seniors live in the City Centre neighbourhood (27%), followed by Steveston (14%), Broadmoor (12%) and Blundell (10%).[10] As highlighted in Figure 4, the remaining planning areas each house less than 10% of the overall senior's population in Richmond.

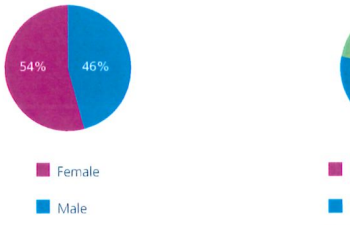
Table 1: Current and projected population in Richmond aged 55+

Year	Number of Seniors	% of population
Current (2016)	63,630	32%
Projected (2036)	106,295	39%

Source: Statistics Canada Semi-custom order, 2016 Census.

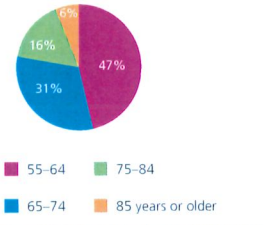
8 BC Community Health Data. B.C. Centre for Disease Control, 2019.; Semi-custom order Census. Statistics Canada, 2016.
9 Semi-custom order Census. Statistics Canada, 2016.; Seniors Vulnerability Report. City of Richmond, 2020.
10 Semi-custom order Census. Statistics Canada, 2016.; Seniors Vulnerability Report. City of Richmond, 2020.

Figure 2: Seniors living in Richmond by sex, 2016 (*n* = 63,630)



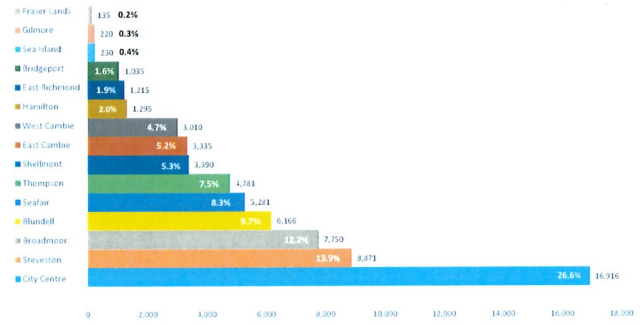
Source: BCCDC, BC Community Health Data, 2019

Figure 3: Seniors living in Richmond by age, 2016 (*n* = 63,630)



Source: Statistics Canada Semi-custom order, 2016 Census/City of Richmond Seniors Vulnerability Report, 2020.

Figure 4: Seniors living in Richmond by planning area (*n* = 63,630)



Source: Statistics Canada Semi-custom order, 2016 Census/City of Richmond Seniors Vulnerability Report, 2020 (percentages rounded to one decimal point)

Income and Living Status

When looking at the income status of the seniors' population, it is important to note the wide range of economic diversity and employment stages of those living within such a broad, 50-year age span (i.e. 55-105+ years). At the younger end of the age span individuals may be employed and earning income, and may have accumulated wealth and assets while others may have retired and are on fixed incomes. Individual circumstances differ and some seniors who have fixed incomes may find it difficult to meet the rising costs of living.

The 2018 BC Seniors Poverty Report Card indicates that 20.3% of Richmond seniors are living in poverty,[11] which is comparable to other age demographics in Richmond. This information is based on tax-filer data from 2015 and represents the number of seniors (65+) living in Richmond who filed taxes in 2015 and reported household income below the Low-Income Measure after Tax (LIM-AT). The LIM-AT is limited in how it can be used to assess the overall level of poverty amongst seniors in Richmond, as it does not include total net worth (i.e. assets and savings) in its measurement. Community-based measures help to understand financial need based on information about access to services. One community-based measure of need is participation in meal and food bank programs. In 2020, 352 more seniors (aged 65+) accessed the Richmond Food Bank than in 2019, with use increasing from 570 seniors (in 2019) to 922 seniors (in 2020). In 2020, seniors aged 65+ accounted for 17.3% of all individuals supported through the Richmond Food Bank.

One factor that increases seniors' risk of poverty, is living alone. Seniors living alone are four times more likely to be at risk of poverty,[12] typically have smaller social networks, are more vulnerable to social isolation and lack emotional well-being due to potentially limited interpersonal interactions.[13] Of the seniors reported to be living in poverty according to LIM-AT data, 26.8% live alone.

The City's Recreation Fee Subsidy program (RFSP) helps people of all ages living in Richmond, who are experiencing financial hardship participate in many registered and drop-in parks, recreation and cultural programs offered by the City and Community Associations and Societies. Between September 1, 2019 and August 31, 2020, 371 seniors participated in the RFSP (see Table 2).

Table 2: City of Richmond Recreation Fee Subsidy Program participation

September 1, 2019 – August 31, 2020

Child (0-12)	Youth (13-18)	Adult (19-54)	Senior (55+)	Total
312	100	458	371	**1,241**

11 B.C. Seniors Poverty Report Card. United Way Lower Mainland & SPARC B.C., 2018.
12 A closer look at inequality and poverty among seniors. Canadian Centre on Policy Alternatives, 2017.
13 Semi-custom order Census. Statistics Canada, 2016. Seniors Vulnerability Report. City of Richmond, 2020.

Language and Ethnicity

Language barriers can have implications on access to and participation in programs and services. Nineteen percent of seniors living in Richmond experience language barriers, meaning they do not have basic knowledge of English.[14] In terms of ethnicity, approximately two-thirds (65%) of seniors living in Richmond are from racialized communities and 3% are recent immigrants who moved to Canada in the past five years. The City of Richmond has the highest percentage of immigrants in Canada. Just under 1% of the Richmond senior's population describe themselves as Indigenous.[15]

Health Status and Behaviours

The My Health, My Community Survey conducted in 2015, highlights key findings related to the health of seniors over the age of 65 years living in Richmond. This information is useful as it informs program development and focus. Of the seniors surveyed, three-quarters (75%) reported a strong sense of community belonging and 44% indicated they have four or more people to confide in. A third (33%) of seniors surveyed reported their health as 'excellent' or 'very good' and 48% of seniors reported their mental health as 'excellent' or 'very good.' These are strong indicators of community belonging and also indicate an opportunity to strengthen and support overall reports of health and mental health.

Over half (55%) of seniors surveyed report engaging in two or more hours of screen time daily and under half (42%) engage in the recommended 150 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity per week. Many seniors remain healthy and independent in the community as they age, with 81% living with no chronic health conditions and just 4% living in long-term care facilities.[16] Even with low rates of chronic health conditions and many seniors living independently or supported by families and caregivers in the community, there is an opportunity to increase physical activity participation rates and continue to promote healthy, active aging.

Vulnerability of Seniors

According to the Seniors Vulnerability Report published by the United Way of Lower Mainland in 2020, there are multiple factors that are associated with socio-economic vulnerabilities in seniors. The indicators of vulnerability in the seniors population include:

- Low income;
- Women aged 85+;
- Living alone;
- Low levels of education;
- Language barriers;
- Recent immigrants; and
- Living in vulnerable housing.

The City Centre area is identified as the neighbourhood in Richmond with the highest number of vulnerability indicators among seniors; 27% of Richmond's seniors live in this neighbourhood.[17]

Emerging Themes

The needs analysis revealed seven themes that were highlighted in the demographic profile, literature review and stakeholder engagement. These themes informed the development of the strategic directions and actions outlined in the strategy framework. Overall, findings consistently indicated that the City of Richmond is seen as a leader in the delivery of services for seniors and there are many current practices that remain relevant and important to focus on over the next 10 years. One of the most significant strengths is the robust social infrastructure in place in the community to support service delivery in collaboration with a strong network of stakeholders who are committed and passionate about meeting the needs of seniors. In addition, it is clear that seniors living in Richmond value and care deeply about their community. While the findings from the needs analysis revealed many strengths related to the delivery of seniors-related programs and services, it also highlighted some gaps that impact seniors living in Richmond and potential opportunities to address them. The following themes emerged from the needs analysis and are discussed below in relation to the strengths, gaps and opportunities that were noted through the various components of this analysis:

1. Meeting the needs of a diverse population of seniors;
2. Reducing barriers to participation by seniors;
3. Supporting seniors to successfully age in place;
4. Age-friendly design and built environments;
5. Infrastructure and resources for a growing seniors population;
6. Addressing existing stereotypes and ageism;
7. Awareness of programs and services available to seniors.

14 Semi-custom order Census, Statistics Canada, 2016 ; Seniors Vulnerability Report. City of Richmond. 2020
15 Semi-custom order Census, Statistics Canada, 2016 ; Seniors Vulnerability Report. City of Richmond. 2020
16 My Health, My Community Survey Vancouver Coastal Health. 2015

17 Seniors Vulnerability Report. United Way of Lower Mainland. 2020

Meeting the Needs of a Diverse Population of Seniors

It is important to highlight that while seniors are often referred to as a homogeneous population group, they are not. In reality, the seniors population is incredibly diverse and heterogeneous. In Richmond, the term seniors is used to describe adults aged 55 years and older, which encompasses several life stages and ages. Aging is a lifelong process and is only partially associated with chronological age. Some seniors remain independent and physically and mentally engaged throughout their lifespan while others do not, due to chronic health conditions or physical or cognitive challenges which increases the complexity of an individual's needs as they age. While the term diversity is typically associated with diversity of culture and ethnicity, it is also important to note that diversity extends beyond this and encompasses many characteristics. This includes diversity of income, physical and cognitive ability and gender, as examples that need to be considered to ensure programming is inclusive and accessible to all seniors.

Diversity in the context of the *Seniors Strategy*, refers to the representation, recognition and celebration of individuals who possess a combination of visible and invisible differences, and lived experiences that shape their view of the world, perspective and approach. Each individual may possess a number of different attributes that intersect and overlap to create a unique lived experience, leading to a diversity of thought within a given group. Such differences include, but are not limited to the following:

- (Dis)ability
- Age
- Educational background
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Physical appearance
- Religious beliefs
- Sexual orientation
- Socio-economic position

Strengths

Many stakeholders highlighted the varied and innovative services offered through City facilities and community organizations as a strength of the city. Services are viewed as accessible, welcoming, affordable, inclusive, culturally appropriate and provide an opportunity for people to connect with others. Service providers work hard to offer a variety of services that address the needs of diverse groups of seniors including those with varying physical and cognitive abilities and those from diverse social, economic, ethnic and cultural backgrounds, LGBTQ2S+ communities and those who are new to Canada. As noted in the demographic profile, Richmond has the highest percentage of immigrants in Canada, with two-thirds of seniors from racialized communities, which adds to the vibrancy and richness within its residents. As a result, a wide variety of cultural traditions of residents including music, food and holidays are celebrated and incorporated into programming throughout the year.

The City's *Cultural Harmony Plan* aims to identify innovative and collaborative approaches to strengthen intercultural connections among Richmond residents, remove barriers to participation and provide City programs and services that address the needs of the city's diverse population. The City also hosts an annual Diversity Symposium for professionals, volunteers and community members interested in learning, sharing and advancing equity, diversity, and inclusion in their communities. Those who work and volunteer with seniors can attend education sessions, training opportunities and conferences that cover many seniors-related topics and educate them of any current trends and research impacting the seniors population.

Gaps and Challenges

Although the City and stakeholders are working hard to meet the needs of seniors, there remains a challenge in meeting the needs of a large diverse group spanning over 50 years of age, from 55 to 105+ years, who are at varying stages in their lives physically, mentally and socially.

Stakeholder engagement revealed that many individuals aged 55 to 65 years did not identify themselves with the term "senior." These individuals indicated a preference for participating in programs and services offered through the City and Community Associations and Societies that are developed and promoted for "adults," a term generally referring to individuals aged 18 to 54 years. As a result, there is an opportunity to do further investigation to understand the needs of this age cohort and how to best serve their needs.

The philosophy, which is integrated into program and service delivery, of planning with seniors and not for them was highlighted in the literature. Implementation of this philosophy has been a challenge for many. There is a wealth of experience, skills and knowledge amongst the seniors population that should not be overlooked. While this is common practice for many organizations, opportunities to expand on this are noted as an area to further explore. Stakeholders also commented that diversity in language and culture is an important consideration, but many times overlooked, as seniors living in Richmond reflect a myriad of cultures and speak a variety of languages.

It is important to note that at the time the *Seniors Strategy* is being developed, the COVID-19 pandemic is actively impacting the community. The pandemic has had a significant impact on the delivery of programs and services. The full extent and

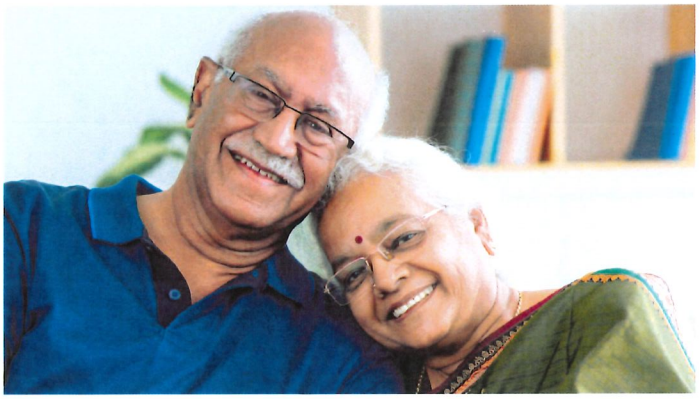
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duration of the impact on seniors in the community is not yet known. In response to the pandemic, stakeholders experienced an increased need for virtual and phone-in programs due to public health restrictions on gathering. This highlighted challenges with isolated seniors, gaps in access and knowledge related to technology, and varying levels of concern around participation with restrictions.

Opportunities

The diversity within the seniors population presents opportunities for enhanced community vibrancy and engagement through increased sharing of perspectives from a variety of seniors with long life experiences. There is an opportunity to engage and connect with seniors and use their wealth of experience, skills and knowledge in the design, implementation and evaluation of services for seniors. Examples include participation in intergenerational programs, on various advisory committees and through paid and volunteer positions that benefit the community.

There is an opportunity to evaluate the terms and labels used to describe programs and services developed for the 55+ population. Meeting diverse needs can also be achieved by reaching out to seniors who are not engaged or connected in the community. It is important to ensure communication is culturally relevant, translated where appropriate, and programs, services and amenities are culturally appropriate, safe and inclusive.



Reducing Barriers to Participation by Seniors

Along with addressing the diversity of the seniors population, it is important to address the numerous barriers that exist that may prevent some seniors from participating and engaging fully with their communities. Seniors, like any other group of people, have different lived experiences based on a number of factors such as socio-economic status, language, culture, health, social relationships, access to resources and supports, and other life events that may influence their ability to participate in services. As seniors age, these barriers can be more pronounced and build on one another making participation in services difficult. Understanding these influences and experiences ensures that services meet the needs of seniors.

Strengths

A strength identified in the needs analysis was the existing partnerships and collaboration between service providers to help support seniors facing barriers, especially those with low income, physical mobility challenges and cognitive limitations. Service providers work together to refer seniors to other organizations or provide on-site one-on-one virtual and in-person support to access a variety of services such as financial benefits, legal and dental clinics, free blood pressure checks at city-wide wellness clinics and affordable housing navigation.

Stakeholders noted that programs in Richmond are developed intentionally to remove barriers that often prevent seniors from participating, including specialized outreach programs offered across the city, communication methods offered in other languages and enhancing accessibility for those with limited mobility or cognitive challenges. The creation of the City Council adopted *Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan* is also an example of a strength that meets the needs of those experiencing cognitive decline through the implementation of a number of actions to ensure seniors with dementia are included, supported, valued and continue to be active and engaged with their community.

Gaps and Challenges

The needs of vulnerable and potentially isolated seniors are highlighted even more now than in the past. It is important to continue to reach and connect seniors through targeted outreach and collaborative initiatives, particularly with VCH and other community health organizations. Stakeholders acknowledged that accessing and connecting with isolated seniors is a challenge in Richmond and is seen as a gap in both the delivery and design of services, programs and amenities.

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Opportunities

In order to successfully meet the needs of an aging population, identifying, addressing and removing barriers that may impact the ability of seniors to fully participate and engage in their communities is of the utmost importance.

Stakeholders identified the need to consider regularly removing the barriers when delivering services and programs for seniors especially when implementing the actions outlined in the *Seniors Strategy*. One example of a potential initiative, suggested during stakeholder engagement, is to develop a standard process or checklist to ensure needs and barriers to participation are addressed when developing seniors programs and other initiatives. These program elements may vary depending on resources, the neighbourhood in which the program is delivered, and other unique needs of the seniors participating.

Supporting Seniors to Successfully Age in Place

Remaining at home in the community for as long as possible and avoiding an unnecessary move into long-term care facilities remains the number one choice for many seniors. The impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on those living in long-term care, including the number of deaths reported and the high rate of spread of the virus, has strengthened this desire to remain in their own homes. There are many benefits to aging in place for seniors in addition to having the ability to remain healthy, active and independent in the community. Those who remain at home may feel a greater level of control over their personal lives which can lead to higher levels of happiness, fulfillment and personal satisfaction. Seniors who age in place also enjoy improved quality of life and sense of well-being, familiarity and comfort, and the avoidance of unnecessary or undesired change and stressors.[18]

Strengths

Richmond has many strengths in supporting seniors to remain in their homes for as long as possible. City Council adopted an *Affordable Housing Strategy*, addressing the affordable housing needs of Richmond residents and focusing on supporting vulnerable populations through increased development of supportive housing, non-market rental housing, and low-end market rental units. The strategy identifies low and moderate-income seniors as one of five priority groups for City involvement in affordable housing.

Many informal partnerships exist between service providers and housing providers representing buildings with high concentrations of seniors in Richmond. Provision and dissemination of information is shared among these partners about programs, services and resources available to support seniors to remain healthy, independent and safe in their homes. Examples of information provided include health supports, flu and vaccine clinics, low-income supports, including free dental care clinics and information on how to deliver programs and workshops on-site in their own buildings.

Community service organizations and the City work closely together to develop, provide and disseminate information on services and resources available. Examples include educational workshops, assistance with navigation of housing databases and health services, and completion of seniors-related forms and applications. The City and Community Associations and Societies host monthly Wellness Clinics at eight locations in Richmond, providing opportunities for seniors to learn about programs and services, access free and low cost health services and connect with their peers socially.

Gaps and Challenges

Despite a number of impactful projects and policies developed to support seniors to age in place, gaps and challenges remain. The aging population has increased the demand for affordable housing options for seniors, especially affordable rental units for low-income seniors. In September 2021, almost half (522) of the 1,085 Richmond households waiting for affordable housing units managed by BC Housing, were seniors.[19] Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER) supplied 1,057 seniors in the private market a rent supplement in September 2021.

Although many options exist, seniors are challenged with understanding and accessing all of the options and supports available that may allow them to age in place longer. For example, those who may need home support or home care options in order to remain at home may find it overwhelming to navigate or access this information. Another concern identified was that, while many seniors do not want to leave their homes, they are challenged with being able to manage the ongoing maintenance, repairs or renovations needed to allow them to continue to live safely in their homes as they age. Challenges also noted by seniors and stakeholders included both affordability and knowledge of suitable and credible service providers.

Extreme weather events have also highlighted the need to support vulnerable and at-risk seniors living in the community. Those at-risk include seniors with underlying chronic conditions and who are socially isolated, residing in poor living conditions or are homebound. If not adequately supported, seniors are at great risk of adverse effects due to extreme weather events.

18 Age-Friendly Communities. Government of Canada. 2021

19 Rental Market Trend. BC Housing. 2021

Opportunities

Many opportunities exist to support seniors to successfully age in place through increased social connections in neighbourhoods, resilience building and emergency preparedness initiatives that address extreme health and weather events. The City has existing relationships and collaborations with many multi-unit residential buildings with high concentrations of seniors. These relationships could be leveraged to pilot successful and emerging practices including Building Resilient Streets/Neighbourhoods and Hey Neighbour Collective initiatives. Building Resilient Streets/Neighbourhood's *Connect and Prepare* program, for example, is a successful approach to building preparedness by strengthening social connections between neighbours through facilitated presentations, interactive games, and friendly discussions that allow neighbours to get to know each other, learn about acute emergencies and chronic stresses, identify assets and priorities, and implement shared preparedness projects.[20] Hey Neighbour is a resident-led initiative aimed at increasing social connectedness, neighbourliness, and resilience in multi-unit buildings through design improvements and social programming. Other goals of the Hey Neighbour initiatives include increasing a sense of community amongst residents within their buildings and decreasing frequency and intensity of loneliness among residents.[21]

Opportunities also exist in the community to help seniors access the necessary information about programs and services that allow them to transition through the continuum of housing or to remain at home with home care and support services and/or referrals to reputable and affordable housing maintenance, repair or renovation businesses. There are also opportunities to build upon and expand successful programs and services already offered in the community, such as monthly Wellness Clinics delivered by the Community Associations and Societies.

Age-Friendly Design and Built Environments

Age-friendly cities consider the needs of seniors with regard to outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social participation, respect and social inclusion, civic participation and employment, communication and information, community support and health services. Age-friendly infrastructure impacts life satisfaction and overall health of seniors and the entire community. Transportation for seniors needs to be available, affordable, safe and comfortable in order to connect them to their destinations. The importance of the design and availability of transit stops, walkability, spots for parking and transportation education was also highlighted.

20. The Connect and Prepare Program. Building Resilient Neighbourhoods. 2021
21. Hey Neighbour. City of Vancouver. 2020.



Strengths

There is a growing awareness among all levels of government and service providers about the importance of age-friendly environments and the positive impact this environment has on the health of its residents. Richmond received Age-Friendly BC Recognition in 2015 by the Province of B.C. for the completion of the *2015–2020 Age-Friendly Assessment* and *Action Plan* and an ongoing commitment to make Richmond age-friendly. Many initiatives were completed from the *Action Plan* and the City continues to work with stakeholders to address age-friendly needs particularly in the areas of transportation, housing and outdoor spaces.

The City also created a framework through a UBCM funded project, *Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning,* to guide the engagement of seniors in future planning in Richmond to support seniors to age in place. Through participation in a series of specifically tailored meetings with a group of diverse seniors, the framework gives seniors the tools to identify age-friendly barriers and supports in their neighbourhoods. Participation in this project increased opportunities for social connections among seniors and their neighbours and engagement between the City and seniors in Richmond.

The Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee (RSAC) provides advice to City Council on issues that impact seniors. The RSAC includes a transportation sub-committee that has successfully advocated for many age-friendly changes to existing transportation

services to support seniors in Richmond including improvements to and accessibility of bus stops, crosswalks, signage and parking. The sub-committee also relays suggestions from seniors in the community to TransLink and HandyDART services.

The City's Enhanced Accessibility Design Guidelines and Accessible Events Checklist are initiatives that help to support an age-friendly city through furthering accessible and barrier-free design in City buildings and at City events. The guidelines assist City staff with incorporating accessibility features in City-owned or City-leased facilities that go beyond the requirements of the B.C. Building Code and enhance barrier-free access for all members of the community. The Accessible Events Checklist supports the development of City events that are accessible, welcoming and inclusive for all community members.

Gaps and Challenges

While the City has many policies and practices in place that utilize an age-friendly lens, there are opportunities to expand efforts to make Richmond more age-friendly.

Many of Richmond's seniors remain healthy and independent in the community as they age with 81% living with no chronic health conditions and only 4% living in long-term care facilities. In an effort to preserve community wellness benefits and prevent the need for costly long-term care housing options for seniors, there remains a priority to support seniors independence in the community for as long as possible.

The impacts of COVID-19 also reinforce the need to address social isolation, loneliness and the mental health of seniors as a key priority in impacting seniors health and well-being. As City facilities and other community organizations temporarily suspended their in-person activities, the need for outdoor public spaces that facilitate informal social connections became even more prevalent.

Awareness of housing and transportation options in Richmond were identified in the literature and by stakeholders as a priority in supporting seniors to remain independent and healthy in the community for as long as possible. Appropriate and affordable housing remains a significant area of focus for seniors. Access to information and resources regarding supports for specific needs and transitions was highlighted in particular.

Opportunities

Together, outdoor spaces could be increasingly activated and social infrastructure put in place to provide additional opportunities for residents to connect safely with their neighbourhoods.

There is an opportunity to identify and centralize information related to housing options and supports available in Richmond. As seniors age, access to housing information will support independence and healthy and safe aging. This information includes resources for seniors who live in a single family home and are interested in learning more about options for supported care such as in-home health supports and levels of long-term care. Additional resources can include information on both market and non-market rental housing options and help with housing maintenance issues.

Expanding the learnings from the *Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning* project completed in the Seafair neighbourhood to other planning areas in Richmond would help to address challenges and opportunities in the areas of transportation, safety, housing options, and programs and services for seniors. When implemented, the framework would support seniors to age in place successfully through increased empowerment and confidence, by creating age-friendly ambassadors, social connections between seniors and their neighbours, and ongoing community engagement and dialogue between the City and seniors in Richmond.

Infrastructure and Resources for a Growing Seniors Population

Seniors currently represent 32% of the total population in Richmond with 63,630 people aged 55+ years.[22] By 2036, 39% of the total population of Richmond, or 106,295 individuals, are projected to be 55 years or older. Life expectancy in Richmond continues to be the highest in Canada at 85.7 years compared to the national average of 81.1 years. As the population of seniors continues to grow and seniors are continuing to live independently in the community longer, it becomes even more important for resources and infrastructure to be in place to adequately support them. Dedicated infrastructure and supportive leadership in addition to human, material and financial resources are essential to adequately meet the needs of a growing seniors population.

Strengths

The needs analysis highlighted that a significant strength in Richmond is the existing foundation that supports the delivery of programs and services to seniors. Specifically, dedicated city-wide staff positions in seniors planning and wellness exist in Richmond that are just beginning to be established in other municipalities in B.C. and across Canada. Richmond is seen as a leader in B.C. with respect to its seniors-related initiatives and in developing plans and strategies to support seniors. In addition, there is strong leadership for seniors-related initiatives from the City, Community Associations and Societies, community service organizations and VCH.

22 Semi-custom order Census, Statistics Canada, 2016

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Richmond has eight active community centres across Richmond, as well as the Richmond Public Library, Richmond Cultural Centre, Minoru Centre for Active Living, Watermania, Minoru Arenas, Richmond Ice Centre and Richmond Pitch & Putt Golf Course. A broad range of programs and services are offered for seniors at all of these facilities. Dedicated staff for seniors ensures programming is tailored to the specific needs in each community and builds trusting relationships between staff and patrons.

A group consisting of senior-serving staff from the City, Community Associations and Societies and the Richmond Public Library, meet regularly to streamline program and service delivery, identify gaps and collaborate. There are also many community-based seniors serving organizations in Richmond delivering a variety of programs, services and initiatives individually and in partnership with the City and Community Associations and Societies with a goal to help keep seniors healthy and active in the community.

The Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living, which opened in 2019, represents a significant investment in the expansion of seniors services and sport and recreation services for the community and is designed to meet the needs of Richmond's growing seniors population. The Minoru Seniors Society, a senior-led non-profit organization works with the City to develop and deliver programs and services at this state of the art Seniors Centre. The City's Richmond Seniors Advisory Commitee is also a resource for seniors living in Richmond and an ongoing conduit for seniors to provide feedback to the City on issues and opportunities related to seniors.

Gaps and Challenges

While a strong foundation to support seniors exists in Richmond, many stakeholders voiced their concern that current services and infrastructure in Richmond may not be able to support the increasingly significant and growing number of diverse seniors in the future. While there are a variety of designated seniors spaces and dedicated staff positions in the community to support seniors, many organizations have limited resources. In addition, expanding appropriate spaces to accommodate seniors who attend programs and services would help support their participation and engagement in community activities.

Opportunities

There are many opportunities to build and expand on the strengths noted above in order to meet the needs of a growing population of seniors in Richmond. The need for dedicated resources to strategically plan for the growing population of seniors is timely and necessary. This includes leading and ensuring progress is made on priority outcomes that impact seniors, securing resources and grants to execute actions, and continuing to build on other successful initiatives. Participation in seniors-related external groups and committees is also important to strengthen collaboration and share information, research, trends and best practices from other municipalities and regions. There is an opportunity to further focus on professional development and training regarding the diverse needs of seniors for staff and volunteers with the City and in the community that work with seniors.

Additionally, there is an opportunity to further align the sharing of information and approaches to supporting seniors among the current network of seniors service providers. Increased sharing within this network of each organization's roles and responsibilities and where there are specialized areas of expertise that can be drawn on by the network will increase efficiencies and reduce the potential for duplication of efforts and resources.

Addressing Existing Stereotypes and Ageism

A lack of knowledge and understanding of the positive impacts of healthy aging can often lead to stereotypes, myths and misconceptions about the seniors population. When the community understands the benefits of healthy aging and the positive contributions seniors make, negative perceptions and stereotypes shift, increasing the respect and support for seniors in the community. The community is also encouraged and more willing to be engaged in initiatives and activities that support seniors. Providing seniors with ongoing accessible opportunities to provide feedback and contribute to their communities builds trust and ensures initiatives for seniors are developed in collaboration.

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Strengths

The City, along with Community Associations and Societies, continue to host the City's Annual Positive Aging Campaign on National Seniors Day (October 1); a yearly event showcasing positive images and messages of seniors in Richmond with a goal of reducing ageism and existing stereotypes. Many intergenerational activities and programs are offered that bring together seniors with others of all ages to help foster relationships between the generations and reduce misconceptions about aging. These programs build on the strengths that different generations have to offer, nurture understanding and mutual respect, and challenge ageism.

Another strength is the number of existing meaningful opportunities for seniors to contribute their knowledge, skills and experiences to the community through volunteer and paid opportunities in programming, boards and committees, special events and other initiatives. This active participation ensures seniors' voices are heard and influence decisions that impact seniors and the broader community.

Gaps and Challenges

Despite the work aimed to dispel stereotypes and misconceptions around the aging population, ageism remains prevalent. Training and educational opportunities are often directed to those who already work with and care for seniors, most of whom are knowledgeable about the population and hold positive perceptions. A gap in the engagement of the broader community, who could benefit from better knowledge and more positive perceptions of the aging population, was noted in stakeholder engagement. A lack of accessible training and educational opportunities for all ages is a gap that can be addressed to help reduce myths and stereotypes about seniors and aging.

Opportunities

There are opportunities to learn from best practices from countries that have a large seniors population. Japan, which has the world's oldest population, started to consciously and formally revise the perception of the image of seniors about 20 years ago, when the elderly population reached 22 million (18% of the population). According to 2018 data released by the government of Japan, there are 35.9 million citizens aged 65 or older in the country. The Japanese government is focusing on reforming national consciousness, working toward making a proactive and positive shift in how the elderly are perceived. The seniors population went from being viewed as a group of people whose abilities were declining, to a class of people who are active, healthy and financially secure like any other age group. Japan now has a *Respect for the Aged Day*.[23]

23. "Fear ageism, not aging: How an aged society is fighting its elders. Hashimoto, Akiko. 2021

There are opportunities to raise the awareness of healthy aging through training, public education campaigns and the use of positive images of seniors in marketing materials that promote events for all ages. Another opportunity is to build upon and expand existing activities that aim to combat ageism to reach all ages in the community. The City's annual Positive Aging Campaign, for example, could expand to become a year-round initiative with a goal to raise awareness of the negative impact of ageism to a larger audience.

Building on existing networks to provide additional, accessible and ongoing methods for seniors to provide feedback and contribute meaningfully to the community was noted as an opportunity to demonstrate increased respect for seniors voices. Also identified, was the opportunity for intergenerational programs and collaboration to help increase knowledge and awareness of healthy aging and allow for ongoing dialogue and engagement between seniors and other generations.

Awareness of Programs and Services Available to Seniors

Having the right information when it is needed helps everyone to stay informed and connected. It is important that seniors are informed of programs and services that will help them to remain active, healthy, safe and independent in the community. Awareness of social opportunities and ways to connect with others supports seniors to avoid isolation and a premature move to long-term care. For many, knowledge, navigation of, and access to the many programs and services that are available to seniors in Richmond may be a challenge. In addition, the diversity of the seniors population may add another layer of complexity impacting an individual's awareness of programs and services available.

Strengths

Service providers work hard to reach seniors and their families to relay information about available services through multiple communication channels including print materials, newspaper advertisements, social media, websites and newsletters. Stakeholders mentioned the availability of one-on-one communication channels such as phone calls, email messages, in-person and virtual meetings, and dialogue during program participation, between seniors and seniors-serving staff as a current strength.

Another strength in Richmond is the collaborative partnerships that exist between organizations and seniors-focused residential buildings and retirement residences to share information about available programs and services. Communication methods are tailored to the specific needs and interests of the community or neighbourhood. In addition to sharing information directly with seniors, intentional connections are made with other populations that may interact with seniors including family members, caregivers, and other organizations and businesses who serve seniors.

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Gaps and Challenges

Despite efforts, there remains a lack of awareness among some seniors about available supports and services in the community. Seniors, their families and caregivers, and those who provide services to seniors are not always aware of the wide variety of programs, services and supports available in Richmond. Seniors living in Richmond reflect many cultures and languages and it can be challenging to ensure communication is culturally relevant and clearly understood. Lack of awareness may also be due to a variety of other factors including lack of community connections, limited mobility, lack of transportation, and cognitive and physical decline. For those unable to utilize technology, the need to visit multiple locations to find the information they are searching for becomes frustrating and not possible for many with physical and financial limitations.

Health-related services and programs were identified as a priority in terms of types of services, programs and amenities offered in Richmond. While there are a wide range and variety of health-related programs and services available in Richmond, many seniors may not be aware of them or are challenged in navigating and accessing them.

The COVID-19 pandemic and recent extreme weather events have highlighted communication and awareness challenges that further emphasize the need to explore innovative methods for seniors to stay connected and informed of what is available to them. While many seniors are utilizing technology, many still do not have access to cell phones, tablets or computers due to a lack of knowledge of how to use them, physical or cognitive limitations, or a lack of ability to obtain the technology due to financial barriers. This presents a challenge for many seniors as information is often relayed online or through technology.[24]



Opportunities

Coordination of communication efforts among service providers, utilizing existing connections with seniors, their families and caregivers, and the public would be beneficial to increase awareness of seniors-related services. Many social prescribing programs use existing connections between vulnerable seniors and primary care providers to refer seniors to available community programs and services to increase physical activities and foster social connections. These programs have demonstrated positive impacts on participants including improvements to their mental health, decreased loneliness and a greater sense of connectedness and belonging. People are healthier when connected to social and community supports, and when they are empowered to play a meaningful role in their own health and well-being.[25]

There is an opportunity to explore different methods of communication to reach seniors, their families and caregivers to increase connections to supports and services that are available. Existing information databases that connect Richmond residents to various City programs and services, could be utilized to increase connection with seniors during extreme health and weather events. There are also opportunities to provide greater technological support and access for seniors and their families to more easily navigate the range of health services available in Richmond. Additional opportunities to increase awareness of seniors-related services noted by stakeholders include the development of creative ways to consolidate and centralize information and resources for seniors and utilizing a variety of low barrier communication methods such as radio and newspaper advertisements.

From Themes to Actions

The demographic profile of seniors in Richmond, considered alongside the literature review and input received through community engagement provides a rich understanding of the current context of seniors in the community and the priority areas of focus. The *Seniors Strategy* aims to guide Richmond's continued leadership in planning for and providing programs and services for a growing seniors population over the next 10 years. The seven themes above informed the development of the five strategic directions and actions outlined in the following section.

24 United Way Healthy Aging connects B.C. Seniors through the Digital Learning Pilot Project. United Way B.C., 2021.
25 Re:Community Housing. Conja, 2018.

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Strategic Directions and Actions

The *Seniors Strategy* consists of five strategic directions and 29 recommended actions to be completed over a 10-year time frame. The strategic directions and accompanying actions were created in response to themes identified through an analysis of community needs, best practices and various stakeholder engagement activities. The strategic directions clarify areas of focus and include actions that build on previous and ongoing work to achieve the described outcomes. Specific targeted activities and initiatives will be established through annual work plans to best support the achievement of the actions outlined in the strategy. The five strategic directions are:

1. Age-friendly neighbourhoods that support seniors to age in place;
2. Diverse, accessible and inclusive programs and services for seniors at all stages;
3. Communication and awareness of programs and services available for seniors;
4. Education and understanding about healthy aging; and
5. Planning for a growing population of seniors.

The *Seniors Strategy* is intended to be delivered in partnership and collaboration with community stakeholders in Richmond that share the vision of keeping Richmond seniors active, healthy and connected to their community. Each action includes:

- **Who's involved:** Those who have an interest and/or the expertise necessary to achieve the action including the City, Community Associations and Societies, community organizations, health agencies and the private sector.
- **City's Role:** Supporting healthy aging is shared with senior levels of government and seniors-serving organizations. The City's role in each action is outlined as follows:

  Lead: The City is responsible for defining and delivering the short, medium, long-term and ongoing direction.

  Collaborate: The City plays a role as a facilitator, convener and/or partner, and will contribute knowledge, leadership, staff time and relevant resources as an active participant on a team or table.

  Support: The City contributes knowledge, staff time and relevant resources to support implementation of the direction that is led by others.

- **Timeline/Implementation Period:** The anticipated timeline for delivering on the actions are classified as short-term (0-3 years), medium-term (4-6 years), long-term (7-10 years) or ongoing.



1 Age-Friendly Neighbourhoods that Support Seniors to Age in Place

Age-friendly communities play an important role in building community, keeping people healthy, well connected, resilient and able to participate fully in their neighbourhoods. In practical terms, an age-friendly community adapts its structures and services to be accessible to and inclusive of seniors with varying needs and capacities. In addition to the necessary physical infrastructure, a community's social infrastructure must also ensure accessibility, inclusivity and safety for seniors with varying needs. Age-friendly neighbourhoods reduce social isolation and loneliness, and ensure all seniors regardless of abilities, live in environments that enable them to actively enjoy a high quality of life.

Key Outcomes

- Seniors have opportunities to connect socially in their neighbourhoods.
- Seniors feel safe and supported.
- Seniors are able to remain active in the neighbourhoods of their choice for as long as possible.
- Seniors utilize the amenities and outdoor spaces in Richmond.
- Seniors have access to affordable, safe and accessible transportation services and housing options.
- Seniors living with dementia, their families and caregivers are supported to be active and engaged in their community.

No.	Action	Who's involved	City's Role	Timeline
1.1	Expand on the development of age-friendly neighbourhoods (e.g. outdoor areas and public buildings, transportation, housing) in Richmond by implementing the framework created from the *2019 Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning* project in all neighbourhoods.	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Community Organizations; Private Sector; Vancouver Coastal Health	Collaborate	Ongoing
1.2	Identify, remove and prevent barriers for seniors to access open spaces, parks, trails and streets (e.g. crosswalks, benches, lighting, accessible, safe gathering places).	City of Richmond	Lead	Short-term
1.3	Build upon current practices (formal and informal) to activate public spaces in a manner that fosters social connections between seniors and others in their neighbourhoods.	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Private Sector	Lead	Medium-term
1.4	Identify ways to support seniors when transitioning through the continuum of housing available in Richmond (e.g. education and awareness, housing repair, one-on-one support, database listing).	City of Richmond; Community Organizations; Housing Providers; Vancouver Coastal Health	Support	Short-term
1.5	Build upon existing best practices that reduce social isolation and loneliness, and facilitate opportunities to strengthen social connections, resilience and mutual support between seniors and their neighbours (e.g. Hey Neighbour, Resilient Streets/ Neighbourhoods programs).	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Housing Providers; Vancouver Coastal Health	Collaborate	Ongoing
1.6	Evaluate the implementation of the *2019–2023 Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan* and develop initiatives to further support for all Richmond residents living with dementia, their families and caregivers following *Action Plan* completion.	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health	Lead	Medium-term

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2 Diverse, Accessible and Inclusive Programs and Services for Seniors at all Stages

Programs and services for seniors in Richmond are offered through many providers including the City, Community Associations and Societies, community organizations and the private sector. Participation in diverse, high quality programs and services offered in the community can foster social connections and enhance overall heath, well-being and quality of life for seniors. Removing barriers and ensuring programs and services are designed to be welcoming and accessible ensures all seniors living in Richmond are able to fully participate regardless of their age, previous experience, physical fitness level and stage in their aging journey. Ensuring a variety of opportunities are available for meaningful and purposeful engagement, celebration, learning, and personal growth and development allows seniors to stay socially engaged, physically and mentally active, and healthier in the community for as long as possible.

Key Outcomes

- Seniors feel welcomed, encouraged and supported to participate in programs and services.
- Programs and services for seniors are accessible by those facing barriers to participation.
- Seniors are supported at all stages in their aging journey to be physically, mentally and socially active.
- Seniors have opportunities available to them that are interesting, engaging and facilitate learning and enhanced skill development.

No.	Action	Who's involved	City's Role	Timeline
2.1	Expand upon activities and events that celebrate the cultural diversity of seniors in Richmond and provide opportunities to learn about and connect with others of varying backgrounds and ethnic origins (e.g. City Arts, Cultural and Heritage programs, Highway to Heaven Bus Tour, holiday celebrations).	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Richmond Tourism; Private Sector	Collaborate	Short-term
2.2	Research and explore best practices, and further engage with participants to better understand and serve the diverse needs and interests of the large seniors age group (e.g. the definition and use of the word "senior" and using a needs-based vs. age-based approach to programming).	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Olympic Oval; Community Organizations; Private Sector	Collaborate	Ongoing
2.3	Identify, remove and prevent barriers for seniors to enable them to participate fully in programs and services that support healthy aging (e.g. physical and cognitive limitations, income, transportation, language, culture, technology access and use).	City of Richmond; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations	Collaborate	Ongoing
2.4	Explore new approaches to program design to engage seniors participation at all levels (e.g. introductory/beginner, intermediate and advanced/competitive/mastery).	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Olympic Oval; Community Organizations; Private Sector	Collaborate	Medium-term
2.5	Promote meaningful volunteer and paid opportunities for seniors to share their experiential wisdom and skills through community-based programs and services that facilitate personal growth and development (e.g. intergenerational opportunities, instructor-led groups, tour guides, project facilitators, etc.).	City of Richmond; Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations	Support	Ongoing
2.6	Support seniors as they move through various life stages through the creation of educational opportunities that address a range of healthy aging topics (e.g. loss of driver's license, retirement, caregiving).	City of Richmond; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health, Private Sector	Collaborate	Medium-term

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3 Communication and Awareness of Programs and Services Available for Seniors

Seniors, their families and caregivers, and those who provide services to seniors are not always aware of the wide variety of programs, services and supports available in Richmond. Having access to the right information at the right time helps everyone stay informed and better navigate the supports seniors require to remain healthy and safe at home. Utilizing existing connections and networks between seniors and service providers to increase the understanding of the benefits of social participation and ensure seniors have access and the skills to stay connected in an increasingly digital world are critical components to aging well and remaining socially connected and engaged.

Key Outcomes

- Seniors and the broader community are aware of the variety of programs and services offered in Richmond to support healthy aging and are able to make referrals to those in need as appropriate.
- Seniors and their families and caregivers report an increased awareness of how to find information about available programs and services to support healthy aging.
- Seniors report that their physical, social and mental needs are met.
- Seniors are socially connected, engaged and informed through accessible and appropriate technology.

No.	Action	Who's involved	City's Role	Timeline
3.1	Explore and implement new, accessible and barrier-free communication methods to promote programs and services available to seniors of all ages, stages and abilities (e.g. 55+ Citywide Program Guide).	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health	Lead	Short-term
3.2	Identify new opportunities for seniors to access a comprehensive listing of programs, services and supports available to seniors in Richmond in one location.	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health; Private Sector	Support	Long-term
3.3	Increase awareness in the community about the range and continuum of health-related programs and services available in Richmond to support healthy aging in place for seniors (e.g. mental health, falls prevention, wellness, Adult Day Care).	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health	Collaborate	Medium-term
3.4	Utilize existing connections between seniors, health professionals and community organizations to raise awareness of the benefits of participation of seniors in programs and services in the community (e.g. social prescribing programs).	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health; Richmond Division of Family Practice	Support	Medium-term
3.5	Increase seniors access to technology through accessible initiatives and opportunities to ensure they are informed and aware of online information and resources to support them as they age (e.g. technology lending programs, one-on-one tech support).	City of Richmond; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations	Support	Short-term
3.6	Evaluate the accessibility of City communication methods and platforms to improve ways to connect with and support potentially isolated seniors, their families and caregivers during public health or weather emergencies (e.g. pandemics, extreme weather events).	City of Richmond; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health; Richmond Division of Family Practice	Lead	Long-term

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4 Education and Understanding about Healthy Aging

Awareness and information sharing initiatives about healthy aging can potentially change how a community thinks, feels, and acts towards the seniors population and helps to dispel any negative myths and stereotypes. By broadening a community's understanding of aging and the issues that impact seniors, seniors are treated in a more respectful manner and better supported to fully participate as contributing members of society. All of which positively impacts the health and well-being of seniors. Additionally, providing ongoing, accessible opportunities for seniors to provide feedback on strategies and initiatives that impact them builds trust and ensures programs and services are developed in collaboration with seniors.

Key Outcomes

- Richmond residents of all ages understand the positive impacts of healthy aging and are engaged in supporting initiatives that foster the skills and abilities of seniors in the community.
- Seniors have an increased sense of purpose and feel their voices are heard.
- There are increased opportunities for seniors to contribute their skills, abilities and experiences to the community.
- Seniors are respected, feel welcomed and valued and are included in the community.

No.	Action	Who's involved	City's Role	Timeline
4.1	Create a series of educational campaigns and activities on a wide variety of topics to inform the public, staff and volunteers about healthy aging.	City of Richmond; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health	Collaborate	Medium-term
4.2	Expand on creative initiatives to reduce ageism and negative stereotypes around aging (e.g. City's annual Positive Aging Campaign).	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health	Collaborate	Short-term
4.3	Facilitate ongoing dialogue and engagement opportunities with seniors through accessible platforms and communication methods to seek feedback on issues and opportunities related to healthy aging.	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee	Lead	Ongoing
4.4	Develop training for staff and volunteers working with seniors on trends and best practices related to supporting healthy aging.	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Community Organizations	Lead	Medium-term
4.5	Explore a variety of opportunities to develop and maintain meaningful connections and increase knowledge exchange between seniors and younger populations (e.g. City Centre's Intergen Youth Leadership Team, Youth/Seniors Week collaborations).	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Community Organizations	Collaborate	Ongoing

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5 Planning for a Growing Population of Seniors

Successfully implementing actions outlined in the *Seniors Strategy* and other seniors-related initiatives is reliant on continuing relationships and collaboration with community partners, ensuring there are dedicated and appropriate resources available, and ongoing information sharing to stay current on issues that impact seniors in the community. There is a particular need to be aware of trends and best practices to successfully serve, support and plan for the growing and wide demographic of seniors that spans over 50 years from age 55 years to 105+ years. The City is committed to reporting out on the progress and achievements made on the *Seniors Strategy's* actions and identifying new opportunities to better support active, healthy and connected seniors in Richmond.

Key Outcomes

- Staff and volunteers in seniors-related roles are aware of current trends, research and best practices related to healthy aging to inform seniors-related initiatives in Richmond.
- The City is aware of the latest trends and best practices that address the impacts of a growing population of seniors on City planning and service provision from other levels of government.
- Supports and resources are in place and efficiently utilized to adequately meet the current and future needs of the growing population of seniors in Richmond.
- A working group is in place to support implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the *Seniors Strategy*.
- The public is informed on the progress of the *Seniors Strategy* and other seniors-related initiatives in Richmond.

No.	Action	Who's involved	City's Role	Timeline
5.1	Research, monitor and evaluate municipal, provincial, federal and global trends and best practices related to addressing the impacts and opportunities of a growing demographic of seniors in order to plan and act accordingly.	City of Richmond	Lead	Ongoing
5.2	Create a working group to support the implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the *Seniors Strategy*.	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations	Lead	Short-term
5.3	Collaborate with other Lower Mainland municipalities and provincial groups to keep up to date on research, trends and best practices related to supporting healthy aging in Richmond.	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations	Lead	Ongoing
5.4	Analyze the community-wide delivery system of seniors-related programs and services in Richmond to reduce gaps, identify opportunities and ensure the best use of community resources.	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health	Collaborate	Short-term
5.5	Dedicate appropriate staff resources to adequately plan for and meet the needs of an increasingly growing population of seniors in Richmond.	City of Richmond	Lead	Ongoing
5.6	Report out every two years on the progress and achievements related to the *Seniors Strategy* to City Council, stakeholders and the public.	City of Richmond; Community Associations and Societies; Richmond Public Library; Community Organizations; Vancouver Coastal Health	Lead	Ongoing



Next Steps: Implementation, Monitoring and Evaluation

The *Seniors Strategy* will be used to guide annual work planning for the City and those serving seniors in Richmond. As the strategy relies on collaborative implementation, a working group will be formed to support the implementation of the actions outlined in the strategy. This working group, comprised of representatives from the City, Community Associations and Societies, the Richmond Public Library, and other community organizations, will determine the specific targeted initiatives that will best accomplish the actions outlined in the strategy each year based on priority needs and opportunities. This group will also monitor and evaluate progress towards achieving the strategic directions and actions, and suggest adjustments as needed. As the *Seniors Strategy* covers a 10-year period, progress on some actions may require adaptation to respond to changing needs and/or opportunities as they arise. Ongoing communication with seniors about emerging trends and priorities will also be critical to further the *Seniors Strategy's* vision and desired outcomes. A formal progress report on the *Seniors Strategy's* implementation will be shared with Council and the public every two years.

Conclusion

The City of Richmond's *Seniors Strategy* represents the City and community stakeholder's ongoing commitment to addressing the unique needs of the fastest growing demographic in Richmond, its seniors population. This strategy builds upon previous achievements and will guide City and stakeholder work in planning, policy development and services provision while continuing to take a collaborative approach to resource sharing and program and service delivery for seniors in Richmond. The *Seniors Strategy* includes five strategic directions and related actions intended to guide City and stakeholder work in supporting seniors in Richmond to age healthy and well over the next 10 years. Ongoing collaboration and commitment of many stakeholders and a solid foundation of structures and supports in place will help to ensure seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities.

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Appendix A: Aligned Strategies

City Council has endorsed a range of strategies and plans that support the aging population in Richmond. The strategic directions and associated actions in these strategies and plans, were considered in the development of the *Seniors Strategy*, in an effort to ensure alignment and leverage opportunities where possible. The following City strategies and plans have strategic actions or focus areas that address seniors.

Richmond 2041 Official Community Plan

Richmond's 2041 Official Community Plan (OCP) includes the aging of the population in the list of key issues to address when planning for the future. Specifically the OCP notes the increase in seniors population will bring a growing demand for accessible, supportive and specialized services such as housing forms that support aging in place. The following actions most relate to the *Seniors Strategy*:

Connected Neighbourhoods with Special Places

- Encourage a variety of housing types, mixes and densities to accommodate the diverse needs of residents.
- Meet the existing need and future demand for accessible housing for the increasing population that experiences limitations in their activities of daily living.

Vibrant Cities

- Ensure that recreation and wellness services, programs, spaces and places meet diverse community needs.
- Provide opportunities to connect with neighbours, feel a sense of belonging, and engage in lifelong learning.
- Encourage people to make healthy, active lifestyle choices throughout their lives.

Mobility and Access

- Encourage sustainable travel by enhancing the safety, comfort and accessibility of the transportation system for vulnerable road users (e.g. pedestrians, people who use mobility devices, cyclists).
- Enhance the appeal of transit service with supporting amenities.
- Expand and improve walking and rolling connections to Neighbourhood Centres.

Open Spaces and Public Realm

- Provide a full range of appealing, welcoming places for residents and visitors of all ages and backgrounds to walk, roll, exercise, play, socialize and engage in healthy, active lifestyles.
- Strengthen pedestrian, rolling (e.g. wheelchairs, scooters, etc.) and cycling linkages among every element of the city (neighbourhoods, schools, civic spaces, neighbourhood shopping centres, parks, natural areas, streets, commercial areas and industrial parks).

Social Equity and Inclusion

- Facilitate the establishment of an equitable, inclusive community, whereby City plans, policies, services and practices respect the diverse needs of all segments of the population.
- Encourage and facilitate the active engagement of all segments of the Richmond population in community affairs.

Parks and Open Space Strategy 2022

The parks and open space system in Richmond has evolved over the course of over 100 years to serve the needs of the community and encompasses the landscapes and special places that make Richmond unique. The *City of Richmond 2022 Parks and Open Space Strategy* traces the evolution of the system from the first playground to the current interconnected system of parks, trails and greenways, natural areas, waterfronts and the urban realm. It outlines the trends and challenges affecting the delivery of parks and open space services and it defines the desired outcomes and the priorities for sustaining and expanding the system over the next decade.

- Parks and public open spaces help to build community by providing space for social interaction and providing activities and events that bring people of all ages and backgrounds together.
- With an ageing population, use of parks and public open spaces is changing, and the physical abilities of the elderly must to be met with innovative and targeted park and open space design.

Social Development Strategy 2013–2022

The *Social Development Strategy* envisions the City of Richmond as an inclusive, engaged, and caring community that considers the needs of the present and future generations, values and builds on its diversity, nurtures its social capital, and treats its citizens with fairness and respect. The actions that align with the *Seniors Strategy* are noted below:

- Support opportunities for people to remain in their neighbourhoods as they age, or personal circumstances or family status changes.
- Continue to play a leadership role with respect to physical accessibility, consulting with people with disabilities and other partners.

- Implement, monitor and update the *Seniors Service Plan*.
- Support aging in place initiatives and the ongoing development of Richmond as an age-friendly community.
- Strengthen the City's already strong collaborative relationship with Vancouver Coastal Health, consulting on emerging health care issues facing the community, advocating for needed services, partnering on priority community and social development initiatives, and soliciting input on the health implications of key City planning matters.

Affordable Housing Strategy 2017–2027

The *Affordable Housing Strategy (*guides the City's involvement in addressing the affordable housing needs of Richmond residents. The strategy focuses on supporting vulnerable populations through the development of increased transitional and supportive housing, non-market rental housing, and low-end market rental units. The strategy cites low and moderate income seniors as a priority group most in need of affordable housing. The following policies outlined in the Affordable Housing Strategy that are most related to the *Seniors Strategy* include.

- Incorporate Basic Universal Housing (accessible and affordable units for persons with mobility challenges).
- Non-Profit Housing Development.
- Co-Location of Non-Profit and Community Facilities.
- Encourage Accessible Housing.

Volunteer Management Strategy 2018–2021

The *Volunteer Management Strategy 2018–2021. Engaging and Supporting Volunteers for a Vibrant, Connected City (VMS 2018–2021)* is an update to the *2007–2012 Volunteer Management Strategy: Building the Volunteer Spirit! (2007–2012 VMS)* and focuses on engaging volunteers and enabling them to reach their goals. The Strategy also focuses on providing the supports for City, partner, and affiliate staff who work closely with volunteers.

- Offer volunteer development opportunities for a wide range of ages, skill levels, and interest areas.

Richmond Arts Strategy 2019–2024

The *Richmond Arts Strategy* acts as a guide for residents, the City and its stakeholders to develop stronger connections in order to advance the policies, programs and services needed for the arts to thrive in Richmond.

- Increase the scope of arts education programs and services available to all age ranges and levels from entry to pre-professional.
- Provide a range of participatory programming for all age groups and inter-age groups at the community or neighbourhood scale.

Recreation and Sport Strategy 2019–2024

The aim of the *Recreation and Sport Strategy* is to build on the strong and successful foundation already present in the City to address the new and diverse interests of stakeholders and to encourage all citizens of every age to enjoy the benefits of an active and involved lifestyle. The growing seniors population is cited in the strategy as a trend that needs to be considered when designing and developing recreation and sport programs and services. The following actions related to the *Seniors Strategy* are as follows:

- Continue to integrate fundamental movement skills into all community recreation programs, addressing all ages from early childhood to older adults.
- Develop and implement initiatives targeting older adults/seniors participation in sport for life.
- Apply *Richmond's Age-Friendly Assessment and Action Plan 2015* guidelines in planning all recreation and sport programs, services and amenities.
- Expand the City-wide intergenerational "mentoring program" where seniors and youth exchange skills and experiences, and support each other in participating in recreation and sport opportunities.
- Increase opportunities for Richmond residents of all ages to sample recreation and sport activities

Community Wellness Strategy 2018–2023

The vision of the *Wellness Strategy* is for Richmond to be an active, caring, connected, healthy and thriving community. The strategy provides a framework to support the City and stakeholders in an effort to identify innovative and collaborative approaches to most effectively impact wellness outcomes for Richmond residents, increase the awareness of the benefits of active community engagement and healthy lifestyles for residents in all Richmond neighbourhoods. Three focus areas that most relate to seniors include:

- Foster healthy, active and involved lifestyles for all Richmond residents with an emphasis on physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellness.
- Enhance physical and social connectedness within and among neighbourhoods and communities.
- Enhance equitable access to amenities, services and programs within and among neighbourhoods.

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Cultural Harmony Plan 2019–2029

The *Cultural Harmony Plan* guides the City's approach in enhancing cultural harmony among Richmond's diverse population and works to support increased inclusion in the community and increased opportunities for newcomers to engage in all areas of community life. The actions most related to the *Seniors Strategy* are as follows:

- Continue to recognize and celebrate Richmond's diverse cultures and unique heritage through intercultural celebrations and events.
- Develop and implement City and Community Associations and Societies programs and services that enhance positive social and intercultural connections, as appropriate, within and among Richmond's diverse cultural, ethnic and religious populations.

2021-2031 Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond

The *Collaborative Action Plan to Reduce and Prevent Poverty in Richmond* (the Collaborative Action Plan) is intended to guide the City of Richmond's work, in collaboration with stakeholder organizations, to reduce and prevent poverty in Richmond over the next 10 years. The purpose of the *Collaborative Action Plan* is to gain a deeper and shared understanding of the experiences and circumstances of individuals and families at risk of or living in poverty in Richmond in an effort to identify actions to better meet their needs. This includes improved access to services and supports as well as the development and implementation of initiatives designed to promote a greater sense of belonging and inclusion in the community.

- Explore the development of a community resource centre for residents at risk of or living in poverty.
- Provide accessible community wellness opportunities for residents at risk of or living in poverty (e.g. dental clinics, mental wellness based programming).
- Explore ways to improve community connections and health impacts for residents at risk of or living in poverty.

2022–2032 Seniors Strategy | City of Richmond

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Seniors Strategy 2022–2032: Public Engagement Overview

Background

Richmond's seniors demographic is growing and it is projected that close to 40 per cent of the population will be 55 years and over by 2036. With the growing number of seniors in the community, it is important that the City and key stakeholders continue with strategic planning and provision of programs and services. The City of Richmond *Seniors Strategy 2022–2032* (*Seniors Strategy*) outlines the City's priority strategic actions related to seniors over the next 10 years. The *Seniors Strategy* is a collaborative and action-oriented framework intended to guide the City and stakeholders in supporting seniors in Richmond to age well. The *Seniors Strategy* builds on the success and learnings of previous strategic documents as well as information gathered through an analysis of trends and needs in the community.

The *Seniors Strategy* identifies five strategic directions to achieve this vision:

1. Age-Friendly neighbourhoods that support seniors to age in place;
2. Diverse, accessible and inclusive programs and services for seniors at all stages;
3. Communication and awareness of programs and services available for seniors;
4. Education and understanding about healthy aging; and
5. Planning for a growing population of seniors.

Each strategic direction includes actions that work to address the gaps and challenges identified in the strategy.

Public Engagement Process

On March 28, 2022, City Council approved the draft *Seniors Strategy* for the purposes of gathering public input on the vision, strategic directions and actions to ensure the strategy addresses the priority needs of seniors living in Richmond over the next decade. The public engagement process took place from April 4 to 24, 2022, and included a combination of an online survey and in-person drop-in sessions where the public could discuss the *Seniors Strategy* and complete a paper-based survey. The public engagement process was promoted online, in print and through various community organizations that provide programs and services for seniors, including:

- A City of Richmond news release and ad in the Richmond News;
- City of Richmond social media channels and websites, including the Let's Talk Richmond platform where the *Seniors Strategy* survey was hosted;
- Postcards and posters with information about public engagement opportunities and a link to the *Seniors Strategy* survey;
- Existing programs and groups for seniors; and
- Through community organizations' email blasts, newsletters and social media accounts.

Seven facilitated, in-person drop-in sessions were hosted at the following locations: Hamilton Community Centre, East Richmond Community Hall, City Centre Community Centre, the Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living, Richmond Multicultural Community Services, the Japanese-Canadian Cultural Centre and the Richmond Public Library – Brighouse Branch. The sessions promoted the online survey, provided paper-based surveys and offered opportunities for dialogue with staff and volunteers. Multilingual volunteer interpreters were available to support survey translation and facilitate dialogue. Let's Talk Richmond survey support was also available for individuals who faced accessibility barriers to completing the survey, including phone support in English, Cantonese and Mandarin and access to translated materials in Traditional Chinese. In total, 169 people attended the drop-in sessions and 501 survey responses were received, 372 in English and 129 in Traditional Chinese.

The following provides an overview of the public feedback received from the *Seniors Strategy* survey.

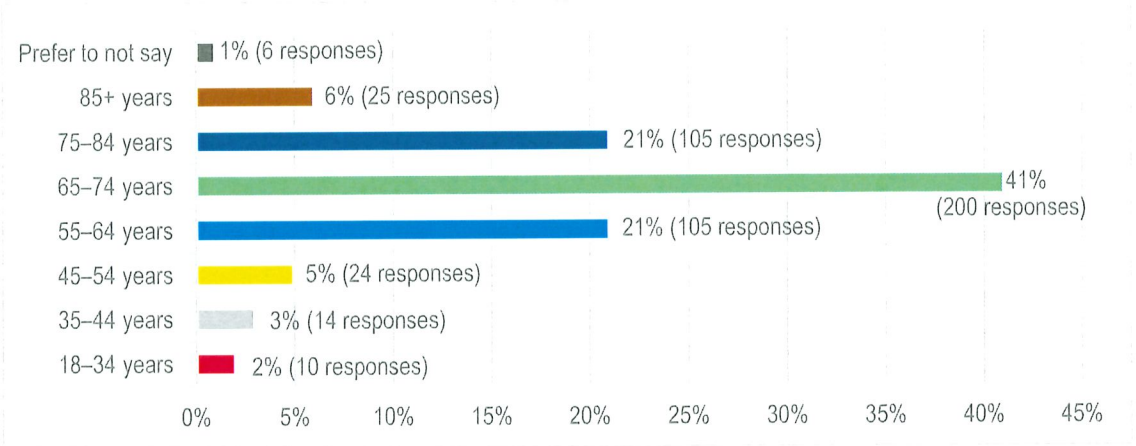
Findings

The survey was comprised of both qualitative and quantitative questions that asked about the demographics of respondents and the level of agreement with the *Seniors Strategy's* vision, strategic directions and actions. An opportunity to share comments and perspectives related to the strategy was also provided. As not all respondents answered every question, the number of identified responses to each individual question is variable.

Survey Demographics

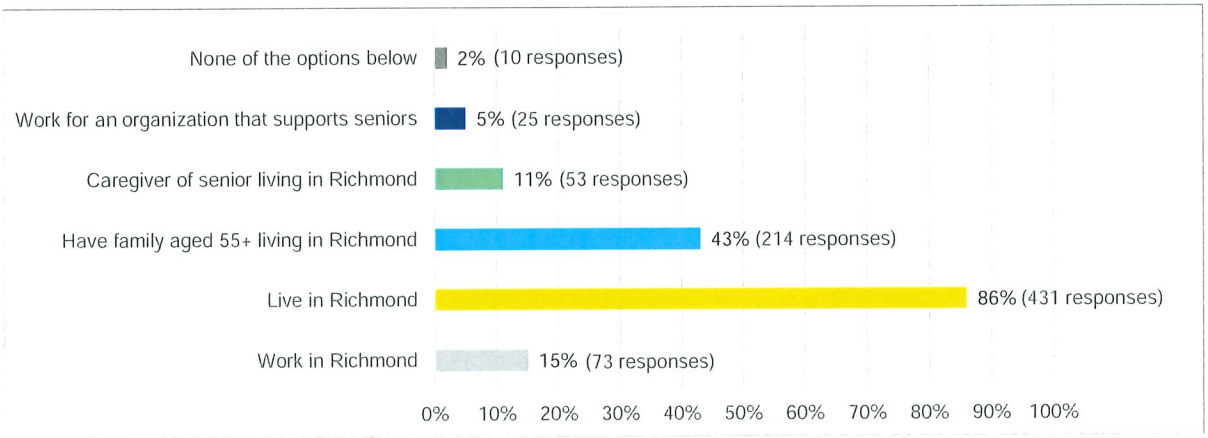
Individuals of all ages participated in the survey with the highest proportion of survey respondents (41 per cent) between the ages of 65–74 years. The distribution of survey respondents by age for those that provided this information is in Figure 1 (below).

Figure 1: Age category of survey respondents (490 responses)



Eighty-six per cent of survey respondents indicated they were Richmond residents and 43 per cent of respondents indicated they have a family member aged 55+ living in Richmond. Identified interest in participating in the *Seniors Strategy* survey is summarized in Figure 2 (below). Multiple responses were permitted, resulting in 806 responses from 501 surveys.

Figure 2: Interest in participating in the survey (501 surveys, 806 responses)



How respondents heard about the public engagement opportunities

Just under half (45 per cent) of survey respondents heard about the public engagement opportunity through an email sent via Let's Talk Richmond. Twenty-two per cent of survey respondents heard about the opportunity through word of mouth; 20 per cent through an 'other' source, which included community centres, community organizations, places of worship, work and family/friends; nine per cent through the City of Richmond website; seven per cent through the newspaper; five per cent through Facebook, while two per cent of survey respondents heard about the public engagement opportunity through Twitter.

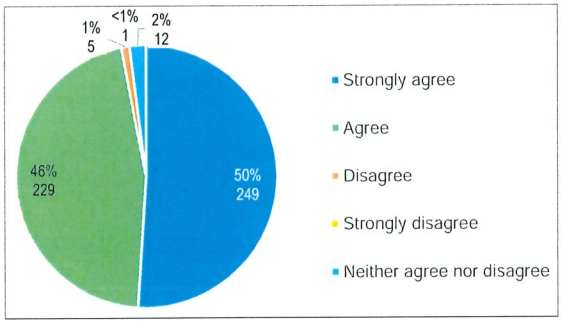
Level of agreement with the *Seniors Strategy*'s vision, strategic directions and actions

Survey respondents were asked to indicate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with the *Seniors Strategy's* vision, strategic directions and actions, and how well they support and address the needs of seniors in Richmond over the next decade. For each item, survey respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement from five choices (Strongly Agree, Agree, Disagree, Strongly Disagree, or Neither Agree nor Disagree). A high level of support was received for the strategy's vision, strategic directions and actions. An overview of public input is below.

Vision

- 96 per cent of respondents indicated they either *strongly agreed* (249 responses) or *agreed* (229 responses) that the *Seniors Strategy* vision *"that seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities"* will support and address the needs of seniors in Richmond over the next decade (Figure 3);

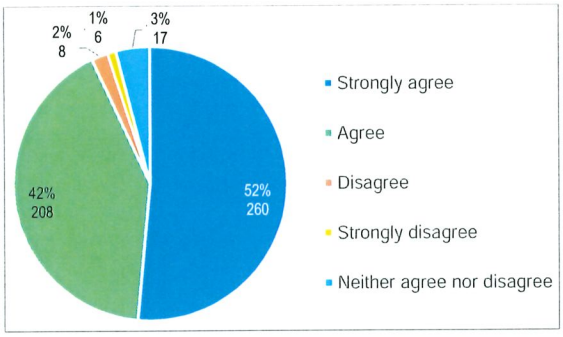
Figure 3: Level of agreement with Seniors Strategy's vision (496 responses)



Strategic Directions

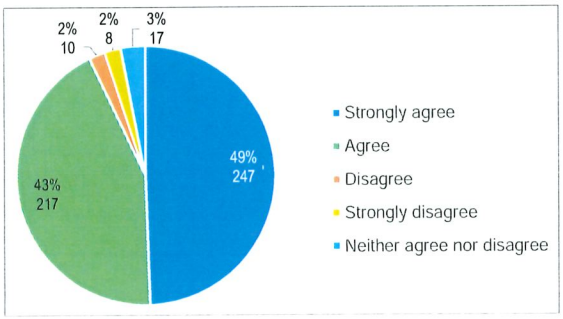
- 94 per cent of respondents either *strongly agreed* (260 responses) or *agreed* (208 responses) that "*Strategic Direction 1: Age-Friendly neighbourhoods that support seniors to age in place"* will support and address the needs of seniors over the next decade (Figure 4);

Figure 4: Level of agreement with Seniors Strategy's Strategic Direction 1 (499 responses)



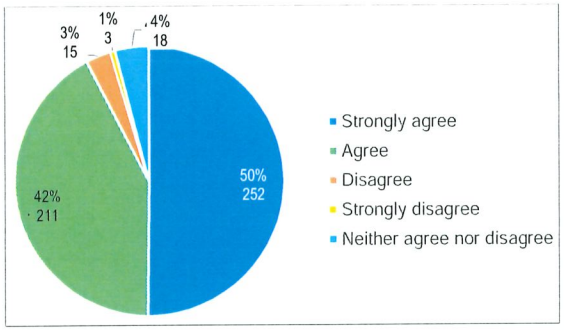
- 92 per cent of respondents either *strongly agreed* (247 responses) or *agreed* (217 responses) that *"Strategic Direction 2: Diverse, accessible and inclusive programs and services for seniors at all stages"* will support and address the needs of seniors over the next decade (Figure 5);

Figure 5: Level of agreement with Seniors Strategy's Strategic Direction 2 (499 responses)



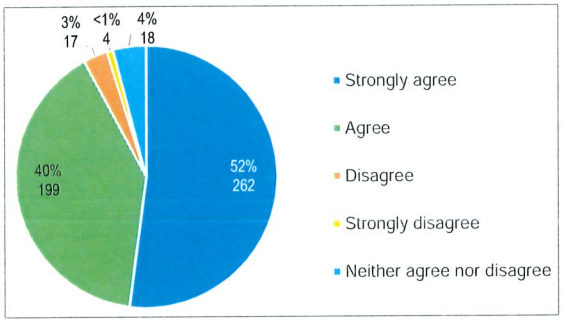
- 92 per cent of survey respondents either *strongly agreed* (252 responses) or *agreed* (211 responses) that "*Strategic Direction 3: Communication and awareness of programs and services available for seniors"* will support and address the needs of seniors over the next decade (Figure 6);

Figure 6: Level of agreement with Seniors Strategy's Strategic Direction 3 (499 responses)



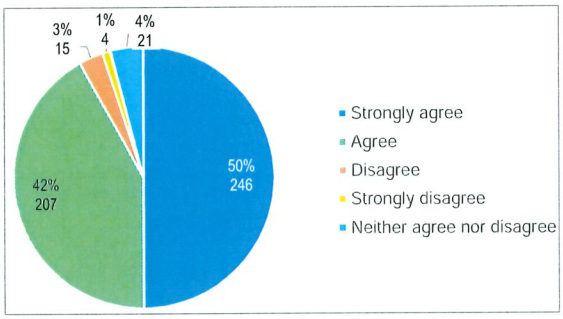
- 92 per cent of survey respondents either *strongly agreed* (262 responses) or *agreed* (199 responses) that *"Strategic Direction 4: Education and understanding about healthy aging"* will work to support and address the needs of seniors over the next decade (Figure 7);

Figure 7: Level of agreement with Seniors Strategy's Strategic Direction 4 (500 responses)



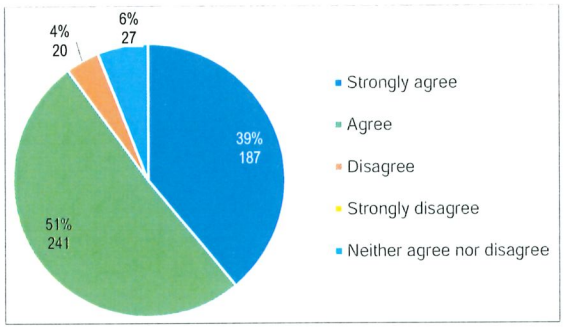
- 92 per cent of survey respondents either *strongly agreed* (246 responses) or *agreed* (207 responses) that *"Strategic Direction 5: Planning for a growing population of seniors"* will support and address the needs of seniors over the next decade (Figure 8); and

Figure 8: Level of agreement with Seniors Strategy's Strategic Direction 5 (493 responses)



- 90 per cent of survey respondents either *strongly agreed* (187 responses) or *agreed* (241 responses) that the actions outlined in the strategy would support and address the needs of seniors in Richmond over the next decade (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Level of agreement with actions outlined in the Seniors Strategy (475 responses)



Survey respondents were also asked to provide any additional comments they would like to share about the *Seniors Strategy*. The additional comments reflected a high level of support for the *Seniors Strategy's* vision, strategic directions and actions, and are summarized below.

Comments about the *Seniors Strategy*

Comments related to the Seniors Strategy provided by survey respondents were analyzed and grouped into five themes:

1. The current age definition of a senior;
2. Wanting a better understanding of how the strategy will be implemented;
3. Appreciation for the *Seniors Strategy*;
4. The need for multi-faceted communication; and
5. Provision of resources to implement the *Seniors Strategy*.

Theme 1: The current age definition of a senior

The current age definition of a senior in Richmond is 55+ years. Though the seniors' age range in Richmond was not intended to be a focus of the public engagement process, the topic emerged during engagement and many survey respondents provided a variety of opinions about this theme. Some survey respondents were supportive of the current definition of seniors in Richmond and commented that they would like the age range to remain as it is. Others, particularly those between the ages of 50–70 years, felt the age range should be increased to 60+ or 65+ years; commenting that although they meet the criteria by chronological age, they do not view themselves as 'stereotypical' seniors or seniors at all. Many

survey respondents also noted that, consistent with the *Seniors Strategy*, seniors are often considered a homogeneous group, when in fact the population is heterogeneous and has a broad range of lived experiences based on life circumstances (e.g. work-life, physical and cognitive abilities).

Theme 2: Wanting a better understanding of how the strategy will be implemented

While survey responses indicated strong agreement with the strategic directions and actions contained in the *Seniors Strategy*, several comments indicated a desire to better understand how the strategy will be implemented, including details about forthcoming initiatives to support the actions, timelines and how initiatives will be monitored and evaluated to best meet the desired outcomes. The following quote by one of the survey respondents exemplifies this theme, "*The above are well written goals and strategies but how to implement with timeline and monitoring mechanisms is also equally important.*"

Theme 3: Appreciation for the *Seniors Strategy*

Many of the respondents expressed appreciation that the *Seniors Strategy* was created and commented that the strategic directions and actions present a well-rounded view. One respondent stated, "*As a senior, thank you for all the work you do regarding this.*" Another respondent commented, "*I feel the Richmond Seniors Strategy for 2022–2032 is excellent. It will ensure all seniors in Richmond have access and help to give their lives meaning and importance as they age-in-place, which is very important.*"

Theme 4: The need for multi-faceted communication

Comments from survey respondents emphasized the need for multi-faceted communication to seniors. Many respondents highlighted the importance of both electronic and traditional forms of communication (e.g. printed program guides and pamphlets) as not all seniors have access to or understand how to use various forms of technology. As one respondent stated, "*The strategy must also address communication methods as currently a number of seniors may not have access (or want to access) electronic methods of communication. In future years, more and more 'younger' seniors will understand and use electronic/technology and receive communications in this manner.*"

Theme 5: Provision of resources to implement the *Seniors Strategy*

Several respondents commented that it is important to allocate sufficient resources to implement the actions contained within the strategy. The following comment from one of the survey respondents echoes this sentiment, "*[I] hope that these well intended ideas are implemented with enough funding and as early as possible.*"

Additional Comments

In addition to the themes identified above, respondents also identified specific actions in the strategy they felt were important to highlight in order to support and address the needs of seniors in Richmond over the next decade. These included:

- Accessibility to and support for seniors to use technology;
- Cultural inclusion and support for those whose first language is not English;
- Multi-generational programs and activities;

- Personal safety of seniors;
- Employment and volunteer opportunities; and
- Age-friendly neighbourhoods that support walkability and access to services.

Other priority areas identified include the need for accessible and affordable housing and public transportation for seniors, and supportive healthcare. Many respondents who commented on these issues indicated awareness that they fall largely outside the scope of the *Seniors Strategy* and/or jurisdiction of the City. Comments received from the *Seniors Strategy* survey have been forwarded to the appropriate departments within the City.

Feedback from the public engagement process ensures the *Seniors Strategy* vision, strategic directions and actions meet the needs of seniors living in Richmond over the next decade.

Conclusion

Public engagement on the *Seniors Strategy's* vision, strategic directions and actions indicated strong support from the public with regard to the *Seniors Strategy's* ability to address the needs of seniors living in Richmond over the next decade. The finalized *Seniors Strategy*, which incorporates public feedback, will guide the City and community stakeholder work to ensure seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities.