



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Services Committee
Date: November 18, 2021

From: Elizabeth Ayers
Director, Recreation and Sport Services
File: 11-7000-01/2021-Vol 01

Re: **Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023) – Progress Update**

Staff Recommendation

- 1) That the staff report titled, “Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023) – Progress Update,” dated November 18, 2021, from the Director, Recreation and Sport Services, be received for information; and
- 2) That the achievements document, *Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023) – Progress Update*, Attachment 1, in the staff report titled “Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023) – Progress Update,” dated November 18, 2021, from the Director, Recreation and Sport Services, be posted on the City website and circulated to key stakeholders who have been involved in the development and implementation of the strategy including, but not limited to, Richmond School District No. 38 Board of Education, Vancouver Coastal Health, Community Recreation Associations and Societies, and the Aquatic Advisory Board for their information.

Elizabeth Ayers
Director, Recreation and Sport Services
(604-247-4669)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Arts, Culture & Heritage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Community Social Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO

Staff Report

Origin

On July 23, 2018, Council adopted the second iteration of the *Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023)*, a collaborative strategy developed by the City of Richmond in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health and Richmond School District No. 38. This five-year strategy guides a collaborative and holistic approach to improve wellness for Richmond residents and increase opportunities, as well as support, for active and healthy lifestyles throughout the city. This report responds to the resulting referral:

“That staff report back at the mid-point and end of the implementation period of the Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023).”

The purpose of this report is to address this referral by providing Council with selected highlights achieved during the first half of implementation of the *Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023)*.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #2 A Sustainable and Environmentally Conscious City:

Environmentally conscious decision-making that demonstrates leadership in implementing innovative, sustainable practices and supports the City's unique biodiversity and island ecology.

2.3 Increase emphasis on local food systems, urban agriculture and organic farming.

2.4 Increase opportunities that encourage daily access to nature and open spaces and that allow the community to make more sustainable choices.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #3 One Community Together:

Vibrant and diverse arts and cultural activities and opportunities for community engagement and connection.

3.1 Foster community resiliency, neighbourhood identity, sense of belonging, and intercultural harmony.

This report also supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #4 An Active and Thriving Richmond:

An active and thriving community characterized by diverse social and wellness programs, services and spaces that foster health and well-being for all.

4.1 Robust, affordable, and accessible sport, recreation, wellness and social programs for people of all ages and abilities.

4.2 Ensure infrastructure meets changing community needs, current trends and best practices.

Analysis

Background

The *Community Wellness Strategy (2018–2023)* (“Wellness Strategy”) demonstrates a renewed commitment by the City of Richmond, Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), and Richmond School District No. 38 (SD38) to work together to improve wellness and strive towards the vision of an active, caring, connected, healthy and thriving Richmond.

In the Wellness Strategy, the concept of wellness is understood to be multifaceted, and is defined as:

... the ability of individuals and communities to reach their fullest potential. At an individual level, wellness means an optimization of and a balance among physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. At a community level, wellness means living in harmony with others, respecting diversity, feeling safe, supported and included, and having a sense of belonging to one's neighbourhood and broader community.

The City of Richmond has a number of strategies and plans that interconnect and bolster the actions in the Wellness Strategy, guiding the City's overall approach to promoting community well-being, including: *2041 Official Community Plan; Social Development Strategy (2013-2022); Recreation and Sport Strategy (2019-2024); Richmond Arts Strategy (2019-2024); 2022 Parks and Open Space Strategy; Cultural Harmony Plan (2019-2024); 2017-2022 Child Care Strategy and Needs Assessment; Seniors Service Plan; and Youth Service Plan*. This report focuses on highlights specific to identified actions in the Wellness Strategy, though there is synergistic work directed by other strategies that also aim to improve wellness outcomes across the community.

The Wellness Strategy guides action in five Focus Areas that aim to improve wellness in an effort to realize the vision of an active, caring, connected, healthy and thriving Richmond.

1. Foster healthy, active and involved lifestyles for all Richmond residents with an emphasis on physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellness.
2. Enhance physical and social connectedness within and among neighbourhoods and communities.
3. Enhance equitable access to amenities, services and programs within and among neighbourhoods.
4. Facilitate supportive, safe and healthy natural and built environments.
5. Promote wellness literacy for residents across all ages and stages of their lives.

In the development of this second edition of the Wellness Strategy, the partner organizations recognized that collaboration and sustained coordinated efforts would be essential to the successful implementation of strategic actions and achievement of collective impact. The Wellness Strategy provides the common agenda with mutually reinforcing activities that guides all three organizations to improve wellness in Richmond.

Summary of Highlights

The *Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023) – Progress Update* (“Strategy Progress Update”), Attachment 1, presents a series of progress highlights and one to two success stories for each Focus Area. A complete listing of the strategic actions (including status) is located in the Appendix of the Strategy Progress Update. Presented below are selected highlights from the Strategy Progress Update from each of the five Focus Areas that demonstrate the breadth of actions accomplished thus far.

Focus Area 1 – Healthy, active and involved lifestyles

Focus Area 1 guides strategic action on the three pillars of physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellness, especially in terms of building capacity of community members to increase control over, and to improve, their health and wellness through access to information and resources, build their skills and knowledge, and take action.

Selected highlights include:

- Walk Richmond is an initiative of the Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association and funded by the City of Richmond, that supports residents to enjoy the benefits of walking and active living while getting to know green spaces and walking routes across the city. Walk Richmond offers free, guided walks at various trail and park locations on a weekly basis, and partners with community organizations such as Richmond Family Place and Vancouver Coastal Health to deliver workshops on the benefits of physical activity and safe walking outdoors. In 2020, despite COVID-19 restrictions on group size, and a temporary 3-month pause, Walk Richmond still engaged 815 participants through 41 guided walking opportunities.
- City Centre Community Centre’s youth leadership group, C-Change, hosted their annual Lock-In event, in early March 2020. Fifty youth participants slept overnight at City Centre Community Centre and engaged in youth-led activities focused on the theme of mental wellness. In preparation for the event, C-Change members were mentored by CHIMO Community Services staff to plan seminars and activities that would educate participants on awareness of mental health, the social stigma surrounding mental health, ways to manage stress, and how to support friends and family who may be struggling with their mental health.
- Vancouver Coastal Health partners annually with Richmond School District No. 38, Richmond Public Library, City of Richmond, and Richmond Children First committed to coordinate a bookmark contest for elementary school age children. The bookmark contest offers a creative outlet to engage children’s imagination in thinking and learning about wellness. In 2019, students from kindergarten to grade seven submitted drawings that represent the slogan, “Growing food, growing me,” and in 2020, “Move and play all through the day.” The bookmarks are distributed through the libraries, community centres and schools.

Focus Area 2 – Physical and social connectedness

Focus Area 2 emphasizes strategic actions that promote physical and social connectedness in Richmond. Initiatives that increase physical connectedness of neighbourhoods and communities both enable individuals to access the people, programs and services that provide social support, and increase the chance for neighbours to meet organically. However, social connectedness often does not ‘just happen’, so programs, services and opportunities that intentionally foster social connections and caring are vital to facilitating social interaction that may lead to true friendships.

Selected highlights include:

- During the 2019-2020 snow season, the Snow Angels Program recruited 21 Richmond volunteers who spent over 63 hours shoveling snow to help residents with physical or mobility challenges remain connected to their community during heavy snowfall. In tandem, the Good Neighbor Campaign, an informational social marketing campaign, encouraged residents to connect with their neighbours to ensure that no one was isolated or cut-off from their community during a heavy snow event. These initiatives foster a sense of caring for others in the community to mitigate isolation in the winter months.
- Richmond was selected as one of four demonstration communities in British Columbia for the Resilient Streets project with a Plan H grant of \$20,000 from BC Healthy Communities. Based in the East and West Cambie neighbourhoods, residents stated that they had a strong desire to meet their neighbours, to make new connections and to collaborate to improve their community, but also reported perceived barriers and lack of personal capacity to build neighbourhood connections. The Resilient Streets project provided \$1,700 in micro-grants to fund nine (9) neighbour-led events that empowered participants to take the first steps in getting to know their neighbours. The results from this project will continue to inform neighbourhood connectedness initiatives delivered by the City and Community Associations and Societies.

Focus Area 3 – Equitable access to amenities, services and programs

Focus Area 3 includes actions that aim to level the playing field by: developing and applying an equity lens; providing supports to increase the ability to find, access and benefit from wellness resources; and intentionally reaching out to groups that experience identified barriers. Enhancing equitable access to amenities, programs and services in spaces where people live, learn, work and play helps to ensure that everyone has the basics to be healthy and well.

Selected highlights include:

- In spring 2021, City Centre Community Centre staff created a pilot Equity Check-list for summer daycamp programming. The goal of developing the tool was to prompt staff consideration of possible barriers or inequities that may be experienced by summer program participants. The findings from this initiative will inform the process to develop an equity lens to assess what and where inequities are at a neighbourhood level.

- Richmond was among the first communities in BC to implement Primary Care Networks (PCN) that are supported by VCH and the Richmond Division of Family Practice. A PCN is an allied health team of primary care service providers, such as family doctors, and other health care providers, such as mental health counsellors, dietitians and physiotherapists. This integrated model enables a single point of access to a comprehensive range of care providers and reduces barriers to accessing timely preventative health and wellness supports.
- Through funding provided by the United Way Lower Mainland, Richmond School District No. 38 is piloting a Community Schools initiative. Richmond SD38 will collaborate with community partners to deliver a variety of after-school programming options for children in identified neighbourhoods. A key priority is to engage students in structured activities that support and enhance physical health, social and emotional development, a sense of belonging, and well-being in a safe space outside regular school hours. This initiative will enhance equity and inclusion, optimize use of facilities, and foster a connected learning community.

Focus Area 4 – Supportive, safe and healthy natural and built environments

The strategic actions outlined in Focus Area 4 set the stage for improved wellness at the community level through the creation of healthy natural and built environments to improve the wellness of Richmond residents. Key outcomes intended from actions in the Focus Area are improved walkability of Richmond's neighbourhoods and increased outdoor unstructured play opportunities.

Selected highlights include:

- Playgrounds encourage health, fitness, and social liveability in the city while also supporting the healthy development of children. The City maintains 58 playgrounds across the community and as the city develops, playgrounds continue to be a central feature in parks new and old. New playground design has emphasized the use of natural materials such as logs for climbing and balancing, inclusive play structures that facilitate participation of people with varying physical abilities, playgrounds that appeal to all ages, and structures that offer the opportunity to be challenged. Playground developments and renewals since 2018 include:
 - Alexandra Neighbourhood Park
 - Burkeville Neighbourhood Park
 - Capstan Neighbourhood Park
 - Garnet Tot Lot
 - Kilgour Neighbourhood School Park
 - London/Steveston Neighbourhood School Park
 - Odlin Neighbourhood Park
 - Palmer Garden City Park
 - Richmond Nature Park
 - Rideau Neighbourhood Park
 - Talmey Neighbourhood School Park

- Transportation networks that encourage active transportation improve equitable mobility and access. They also support placemaking and social cohesion as more people enjoy walking and cycling to destinations within and across neighbourhoods, and contribute to improved health and environmental sustainability. As of 2020, Richmond has nearly 80 km (78.2 km) of cycling routes comprised of on-street bike routes and off-street bike paths, greenways and multi-use paths (excluding unpaved dyke trails). Additionally, Phase 1 of community engagement to seek feedback to update the City's Cycling Network Plan was completed in June 2021. The Phase 2 engagement is occurring in November 2021 to inform the prioritization of future cycling network improvements, with completion of the plan anticipated in spring 2022.
- The City of Richmond's Community Mural Program has been the catalyst for 10 murals since the program's inception in 2018. Murals make public spaces inviting and activate them by adding beauty and colour, while the images foster community dialogue and help people connect with places. As well, the process of designing community murals fosters social connections as project participants share ideas to co-create a collaborative vision. Murals have been commissioned in partnership with several Richmond Community Associations and Societies, Richmond School District No. 38 elementary and high schools, and private businesses.

Focus Area 5 – Wellness literacy

The strategic actions in Focus Area 5 aim to align community resources that contribute to building health and wellness literacy of community members. Wellness literacy refers to the ability to access, understand, evaluate and communicate information as a way to promote, maintain and improve health and wellness across the life-course.

Selected highlights include:

- The 55+ Activate! Wellness Fair is a biennial information fair held in June promoting health, wellness, safety and independence for the 55+ community. In past years, the information fair had over 40 booths, 21 workshops, presentations, a free wellness clinic, prize draws and Try-It activities, drawing up to 1,500 participants. In 2021, held in tandem with Seniors Week, seven online or phone-in wellness information sessions were offered, reaching 78 participants. Topics included: benefits of walking, meditation techniques, coping skills for caregivers (Cantonese), and community programs and services for seniors.
- City Centre Community Association has been committed to serving the varied wellness needs of community members through educational and engaging programming. The new Artful Aging Enrichment Project is an intergenerational initiative featuring a variety of art-based and wellness literacy workshops in different languages. Through an ongoing partnership with S.U.C.C.E.S.S., a range of online and in-person programs address varying access and language barriers to wellness information. And through a new partnership with the UBC InterCultural Online Health Network (iCON), health practitioners help community members learn about chronic disease prevention and

management. These efforts enable community members to take action to improve their own health and well-being.

COVID-19 and Wellness

The COVID-19 pandemic created an additional layer of stress, due to challenges such as new health and safety protocols, unstable employment, food insecurity, less access to one's social support network, and limitations on many of the activities that people typically would do to improve their mental health. The Community Wellness Strategy's focus on fostering healthy built and natural environments and emphasis on promoting social connectedness continued to be relevant, perhaps even more so, throughout the pandemic and as the community recovers from its effects.

Selected highlights include:

- Physical activity promotion and opportunities continued through the pandemic, albeit in different formats that evolved based on COVID-19 restrictions. For example, shifting drop-in physical activity opportunities in City recreation facilities to registered visits enabled residents to continue unstructured physical activity while maintaining the facility's ability to control participation levels in accordance with Provincial Health Orders.
- Community meals offered stable access to nutritious meals and also connected community members with a range of support services and opportunities to develop social connections with others. During the onset of the pandemic, many community meal programs shifted quickly from in-person meals to take away or delivered meals, and grocery store gift cards were also provided to maintain a connection with community members. For example, the Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP), with funding from Vancouver Coastal Health, distributed grocery store gift cards to youth whose families were dealing with loss of work and other difficulties during the pandemic. This program enabled RYMP staff to stay in touch with youth during this difficult time.
- The Wellness Strategy outlines the important objectives of increasing the number of individuals across all ages reporting a positive state of mental wellness, and providing opportunities to increase Richmond residents' sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods. Through the pandemic, a number of initiatives focused on ensuring community members did not feel alone despite the need to be distant. For example, youth from the Interact Club at Hugh Boyd School delivered 75 handmade cards to the Seniors Centre at the Minoru Centre for Active Living. These cards, full of bright pictures and well-wishes, were given to seniors as part of their Meal-to-Go from the Seniors Centre Cafeteria the week leading up to Valentines Day 2021.

Next Steps and Implementation Timeline

The *Strategy Progress Update* will be shared with key stakeholders that have been involved in the development and implementation of the Wellness Strategy including, but not limited to,

Richmond School District No. 38 Board of Education, Vancouver Coastal Health, Community Associations and Societies and Aquatic Advisory Board, and will be posted on the City website.

A number of projects are on the horizon for the next phase of strategy implementation.

- Foundry Richmond will open its permanent location in central Richmond, offering expanded services to provide health and mental wellness services to Richmond children, youth and families.
- Funding received by the City through a Plan H grant from BC Healthy Communities will support the initial stages of developing an equity lens resource for recreation.
- Planning has begun in the development of a social prescribing program involving referral to programs and services offered by the City and Community Associations and Societies.
- The demand for community gardens, which offer residents the ability to grow their own vegetables, has prompted a community engagement process to identify need and inform the site selection of future gardens.
- Last, but not least, the pandemic has highlighted the need for the community as a whole to rally around fostering resilience by creating supportive social environments and raising awareness about resources for mental health.

It is anticipated that due to challenges posed by the pandemic to the implementation timeline, the *Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023)* activities will continue through 2024 or 2025. However, a follow up progress report based on the original lifespan of the *Strategy* will be presented to Council on achievements in Q1 2024.

Financial Impact

No financial impact.

Conclusion

The *Community Wellness Strategy (2018–2023)* is a renewed commitment of the three partners—the City of Richmond, Vancouver Coastal Health-Richmond and Richmond School District No. 38 to work collectively to improve wellness. The collaborative and holistic approach to improve health and well-being for Richmond residents is an asset, which proved even more valuable during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Through the collective and independent efforts of the City, Health Authority and Richmond School District, increased opportunities as well as support for physical activity, access to healthy food, mental wellness and social connectedness remained a priority. As the Wellness Strategy implementation continues, the partners remain committed to helping Richmond realize the vision to be an active, caring, connected, healthy and thriving community.

November 18, 2021

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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. Lee' with a stylized flourish.

Donna Lee
Research Planner 2
(604-204-8908)

Att. 1: Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023) – Progress Update

Richmond Community Wellness Strategy (2018–2023) Progress Update



December 2021

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About the Strategy

On July 23, 2018, Richmond City Council adopted the second iteration of the Richmond Community Wellness Strategy (2018–2023), a collaborative strategy developed by the City of Richmond in partnership with Vancouver Coastal Health and Richmond School District No. 38. This five year strategy is intended to guide a collaborative and holistic approach to improve wellness for Richmond residents and increase opportunities as well as support for active and healthy lifestyles throughout the city. It demonstrates a renewed commitment by the City of Richmond, Vancouver Coastal Health, and School District to work together to improve wellness and strive towards the vision of an **active, caring, connected, healthy and thriving Richmond**.

In the Community Wellness Strategy (2018–2023), the concept of wellness is understood to be multifaceted, and is defined as:

... the ability of individuals and communities to reach their fullest potential. At an individual level, wellness means an optimization of and a balance among physical, mental, social and spiritual well-being. At a community level, wellness means living in harmony with others, respecting diversity, feeling safe, supported and included, and having a sense of belonging to one's neighbourhood and broader community.

The Community Wellness Strategy guides action in five Focus Areas that will lead to a number of intended outcomes.

Focus Areas	Outcomes
Foster healthy, active and involved lifestyles for all Richmond residents with an emphasis on physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellness.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Awareness of benefits ↑ Physical activity opportunities ↑ Physical activity levels ↑ Healthy food outlets ↑ Fruit and vegetable servings ↑ Self-rated mental health
Enhance physical and social connectedness within and among neighbourhoods and communities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Strong sense of community belonging ↑ Volunteers
Enhance equitable access to amenities, services and programs within and among neighbourhoods.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Amenities, programs and services available by neighbourhood ↓ Reduced barriers to opportunities
Facilitate supportive, safe and healthy natural and built environments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Walkability of neighbourhoods ↑ Outdoor unstructured play opportunities
Promote wellness literacy for residents across all ages and stages of their lives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ↑ Awareness of wellness components



Message from the Partners

A community's health and wellbeing is influenced by numerous factors and responsibility for wellness does not lie with just one organization. The City of Richmond, Vancouver Coastal Health and Richmond School District No. 38 are committed to working together towards the Community Wellness Strategy's vision for Richmond to be:

An active, caring, connected, healthy and thriving community.



In the development of this second edition of the Community Wellness Strategy (2018-2023), the partner organizations recognized that collaboration and sustained coordinated efforts would be essential to the successful implementation of strategic actions and achievement of collective impact. The Strategy provides the common agenda with mutually reinforcing activities that guides all three organizations to improve wellness in Richmond.

Part way through the implementation of the Strategy, the world was disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. This has added a next level of challenge and complexity to the three partner agencies' endeavours to promote wellness in Richmond.

Despite the circumstances, and bolstered by the commitment to Richmond's community, the City, Health Authority and School District have continued to work collaboratively and independently to continue to offer wellness focused programs and services, and to build healthier communities throughout Richmond—all the while practicing and promoting COVID-19 safety protocols through the evolving pandemic.

The City of Richmond has a number of interconnected plans that guide the City's actions in promoting overall community well-being, including:

- 2041 Official Community Plan
- Community Wellness Strategy
- Social Development Strategy
- Richmond Arts Strategy
- Recreation and Sport Strategy
- Parks and Open Space Strategy
- Cultural Harmony Plan
- Child Care Strategy and Needs Assessment
- Seniors Service Plan
- Youth Service Plan

The Wellness Strategy Progress Update attempts to focus on highlights specific to identified actions in the Wellness Strategy, though there is synergistic work directed by other strategies that also aim to improve wellness outcomes across the community.

The Richmond School District is guided by the Richmond Board of Education Strategic Plan 2020-2025, including a goal of fostering resilient and healthy lifelong learners.

Vancouver Coastal Health Authority sets its strategic priorities such as prevention and health promotion through an annual Health Authority Services Plan, with an overarching vision of "Healthy lives in healthy communities".

COVID-19 Pandemic and Wellness

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a worldwide pandemic due to the COVID-19 coronavirus, and on March 17, 2020 the BC provincial government declared COVID-19 a public health emergency, with the City of Richmond temporarily closing all City facilities that day. Since that time, community members have had to adapt to a fluid situation as more information and understanding about the coronavirus became known.

Public facilities were closed to the public until mid-May 2020, and slowly began to resume services primarily through virtual methods where possible. Physical distancing requirements, limitations on group size, recommendations to stay within one's 'bubble', and the lack of in-person interaction has been difficult for people across all age groups, from children and youth missing time with their friends at school through to seniors who no longer had social gatherings at their local community centre. The early days of the pandemic created an additional layer of stress, due to challenges such as new health and safety protocols, unstable employment, food insecurity, less access to one's social support network, and limitations on many of the activities that people typically would do to improve their mental health.



To gain some insight into how the pandemic has affected the health and wellness of British Columbians, the BC Centre for Disease Control administered the first COVID Speak Survey two months into the pandemic, providing recent, relevant and representative population health data at provincial, regional and local levels. Additional information from the COVID Speak Survey 1 is presented throughout this progress report to provide a snapshot of recent relevant indicators.

Richmond COVID Speak Survey 1 responses suggest that, in many instances, Richmond residents might have been impacted the same or slightly less negatively by the pandemic relative to respondents BC-wide. For example:

- 35% of Richmond survey respondents said they walk, run or cycle more than before the coronavirus pandemic. Province-wide, the response rate to the same question was: 33%.
- 28% of Richmond survey respondents said they are eating more fruits and vegetables compared to before the pandemic. Province-wide, the response rate to the same question was: 22%.
- 68% of Richmond survey respondents, with children 5-17, said their children have less connection with friends since schools closed in-person learning during the coronavirus pandemic. Province-wide, the response rate to the same question was: 78%.

The indicators above might have been facilitated by Richmond's rich inventory of community amenities, including world-class parks, trails and recreation facilities, complemented by quality programming. Continued emphasis on the provision of public places and spaces that can play a role in mitigating impacts during stressful times contributes to a community's resilience.

At the end of this Wellness Strategy in 2023, it will be critical to look at the latest data on community-wide levels of physical activity, healthy eating, and mental wellness. The 2015 "My Health My Community Survey" flagged for stakeholders the opportunity to boost these wellness indicators, as Richmond was lagging below the regional average. Through strategic actions guided by the Community Wellness Strategy, work is underway to reverse these trends.

Finally, the pandemic has shed light on the need for even more urgent action to promote mental wellness, as 43% of Richmond COVID Speak Survey 1 respondents said their mental health has worsened compared to before the coronavirus pandemic.



COVID-19 Response



COVID-19 ASSESSMENT AND VACCINATION CAMPAIGN IN RICHMOND

The successful partnerships that exist among public sector agencies in Richmond have been an asset throughout the pandemic. VCH identified that a COVID-19 assessment centre was needed to enable increased screening in a safe, controlled environment. The City provided space along the west perimeter of Minoru Park to support a drive through assessment centre, and VCH operated and provided all services at the centre. This arrangement was in place from June through November 2020, when a new COVID-19 assessment and collection site opened near Vancouver International Airport to provide additional capacity.

The implementation of the COVID-19 vaccination campaign further demonstrates the successful public sector and public-private partnerships in Richmond. Immunization coverage in Richmond was initially lower than other neighbouring municipalities. In order to increase access to the COVID-19 vaccine, and to increase vaccine uptake in all neighbourhoods, the VCH vaccination campaign focused on reducing inequities in access by age and neighbourhood by holding pop up clinics at schools, City facilities, assisted living and seniors living facilities, shopping centres, and the Richmond Night Market, among other locations. Home bound individuals were offered vaccination in their homes to ensure they were able to access this very important protection.

The public and private partners promoted the campaign through their networks. While VCH provided the vaccine and immunizers, partners often provided clinic space or staff to help navigate the clinics. Partnerships across the community ensured the success of this campaign. For example, City of Richmond facilities including Cambie Community Centre, East Richmond Community Hall, and Minoru Centre for Active Living were used during the vaccination campaign and City staff provided input on community engagement strategies. Richmond School

District enabled the use of Cambie Secondary School's gym for several weeks as a main vaccination site, in addition to a number of other schools that hosted day-long clinics. Other partnerships with Kwantlen Polytechnic University and private partners such as River Rock Theatre and YVR also made the vaccination campaign a success. Elected officials and private partners hosted Q&A sessions and promoted the vaccine. At the time of writing this report, the intensive collaborative effort resulted in a one-dose coverage of 91% in Richmond residents 12 years of age and older, with a range of 86–94% among various neighbourhoods across the city.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

The Community Wellness Strategy emphasizes the strategic objective of increasing the number of Richmond residents across all ages to be involved in physical activity and active healthy lifestyles. As outlined in the City of Richmond's Recreation and Sport Strategy (2019-2024) – Progress Update, physical activity promotion and opportunities continued through the pandemic, albeit in different formats that evolved based on COVID-19 restrictions. Some key changes in how physical activity opportunities were delivered in City places and spaces included:

- Leveraging outdoor environments for fitness classes and outdoor active play in child care programs offered by community centres.
- Implementing a one-way path at Garry Point Park to enhance visitors' sense of safety.
- Providing walking and cycling maps to outdoor points of arts, culture and heritage interest.
- Shifting to high quality and engaging online, virtual programming for group fitness and other active recreation opportunities.
- Shifting drop-in opportunities to registered visits to enable unstructured physical activity while maintaining the ability to control participation levels in accordance with Provincial Health Orders.
- Maximizing environmental controls such as ensuring adequate ventilation, physical distancing, mandating mask use while indoors, lowering the intensity of exercise classes, and utilizing time buffers between classes to avoid gatherings.
- Ensuring the community was aware of facility status and the opportunities to access the wide variety of indoor and outdoor programs and services that were available, including swimming at the new Minoru Centre for Active Living.



Did you know?

The average number of daily cycling trips along the Railway Corridor was four times higher in July 2020 than July 2019.*

**Data is based on trips tracked by cyclists using the Strava app and is consistent with broader trends identified through usage counting devices.*

FOOD INITIATIVES

The Community Wellness Strategy identifies the strategic objective of increasing the number of Richmond residents across all ages making healthy food choices, recognizing that healthy choices are mediated by factors such as access, availability, affordability and awareness. Immediately after the implementation of COVID-19 closures, significant reduction in access to food occurred in Richmond. Grocery stores reduced their hours, restaurants and food service establishments closed, and access to emergency food was significantly reduced. This was partly related to public buildings being shut and loss of volunteer support, as everyone locked down.



Community meals not only offer stable access to nutritious meals, but also connect community members with a range of support services and opportunities to develop social connections with others. However, between March and June 2020, community meal programs shifted quickly from in-person meals to take away or delivered meals. Numbers of take-away food hampers and delivered food hampers increased, and grocery store gift cards were also provided. In 2020, the City Grants Program provided funding to support initiatives of a number of non-profit community service agencies providing access to healthy food to clients through the pandemic. As well, the Food Aid Delivery Group found ways to ensure people experiencing homelessness could access healthy meals everyday throughout the pandemic.

Urban Bounty (Richmond Food Security Society), funded by the United Way, implemented the Match Maker / Food Hub project in May 2020, providing prepared meals and food vouchers to community organizations who in-turn managed delivery to families. This involved hiring four chefs to prepare meals at two locations made available by the City of Richmond, the East Richmond Hall and the Terra Nova Red Barn. About 500 meals per week were delivered through a range of community organizations and public-sector sites such as Cambie Secondary School, Healthiest Babies Possible, McNeely Elementary School. In addition to this, they also supported the Richmond School District with 300-bagged lunches per week.

A number of food-related initiatives also assisted in maintaining connection with seniors and youth through the pandemic. The Minoru Seniors Society (MSS) continued to provide a pick-up meal service that was particularly valuable and necessary for isolated seniors who normally would have attended seniors programming at the facility. Through a number of sponsorships, MSS also supported 103 seniors with a free holiday meal, a Save-On-Foods gift card and a handmade holiday card made by youth. Meals were delivered to seniors' homes by volunteers on December 24, 2021. As well, the Richmond Youth Media Program (RYMP), with funding from Vancouver Coastal Health, distributed grocery store gift cards to youth whose families were dealing with loss of work and other difficulties during the pandemic. This program enabled RYMP staff to stay in touch with youth during this difficult time.

Food is a way for people to come together. Even through the pandemic, a focus on healthy eating helped organizations to form new partnerships and facilitated connection with community members.

MENTAL WELLNESS AND SOCIAL CONNECTEDNESS

The Community Wellness Strategy outlines the important objectives of increasing the number of individuals across all ages reporting a positive state of mental wellness, and providing opportunities to increase Richmond residents' sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods. The COVID-19 pandemic affected mental health and the ability of community members to maintain connection with one another. The rapid and unanticipated changes in Public Health Orders throughout the pandemic left some feeling confused, sad, anxious or burnt out. Self-isolation and social distancing made some people feel less connected to the activities and people that could help manage these feelings. A key role for the City, Health Authority and School District is to foster community resilience.

Resilience is the process of learning healthy ways to adapt and cope with adversity and stress. Having positive social relationships can often help in stressful situations as others can offer encouragement, support, and empathy. Through the pandemic, a number of initiatives focused on ensuring community members did not feel alone despite the need to be distant.

To help reduce stress and assist parents working in essential roles to access temporary, emergency child care through the early part of the COVID-19 pandemic, the City played a leadership role in coordinating and sharing relevant information. In collaboration with the Richmond School District, Vancouver Coastal Health Child Care Licensing and Richmond Child Care Resource and Referral, resources and communication materials were created to connect parents with child care options during this challenging time.

The Minoru Seniors Society received \$6,300 from the Canadian Red Cross Community Support Grant in 2020 to launch an outreach project for Chinese-speaking seniors in response to the COVID-19 pandemic. The project reached 216 Cantonese and Mandarin-speaking seniors through activities and outreach calls. A total of 25 activities were delivered virtually in Cantonese and Mandarin, including chair exercise, music, health and wellness workshops, and coffee and chat sessions. In addition, project staff connected with over 30 Chinese-speaking seniors on a regular basis through outreach calls that included information and resources, birthday calls and wellness check-ins.



To minimize social isolation during the pandemic, the Pen Pal Project was a digital letter-writing program to create intergenerational community connections between youth from the Richmond Public Library and seniors from the Seniors Centre. The outcomes achieved were reduced social isolation for the seniors who shared their stories and experiences with others, and improved communication skills for the teen volunteers. Over 150 letters have been exchanged through this program.

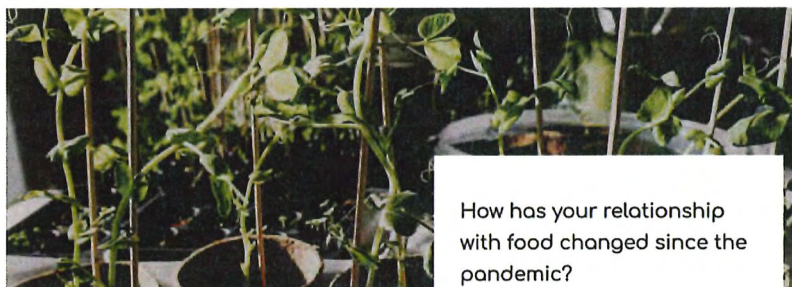
Steveston Community Centre implemented “Supporting Seniors During the Holidays”, an initiative designed to reach seniors during the COVID-19 pandemic that has left many of our seniors isolated. Steveston staff welcomed the community, including preschool participants, youth council, senior volunteers, schools, community groups and individuals, to create handmade cards with words of support and encouragement to wish seniors a happy holiday season and remind them that they are not alone during these challenging times. Over 250 cards were submitted and delivered to seniors living in Richmond.

To combat social isolation during the COVID-19 pandemic, 75 handmade cards were delivered to the Minoru Seniors Centre by youth from the Interact Club at Hugh Boyd School. These cards, full of bright pictures and well-wishes, were given to seniors as part of their Meal-to-Go from the Seniors Centre Cafeteria the week leading up to Valentines Day 2021.

Part of the #RichmondHasHeart campaign, Eating in the Time of COVID, by Cristy Fong and Denise Fong, is an online collection of stories, quotes, photos, poems and illustrations to capture culturally diverse and multigenerational experiences with food during the coronavirus pandemic. The project is ongoing from 2020 through to Fall 2021 and has engaged the Sharing Farm Society, Urban Bounty, local farmers, grocery store owners, restaurateurs, food bloggers and the general public in Richmond, in answer to the question: “How has your relationship with food changed since the pandemic?” The website, richmondfoodstories.ca, will function as the online exhibition and as a legacy piece to document the voices, feelings, and visual representations of the COVID-19 experience. A short video will also be produced and shown as part of the online exhibition, which aims to help people know that they are not alone.



Richmond Food Stories



Visit the online exhibition at
richmondfoodstories.ca

Wellness Moving Forward

While the COVID-19 pandemic has left an indelible mark on communities across the world, the increasing vaccination rates and general easing of restrictions has allowed many in Richmond to move forward in a new state of equilibrium. The Community Wellness Strategy continues to be relevant, perhaps even more so, as the community continues to recover from the effects of the pandemic. The Strategy's five Focus Areas and 47 strategic actions continue to provide a guidepost for the City of Richmond, Vancouver Coastal Health-Richmond and Richmond School District on collaborative efforts that can improve the health and well-being of those who live, learn, work and play in Richmond. The following sections provide an overview of successes achieved in the first half of the Community Wellness Strategy's five-year implementation period, demonstrating the strong foundation the organizational partners will continue to build upon in order to improve wellness in Richmond.





Focus Area 1

Foster healthy, active and involved lifestyles for all Richmond residents with an emphasis on physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellness.

Why is this important?

A key to promoting overall wellness, including the adoption of healthy lifestyle habits, is through supportive environments that enable equitable access to information, life skills and opportunities to take action and make healthy choices¹.

Increasing physical activity and reducing sedentary time can provide benefits such as improved energy and strength, prolonged independence as we age, and helps to prevent chronic diseases, including cancer, obesity, hypertension, heart disease and type 2 diabetes². Among the mental health benefits, regular physical activity can help reduce day-to-day stress, increase self-reported happiness, and prevent depression and anxiety³. Community-based physical activity opportunities also offer myriad avenues to participate in community life, connect with others and enjoy the outdoors.

Healthy eating is, of course, about food choices, such as eating plenty of vegetables and fruits, whole grain foods and protein foods. It is also about eating habits such as being mindful of when and why you eat, your knowledge of food (such as reading food labels or how to grow food), how to process, prepare and preserve food, cultural appropriateness of food, and how food can help to bring people together⁴.

Mental health is the state of your psychological and emotional well-being⁵. It is not the same as mental illness; everyone has a state of mental health, just like physical health, which can shift at different times, like when one experiences stress, a difficult life event, or burnout⁶. Defining characteristics of good mental well-being include having a sense of purpose, strong relationships, feeling connected to others, having a good sense of self, ability to cope with stress and a feeling of enjoying life⁶.

Focus Area 1 guides strategic action on the three pillars of physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellness, especially in terms of building capacity of community members to increase control over, and to improve, their health and wellness through access to information and resources, build their skills and knowledge, and take action.

Intended outcomes include:

- ↑ Awareness of benefits
- ↑ Physical activity opportunities
- ↑ Physical activity levels
- ↑ Healthy food outlets
- ↑ Fruit and vegetable servings
- ↑ Self-rated mental health



The City of Richmond is a designated Global Active City, and a member of the Active Well-being Initiative, the only North American city awarded this designation. Richmond's *Community Wellness Strategy* and *Recreation and Sport Strategy* demonstrate the City's commitment to this designation through the intentional planning of opportunities and environments that aim to enhance community members' health, well-being and happiness.

Highlighted Achievements

WALK RICHMOND (1.1.2)

Walk Richmond is an initiative of the Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association and funded by the City of Richmond, that supports residents to enjoy the benefits of walking and active living while getting to know green spaces and walking routes across the city. Walk Richmond offers free, guided walks at various trail and park locations on a weekly basis, and partners with community organizations such as Touchstone Family Services, Richmond Family Place and Vancouver Coastal Health to deliver workshops on the benefits of physical activity and safe walking outdoors. Walk Richmond has a strong base of 12 volunteer walk leaders who receive training to lead the guided walks. Over 1200 people subscribe to the Walk Richmond newsletter distribution list, and the translated walking schedule is promoted through partner agencies and programs such as VCH and BC ShapeDown. In 2020, despite COVID-19 restrictions on group size and a temporary 3-month pause, Walk Richmond still engaged 815 participants through 41 guided walking opportunities.

Key Action: (1.1.2)
Implement initiatives to keep Richmond residents active through enhancing walking and cycling programs city-wide and at a neighbourhood level



FALLS PREVENTION THROUGH WALKING (1.1.2)

Funded through a VCH Action Mini Grant, the Minoru Seniors Society hosted the Step Ahead Series – Preventing Falls to increase seniors' awareness about preventing falls and encouraging walking. Provided to a cohort of 12 participants, the series consisted of a phone interview with health screening questions, an online fall prevention workshop led by VCH, an online exercise session led by a fitness instructor, and a guided, in-person, outdoor, socially-distanced walk with Walk Richmond. Participants received a weekly reminder phone call to check in with the seniors and provide encouragement to attend the program. Moving forward, session topics will be offered on a one-off workshop basis, and staff will seek funding to offer the entire series again in the future.

ART, CULTURE AND HERITAGE WALKING AND CYCLING RESOURCES (1.1.2)

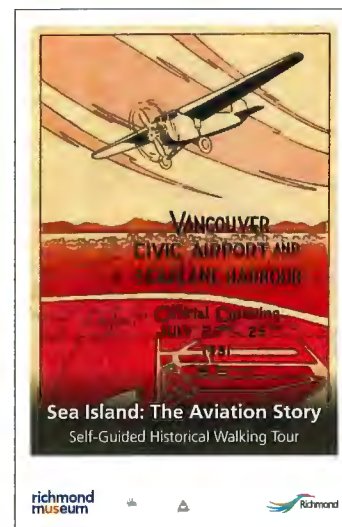
Throughout 2020, new walking and cycling resources that feature Richmond's public art and heritage features were created to encourage learning and physical activity in the outdoors. The Cycling Art Tour, a downloadable map hosted on the City's cycling resources webpage, highlights public art pieces that underscore the power and resilience of community, connection, togetherness, home and place. Additionally, walking resources were developed to spark interest in public history and encourage the exploration of local heritage sites, including a family-friendly heritage scavenger hunt of Steveston Village, and self-guided historical walking tours featuring heritage places in Terra Nova, Brighthouse District and a new guide focused on Sea Island.

STORYWALK® LIBRARY PROGRAM (1.1.2)

Richmond Public Library offers StoryWalks, a fun, educational activity that promotes literacy, learning and outdoor play. A StoryWalk® involves individual pages of a storybook that are mounted on trees. Children follow the narrative by visiting each tree in sequence. Prior to the pandemic, StoryWalks® were offered as a group program throughout the summer as a unique active outdoor reading experience via 15 StoryWalk® Kits with support from the Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association. While the library was unable to facilitate in-person StoryWalks® in 2020, the kits continued to be borrowed from the library by early years educators. The public lending collection grew to 17 different children's books in 2021, enabling families to take a StoryWalk® in their neighbourhoods while being socially distanced. Throughout Summer 2021, the library offered several StoryWalk® programs in local parks, including Minoru Park, McLean Neighbourhood Park and at Cambie Community Centre, once again offering community members an opportunity to connect with library staff and participate in this fun outdoor literacy program.

CYCLING PROMOTION (1.1.2)

The City offers a number of annual initiatives to promote cycling in Richmond. The "Island City, by Bike" tour held each year in June offers two guided bike rides featuring destinations across Richmond, such as Britannia Heritage Shipyard in 2019 that engaged approximately 100 participants of all ages. Richmond also annually participates in HUB Cycling's "Go by Bike Week" initiatives in the Spring and Fall (formerly "Bike to Work Week") and "Shop by Bike" in the Summer, and typically a number of bike maintenance courses for the public plus cycling education courses for new immigrants. Due to COVID-19, in-person cycling initiatives were cancelled in 2020, resuming with an online Spring 2021 Go by Bike Week. The Fall 2021 Go by Bike Week event was held with COVID-19 protocols and included one "Knowledge Hub" in Richmond outside Thompson Community Centre featuring bike tune ups, resources and prizes.



CYCLING EDUCATION IN SCHOOLS (1.1.2)

In 2013, the City began funding cycling education courses for Grades 5 to 7 students typically at four public elementary schools for approximately 450 students per year. In 2020, the City expanded its funding of the “Ride the Road” cycling education programs, delivered by HUB Cycling, to all Grade 6 and 7 students in School District No. 38 schools over a two-year period. With the City’s support, HUB Cycling will work with the School District to deliver cycling education programs to 19 elementary schools or approximately 2,000 students per year. The goal is for Richmond students to gain lifelong knowledge, skills and confidence to cycle safely for fun and transportation.

ART TRUCK (1.1.3.1)

The Art Truck is a mobile program operated through the Richmond Arts Centre and provides a range of arts-based outreach opportunities throughout the school year and summer, including physical literacy and movement programming. During the 2018-2019 school year, the Art Truck delivered programs at six Richmond School District elementary schools. Instructors provided more than 80 hours of Art and Physical Literacy instruction for 158 students across the city. The Art Truck program also reached new milestones in 2019 with funding received through the Province of BC’s Before and After School Recreation Program grant, nomination for the 2019 BCRPA Excellence Award, and a conference presentation featuring the Art Truck at the provincial BCRPA Symposium in Whistler. The growth of the Art Truck program allowed more students facing barriers access to high quality after-school arts education opportunities, physical literacy sessions and a healthy, dietitian created snack. In the 2019-2020 school year, the Art Truck expanded services to seven School District No. 38 schools. However, as COVID-19 took hold and public facilities closed the Richmond Arts Centre and Richmond Art Gallery collaborated on Art Truck programming in order to continue to provide enriching arts education to children of essential workers during the early days of the pandemic.

Priority Action: (1.1.3.1)

Scale-up the Art Truck initiative which includes physical activity, arts and culture and healthy eating.



ACTIVE COMMUNITIES GRANT (1.1.4.1)

The Active Communities Grant-funded initiatives in the City Centre neighbourhood were completed in 2019. The first phase of the project focused on planning and discovery through key informant interviews that shed light on barriers and challenges that exist for City Centre residents as they relate to physical activity, as well as walk-about tours of the neighbourhood to gather information on the natural and built environment. Three key initiatives were developed based on these findings to increase active unstructured outdoor play in the City Centre core. These initiatives included the installation of three outdoor Live 5-2-1-0 Playboxes at Brighthouse Elementary School, Lang Neighbourhood Park, and Minoru Park, stylized wayfinding through commissioned art from a local artist, and an information-based marketing and awareness campaign. These initiatives were accomplished in partnership with the Richmond School District 38, City Centre Community Association, Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association, and Vancouver Coastal Health–Richmond. In 2020, three more Live 5-2-1-0 Playboxes were installed at Cambie, Hamilton and Thompson Community Centres.

Priority Action:
(1.1.4.1) Implement the Active Communities Grant Project focusing on physical activity initiatives in the City Centre neighbourhood.



EXPANDING COMMUNITY GARDENS (1.2.1.2)

The City currently boasts 434 individual community garden plots at 11 City-owned sites that are managed by Urban Bounty, with approximately 220 more located at School District No. 38 sites for educational purposes. The most recent additions are the new Cook and Riverport Community Gardens, which improve food security and access to outdoor activities in two key areas of the city. Approximately 100 new individual plots are on the horizon as a new garden site is planned for the Garden City Lands. Additionally, a community engagement process was completed in September 2021 to receive input from the public on potential future community garden locations, how to meet the high city-wide demand, and what other considerations should be part of the community garden planning process. Input gathered will inform the City's plans to develop future community gardens.



SCHOOL VENDING MACHINE AUDIT (1.2.2.2)

Because schools have an important impact on children and youth's dietary habits and food consumption, a Vancouver Coastal Health Research Institute (VCHRI) funded Research Challenge study examined vending machines in Richmond Secondary Schools has been completed. Vending machine audits were conducted in April, June and October 2019, along with interviews with school administrators to understand their perspectives around school vending machines. The project revealed an opportunity to improve the nutritional qualities of products offered in the vending machines of several schools. While the study was not able to definitively determine factors that support and hinder compliance with the Guidelines for Food and Beverage Sales in BC Schools, it did highlight that the school food environment is broader than just vending machines, and consideration should extend to school stores, fundraising events, and cafeteria offerings.

Priority Action:

(1.2.1.2) Expand community gardens in neighbourhoods across Richmond, to encourage social interaction, physical activity and access to fresh affordable vegetables and fruits for residents.

Priority Action:

(1.2.2.2) Conduct school food environment audits within identified neighbourhoods to inform and strengthen the Neighbourhood Food Hub initiative.

HEALTHY LIVING BOOKMARK CONTEST (1.2.3.4)

VCH-Richmond Public Health partners annually with School District No. 38, Richmond Public Library, City of Richmond, and Richmond Children First committee to coordinate a bookmark contest for elementary school age children. The bookmark contest offers a creative outlet to engage children's imagination in thinking and learning about wellness. In 2019, students from kindergarten to grade seven submitted designs to represent the slogan, "Growing food, growing me," and the 2020 theme was "Move and play all through the day." One design is selected from each grade, and posters and bookmarks featuring the winning bookmarks are created for distribution at community centres and library branches.



SUPPORTING SOMALI WOMEN'S FOOD INITIATIVE (1.2.3)

Beginning in 2019, the City has collaborated with the Richmond-based Somali Women's Empowerment Society (SWES) to educate and engage visitors to Terra Nova Rural Park, one of Richmond's most popular destination parks. The women of SWES have adopted a garden space and are practicing traditional methods of agriculture while sharing their knowledge with community gardeners and park visitors, and donating a portion of their harvest to the Richmond Food Bank.

Priority Action:

(1.2.3.4) Focus the annual VCH-Richmond/SD 38 Bookmark contest on healthy food choices in year 1 (2019), physical activity in year 2 (2020), mental wellness in year 3 and social connectedness in year 4.

Key Action: (1.2.3)

Enable residents of all ages to make healthy food choices through educational opportunities and programs that are culturally relevant.

CITY CENTRE YOUTH LEADERSHIP IN MENTAL WELLNESS (1.3.1)

City Centre Community Centre's youth leadership group, C-Change, hosted their annual Lock-In event, in early March 2020, just prior to the pandemic facility closures. The Lock-In was a fundraiser for C-change initiatives where 50 youth participants slept overnight at City Centre Community Centre, and engaged in youth-led activities focused on the theme of mental wellness. In preparation for the event, C-Change members were mentored by CHIMO staff to plan seminars and activities that would educate participants on awareness of mental health, the social stigma surrounding mental health, ways to manage stress, and how to support friends and family who may be struggling with their mental health.

Key Action: (1.3.1)
Implement initiatives to increase access to mental wellness resources for residents.

MENTAL HEALTH LITERACY IN SCHOOLS (1.3.3)

School District No. 38 has implemented initiatives to improve mental health literacy across the district through in-service to all secondary school teachers and staff as well as implementing a mental health unit in the Grade 9 Personal Health Education curriculum. While the primary focus of these initiatives is on the long-term well-being of students, the in-service for staff is intended to help them more easily recognize common mental health disorders and foster a supportive environment. As well, many parent advisory committees and community members have participated in mental health literacy information sessions. Furthermore, the EASE (Everyday Anxiety Strategies for Educators) program has been widely implemented in elementary schools since 2019, incorporating the parent community as well, and in the fall of 2021, was expanded to include secondary schools.

Key Action: (1.3.3)
Develop a common language around what mental wellness means and integrate it into resources developed to support mental wellness.

WELL-BEING INDICATORS FOR YOUNG CHILDREN (1.3.3.1)

Given the value in expanding the data available on well-being indicators of younger children, the City of Richmond supported the pilot phase of a new population health tool created by the UBC Human Early Learning Partnership (HELP). The Toddler Development Instrument (TDI) is based on data collected from parents and caregivers of children aged one to two years. In tandem with the new Childhood Experiences Questionnaire (CHEQ), focused on children's experiences at the beginning of Kindergarten, the data collected through these instruments will help shed light on the social and emotional development of young children in Richmond and inform the development of programs and services to support parents and caregivers.

Priority Action: (1.3.3.1)
Adopt a common social/emotional competency curriculum that can be applied to children, youth and adult programs aimed at supporting mental wellness.

Utilize the EDI, MDI and McCreary data and research for Richmond to inform the curriculum and other programs/strategies that have the potential to decrease risk factors and increase protective factors during developmental stages.



Success Story

VCH FOOD ASSET MAP (1.2.2.1)



This fulfills Priority

Action: (1.2.2.1)

Complete the Richmond Food Asset Map to inform the Neighbourhood Food Hub initiative.

Richmond Public Health, in partnership with Urban Bounty, UBC Land and Food Systems, and the City of Richmond developed and launched the online Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) Food Asset Map for Richmond. A food asset map is a snapshot of food-related resources in a community that provides a wayfinding tool for residents, health care professionals, and community organizations to search for food assets in Richmond. Importantly, the map also functions to illuminate areas and neighbourhoods in the city where healthy food assets may be lacking. To date, there have been approximately 46,000 public views of the Food Asset Map.

Food assets are places where people can grow, prepare, share, buy, receive, or learn about food. These food assets include community kitchens, community meals, green grocers, garden programs, community orchards and many others. For example, South Arm Community Centre and Steveston Community Centre were the sites for community kitchen programs offered by Family Services of Greater Vancouver for newcomers and seniors. Additionally, School District No. 38 leads a number of food access initiatives including the long established Feed-U-Cate program and Backpack Buddies, in collaboration with St. Alban's Church, to provide weekend food supplements and hampers for students in need.

Having access to food is one of BC's social determinants of health. In addition to having access to retail food stores, resources to learn about healthy eating and food skills such as community kitchen programs, community gardens and orchards, and urban farms are equally crucial for Richmond residents. By reviewing the Richmond Food Asset Map and cross-referencing with the City's Planning Areas, disparities between neighbourhoods were identified, specifically: (1) the lack of access to low-cost meals, vegetables and fruits, and retail grocers in some neighbourhoods, and (2) some neighbourhoods have localized growing food programs (i.e. community gardens and orchards, and garden programs and education), while others do not. These identified disparities will inform the development of neighbourhood food hubs in underserved areas to address the lack of fresh and local produce and establish a healthier food environment at the neighbourhood level.

The Vancouver Coastal Health Food Asset Map is available at: www.vch.ca/public-health/nutrition/food-asset-map

Success Story

FOUNDRY RICHMOND (1.3.2)

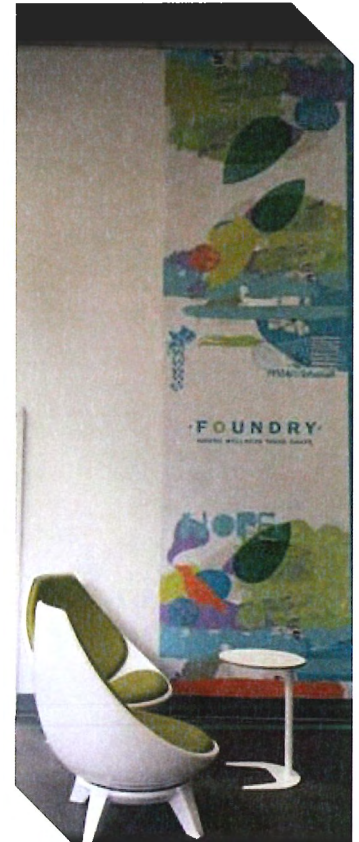
Foundry Richmond is part of an exciting province-wide network of integrated health and social service centres for young people ages 12 to 24. The centre offers a welcoming, safe, non-judgmental space for youth and their caregivers to access health and social services by improving availability, acceptability, and equitability. By offering a low-barrier, youth-friendly, single-point-of-access to mental health care, substance use services, primary care, social services and youth and family peer supports, Foundry Richmond makes it easier for young people to find the support they need sooner — before health challenges become problematic.

The development of Foundry Richmond is a flag-ship project for the community, bringing together leadership from education and health alongside over 15 community service agencies to co-design services that reflect the unique needs of our community. The City is a member of the Richmond Foundry Leadership Advisory Council and participates in planning as a partner and key stakeholder. Community service agencies work together to develop the operational needs of Foundry Richmond, and provide youth-centred in-kind services that connect youth and their families to a continuum of integrated services available throughout Richmond. For example, the City, Richmond Addiction Services Society and Foundry Richmond collaborated to develop and deliver an online Adulting 101 workshop series when youth identified the need to learn skills that would support their transition to adulthood, including sessions on mental wellness, finances and resume writing. As collaborative initiatives increase, Foundry Richmond will play a role in connecting youth to wellness resources such as the City's youth outreach and community-centre based programming.

The centring of youth voices in the design and implementation of Foundry Richmond has been integral since the project's inception. Through the engagement process that informed facility design, youth overwhelmingly expressed that the Foundry space should evoke a sense of calm, comfort and 'home', with natural elements such as plants, wood and a light, airy feel. The Foundry Youth Advocates table also provides an ongoing youth perspective to ensure provision of the most relevant services to Richmond youth and their families. This group also manages Foundry Richmond's Instagram social media account to ensure communications reflect a youth perspective. Efforts to ensure that youth feel welcome, heard and represented at Foundry Richmond will help to increase their feeling of connection to the community, and make it easier for youth to seek mental health and other services when they are needed.

The process of co-designing Foundry Richmond with input from youth, families and community partners has fostered relationships and expanded working partnerships, which results in better access to wellness opportunities for Richmond residents. Foundry Richmond will move to its permanent home in 2022, which will allow services and programs to expand into a fulsome, integrated system of care to meet the needs of Richmond youth and families.

This represents significant progress towards Key Action: (1.3.2) Implement the 'Foundry' Initiative, which is an integrated one stop shop for mental health, primary health care and social services for young people ages 12–24 with a focus on ready access to services and early intervention for wellness. This initiative is currently being implemented in cities across British Columbia.



Quick Facts

Contributions towards:

- ↑ Physical activity opportunities
- ↑ Healthy food outlets

- Walk Richmond, a program of the Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association and co-funded by the City of Richmond, provides guided walks led by volunteers throughout the year. Even with a three-month pause and reduced group capacity in 2020 due to COVID-19, Walk Richmond continued to provide opportunities to explore Richmond's parks and trails.

Walk Richmond	2018	2019	2020*
Guided Walks	35	37	31
Volunteers Engaged	238	240	138
Total Participants	1354	1539	745

*Walk Richmond did not offer programming for 3 months in 2020 due to COVID-19.

- The number of opportunities for community members to participate in active recreation and sport through registered programs available in City facilities was increasing prior to the pandemic.

	2018	2019	2020**
Active recreation and sport registered programs available	10,796	11,358	3,650
Participants	67,897	70,888	27,093

**City facilities were closed to the public for 2 months in 2020, with a phased implementation of virtual and in-person registered programs throughout 2020.

- Before the pandemic, approximately 145 healthy food and 75 mental wellness programs, events and workshops were offered each year in City of Richmond facilities (2018, 2019).
- Richmond's Community Garden Program boasts 434 individual plots across 11 community garden sites on City-owned public land. Approximately 220 additional garden plots used for educational purposes are located throughout School District No. 38 sites.
- School District No. 38 currently provides 90 daily lunches, 70 weekend supplements on a weekly basis, and distributes over 2000 monthly snacks to students in need.



Focus Area 2

Enhance physical and social connectedness within and among neighbourhoods and communities

Why is this important?

The importance of social connectedness to one's physical health and mental and emotional well-being is multifaceted. Having a sense of social connection, belonging and value in one's community certainly helps to increase one's mood and happiness; it also has protective effects on physical health, including a reduction in the risk of premature death. Studies have shown that periods of stress can elevate cortisol levels and activate the body's fight-or-flight response, slowing one's recovery from disease and increasing susceptibility to anxiety and depression. On the other hand, the benefits of social connectedness include 50% increased chance of longevity, stronger gene expression for immunity, and better emotion regulation skills.⁷

Focus Area 2 emphasizes strategic actions that promote physical and social connectedness in Richmond. Initiatives that increase physical connectedness of neighbourhoods and communities both enable individuals to access the people, programs and services that provide social support, and increase the chance for neighbours to meet organically. However, social connectedness often doesn't 'just happen', so programs, services and opportunities that intentionally foster social connections and caring are vital to facilitating social interaction that may lead to true friendships.

Intended outcomes include:

- ↑ Strong sense of community belonging
- ↑ Volunteers



Highlighted Achievements

AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITY BUILDING (2.1)

In 2019, the City received a \$25,000 Age-Friendly Communities grant from the Union of BC Municipalities (UBCM) to advance the work towards making Richmond an age-friendly community. This work brought together a diverse group of adults 55+ years living in the Seafair area of Richmond for a series of six neighbourhood meetings and a roundtable event to identify barriers and well-designed areas in the built environment that impact aging in place, wellness, health and social connections. This inclusive community planning initiative prioritized the local knowledge held by seniors about the built environment in their own neighbourhood and created opportunities for dialogues with neighbours. Given the potential to increase residents' sense of value and belonging to their neighbourhoods, the learnings from this grant project will inform the development of a Neighbourhood Strategy, as guided by the Wellness Strategy Action 2.1.1.

Objective: (2.1)

Provide opportunities to increase Richmond residents' sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods.



EXPLORING ECOLOGY THROUGH PLACE (2.1)

The Engaging Artists in Community Program is a Richmond Public Art initiative that supports artists with socially oriented art practices who wish to work collaboratively within communities in Richmond. Rachel Rozanski, the 2021/2022 artist-in-residence at the Richmond Public Library, is facilitating Exploring Ecology Through Place, a program that fosters cross-cultural exchange, inclusive community building and education with a focus on social isolation. Rozanski, an interdisciplinary artist whose works focus on biological, geological and material transformations in local ecology, will encourage workshop participants to explore and connect with their local ecology to define what “place” means to them through six public workshops and two StoryWalk programs.

IMPORTANCE OF PRIDE (2.1)

Pride Week, celebrated in late July to early August, signals to Richmond’s Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Two-Spirit (LGBTQ2S) community that they will be respected, valued and safe in community places and spaces. In recent years, Richmond’s Pride activities have evolved beyond the one-week celebration to longer-term demonstrations of support.

- Ahead of Pride Week 2019, the City unveiled the Rainbow Crosswalk on Minoru Boulevard, between Richmond City Hall and the Richmond Cultural Centre. This permanent installation is a year-round symbol of inclusion and allyship.
- With funding from the Province of BC’s Community Resilience Program, from April to August 2019, the Richmond Art Gallery, Richmond Weavers and Spinners Guild and Richmond Public Art program collaborated to host a weekly community weaving workshop and speakers series entitled Re-imagining the Spectrum. Over four months, a safe space was nurtured for local artistic production and conversation reimagining the Pride flag as a communally woven table runner for an inaugural Pride picnic.
- Signs of Pride, a public art installation commissioned by West Richmond Community Association and Cambie Community Centre, celebrates and commemorates the history and culture of the LGBTQ2S community in Richmond. Through weekly meetings between May and August 2021, professional artists Sam McWilliams, Paige Gratland, and Phranc mentored youth artists to create column wraps that are displayed on the West Richmond Community Centre building.



TAKING CARE OF OURSELVES, TAKING CARE OF OTHERS (TCO²) (2.1)

TCO² is an annual workshop delivered in the Richmond School District to all Grade 6 and 7 students by Children of the Street (PLEA), designed and delivered by youth, for youth, about preventing sexual exploitation. The interactive session empowers youth to think critically, recognize signs of recruitment and luring, and understand what healthy relationships should look like. It also underscores the importance of fostering empathy and social connectedness in communities. Teachers receive age-appropriate extension activities, developed by the School District, to further the conversation following the presentation. A companion workshop is presented to students in alternate programs and is in development to be delivered to all secondary schools.

SNOW ANGELS AND GOOD NEIGHBOURS (2.1)

During the 2019-2020 snow season, the Snow Angels Program recruited 21 Richmond volunteers who spent over 63 hours shoveling snow to help residents with physical or mobility challenges remain connected to their community during heavy snowfall. In tandem, the Good Neighbour Campaign, an informational social marketing campaign, encouraged residents to connect with their neighbours to ensure that no one was isolated or cut-off from their community during a heavy snow event. These initiatives foster a sense of caring for others in the community to mitigate isolation in the winter months.



Success Story

SENIORS PHONE-IN PROGRAMS TO INCREASE CONNECTEDNESS (2.1)

Resilience is the ability to bounce back after a stressful situation, and it is enhanced through social connectedness. Some of the ways social connectedness can be understood is through indicators such as community members' sense of feeling alone, involvement in community activities, and one's perception of belonging to the community. COVID-19 limited the recreational activities available to seniors, which affected their ability to stay connected with others in the community. Many virtual programs were created using online platforms, but many seniors were still not able to access these programs due to lack of access to technology, cost, or knowledge. And even though a phone-in feature was available for virtual programs, many users reported feeling a sense of being "left out" when they could not see the screen like other participants.

Through the United Way Safe Seniors, Strong Communities Grant, telephone-based programming was developed to create connections among these isolated seniors in Richmond. Over 30 phone-in programs were offered for seniors, such as Music Rings, Meditation, Audiobook Club with the Richmond Public Library, Journey Through Time, and Hanging with the Guys. Program promotion used methods that would most likely reach isolated seniors, such as newspaper ads, brochures, reaching out directly to seniors during Wellness Check phone calls, and working with community partners to share information among their clientele. Seniors Coordinators at each facility also conducted reminder phone calls ahead of the programs to provide social support and encourage vulnerable seniors to participate.

The phone-in programs have had almost 150 participants to date. While most participants have the means and technology to participate in a combination of virtual and phone-in programs, this initiative managed to engage 20 isolated seniors who would not have been able to participate in virtual programs. Many of these seniors were interested in topics such as emergency preparedness, walking for health, and vaccination updates. As this grant-funded initiative will continue through the end of 2021, program coordinators will aim to connect with seniors who are still isolating due to COVID-19, those who face transportation barriers over the dark winter months, and who have health issues that prevent their in-person participation.

This contributes to **Objective: (2.1)** Provide opportunities to increase Richmond residents' sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods.



Success Story

COMPLETION OF THE RESILIENT STREETS PROJECT (2.1.1.1)

Richmond was selected as one of four demonstration communities in British Columbia for the Resilient Streets project with a PlanH grant of \$20,000 from BC Healthy Communities. The Resilient Streets project provided micro-grants for East and West Cambie neighbourhood residents to host neighbour-led events aimed to build social connections with immediate neighbours on residential streets and within multifamily dwellings. East and West Cambie were chosen as the focus sites given the diversity in neighbourhood characteristics, ranging from newly developed, higher density neighbourhoods in contrast to established suburban neighbourhoods with single-family homes.

A joint planning “Collaborative Table” of local partners led by the City, and including East Richmond Community Association, Vancouver Coastal Health, Richmond Public Library, Richmond Fire Service, RCMP, Richmond School District No. 38, and City Centre Community Association, provided guidance throughout the development and implementation of the project. Three project launch events were hosted at neighbourhood sites, which engaged over 70 people in dialogue and activities about building resilience and connections with neighbours, and participation in eight other community events hosted by community partners, which engaged over 250 people.

The Resilient Streets Project also distributed \$1,700 in micro-grants to applicants, in total funding nine neighbour-led social gatherings such as a holiday dinner at a seniors’ retirement co-op and a travel themed summer BBQ for a block of neighbours. One micro-grant recipient noted, “I’ve managed to form a WhatsApp group that connects about 16 of the houses on our one block!” Another recipient said of their micro-grant-funded event, “We spent a wonderful time together. I told them my experience of traveling to China recently, and taught my neighbours how to use WeChat.”

The project found that residents in the East and West Cambie areas have a strong desire to meet their neighbours, to make new connections and to collaborate to improve their community. However, project participants reported perceiving barriers and lack of personal capacity to build neighbour connections due to differences in language, culture, nationality, for example. Despite this, the micro-grants and information about social connectedness and resilience empowered participants to take the first steps in getting to know their neighbours. These findings were shared with City Council and staff in December 2018 and continue to inform future neighbourhood initiatives delivered across the City, including updates to the Neighbourhood Grants program.

This fulfills Priority Action: (2.1.1.1)

Implement the ‘Resilient Streets Program’ which aims to increase neighbour-to-neighbour connections, starting with the East and West Cambie Neighbourhoods. Learnings from this program will inform the Neighbourhood Strategy.



Quick Facts

Contribution towards:

↑ Volunteers

- The City's I Can Help volunteer management system provides a convenient and easy way to match volunteers with the wide range of volunteer opportunities available through the City and Community Associations and Societies. Based on hours of volunteer time tracked in the I Can Help system, the total number of volunteer hours contributed were increasing prior to the pandemic.

	2018	2019	2020
Total Volunteer Hours	81,869	82,275	15,554



A sample of measures on social connectedness in Richmond:

- From the BC COVID-19 SPEAK Population Health Survey Round 1 (conducted May 2020):
 - 58% of Richmond survey respondents said they are connecting with friends less than before the coronavirus pandemic. Province-wide, the response rate to the same question was: 61%.
 - 68% of Richmond survey respondents, with children 5-17, said their children have less connection with friends since schools closed in-person learning during the coronavirus pandemic. Province-wide, the response rate to the same question was: 78%.
 - 64% of Richmond survey respondents said they have a strong sense of community belonging. Province-wide, the response rate to the same question was: 65%.
- From the School District No. 38 Student Learning Survey (conducted in the 2020/21 School Year):
 - The percentage of students who responded to the question "Do you feel good about yourself?" with 'Many times' or 'All of the Time':
Grade 3/4 – 65% | Grade 7 – 47% | Grade 10 – 44% | Grade 12 – 45%
 - The percentage of students who responded to the question "How would you describe your health (mental or physical)?" with 'Excellent' or 'Very Good':
Grade 3/4 – question not asked | Grade 7 – 40% | Grade 10 – 34% | Grade 12 – 25%



Focus Area 3:

Enhance equitable access to amenities, services and programs within and among neighbourhoods

Why is this important?

Equity is achieved when support and resources to enable access to opportunities is provided based on an individual's level of need, instead of providing everyone with the same level of support.⁸ About 75% of our overall health is determined by social factors like income, education, social support networks, and connections with others, and this leads to different levels of health and well-being for people of different population groups.⁹ An equity-based approach to the planning and delivery of amenities, services and programs prompts consideration of questions such as: *Who is not participating? What contributes to this exclusion? and What can be done differently to promote inclusion?*¹⁰

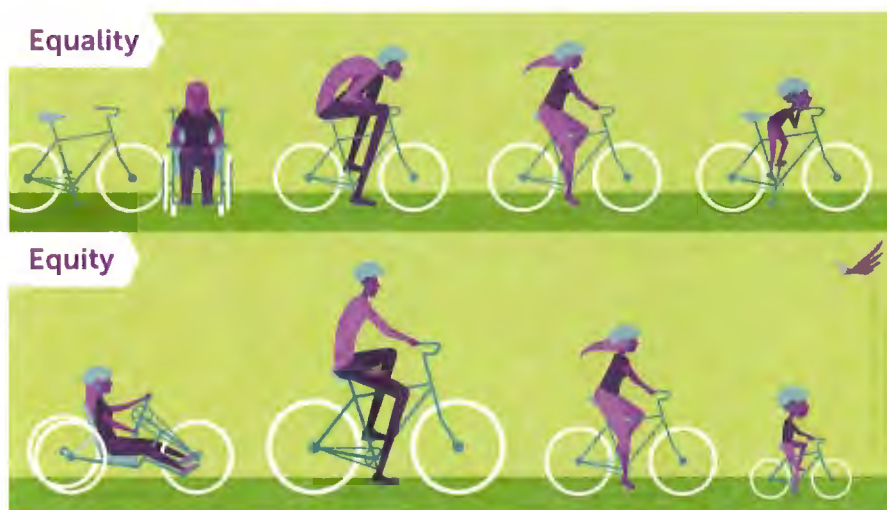


Photo credit: Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2017)

Focus Area 3 includes actions that aim to level the playing field by: developing and applying an equity lens; providing supports to increase the ability to find, access and benefit from wellness resources; and intentionally reaching out to groups that experience identified barriers. Enhancing equitable access to amenities, programs and services in spaces where people live, learn, work and play helps to ensure that everyone has the basics to be healthy and well.¹¹

Intended outcomes include:

- ↑ Amenities, programs and services available by neighbourhood
- ↓ Reduced barriers to opportunities

Highlighted Achievements

CITY OF RICHMOND GRANT PROGRAMS (3.1)

The City provides support to many non-profit societies that enhance the quality of life of Richmond through its three City Grant Programs: Arts and Culture; Health, Social and Safety; and Parks, Recreation and Community Events. These non-profit societies play an integral role in providing programs and services to community members that contribute to the well-being of residents. The funding also helps to build organizational capacity and encourages partnerships in order to align resources across the community. In 2021, over \$850,000 in City of Richmond grants was awarded.

PRIMARY CARE NETWORK (3.1)

In 2019, it was announced that Richmond was among the first communities in BC to implement Primary Care Networks (PCN). Supported by VCH and the Richmond Division of Family Practice, a PCN is a team of local primary care service providers who partner to provide a continuum of services based at a central hub, such as a community health care centre. While family doctors remain the central caregiver, other health care providers who are part of the allied health team, such as mental health counsellors, dietitians and physiotherapists, enable a single point of access to a comprehensive range of care providers. This integrated model reduces barriers to accessing timely preventative health and wellness supports.

EQUITY ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN FOR SUMMER PROGRAMS (3.1.1)

In Spring 2021, City Centre Community Centre staff created a pilot Equity Check-list for summer daycamp programming. The goal of developing the tool was to prompt staff consideration of possible barriers or inequities that may be experienced by summer program participants. The checklist was completed by the community centre staff programming team, summer daycamp staff and summer volunteers prior to a training session on justice, equity, diversity and inclusion, and then again after completing the training. Participants demonstrated higher levels of understanding and reflection after completing the training and had many ideas about how to apply the concept of equity to their role as leaders in daycamps. The findings from this initiative will inform the process to develop an equity lens to assess what and where inequities are at a neighbourhood level.

BC HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PLAN H GRANT (3.1.1)

In July 2021, the City was successful in receiving a \$15,000 grant from BC Healthy Communities towards the development of an equity lens resource to support staff to better consider and address equity and inclusion through the program planning process. The City received one of ten PlanH grants from BC Healthy Communities to accomplish this strategic action, along with additional support from the City and Vancouver Coastal Health.

Objective: (3.1)

Align availability and access of programs and services to meet the needs of Richmond residents by addressing inequities at a neighbourhood level.

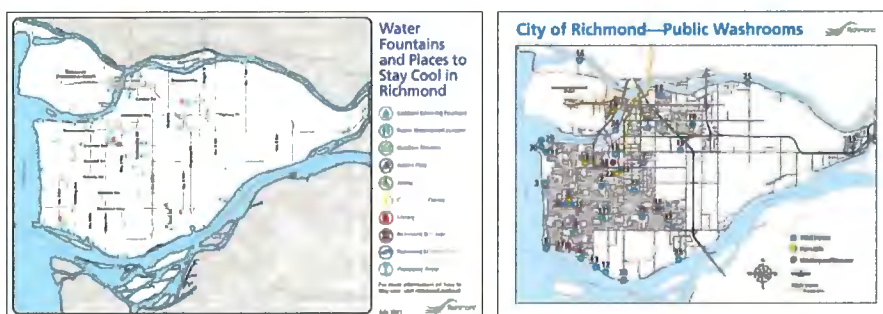


Key Action: (3.1.1)

Adopt an equity lens framework and assess what and where the inequities are at a neighbourhood level.

OUTDOOR PARK AND TRAIL AMENITY WAYFINDING MAPS (3.1.2)

In 2020, to facilitate continued use of public outdoor parks, trails and amenities for community members during the COVID-19 pandemic, maps were created that display public washroom locations and hours of availability, as well as maps of designated BBQ areas in Richmond parks. In response to extreme heat in 2021, an additional map that features places to stay cool in Richmond, including outdoor drinking fountains, outdoor shelters, pools and waterplay areas has been made available throughout the community in order to prevent heat related issues and continue to promote safety while participating outdoors.



Key Action: (3.1.2)
Create wayfinding tools which help residents and service providers to make best use of amenities, services, programs, natural and built environment opportunities that the neighbourhood offers.

SOCIAL PRESCRIBING (PRESCRIPTION FOR HEALTH) (3.1.3)

In a partnership between the City, VCH, Richmond Primary Care Network and the Richmond Division of Family Practice, a social prescribing pilot project is under development. Social prescription programs enable general practitioner doctors and other frontline healthcare professionals to refer patients to a Link Worker who support patients to design their own community-based solutions to improve their health and wellbeing. For example, a patient may identify the desire to increase physical activity, so the Link Worker would help 'co-produce' their 'social prescription' and identify community resources that meet their individual needs and preferences. Planning for the pilot project is currently underway and informed by best practices research.



Key Action:
(3.1.3) Introduce a 'Prescription for Health' initiative where local health care providers and school counsellors would prescribe physical activity utilizing local amenities, services, programs, natural and built environments in neighbourhoods.

COMMUNITY SCHOOL PILOT (3.1.4)

Through funding provided by the United Way Lower Mainland, School District No. 38 is piloting a Community Schools initiative. Using data from sources such as the Early Development Instrument, Middle Years Development Instrument, and Social Services Index, the School District can identify Richmond communities that may benefit from additional supports based on the socio-economic background of families and/or their geographic location. Through the community schools initiative, SD38 will collaborate with community partners to deliver a variety of after-school programming options for children in identified neighbourhoods. A key priority is to engage students in structured activities that support and enhance physical health, social and emotional development, a sense of belonging, and well-being in a safe space outside regular school hours. The Community Schools Coordinator will also aim to reduce barriers to service and enhance accessibility for vulnerable students. This staff position will also liaise with both school-based and district staff, including area counsellors, Settlement Workers in Schools, and the Indigenous Success Team, to ensure that programming opportunities are provided to the diverse student population. Richmond's new community school will enhance equity and inclusion, optimize use of facilities, and foster a connected learning community.

Key Action: (3.1.4)

Enhance partner outreach to groups where barriers to access and participation in services and programs have been identified.



LIBRARY CHAMPIONS (3.1.4)

The Richmond Public Library (RPL) participates in the Library Champions Project with NewtoBC, in which recent immigrants receive training about library services and programs as well as other community, health and social service resources in Richmond, in order to help other newcomers navigate and access resources, and participate more fully in the community. Forty (40) newcomers living in Richmond participated in the Library Champions project in 2020, who reached out to 1,067 newcomers that year. To date, RPL has supported over 199 Library Champions, who have collectively reached over 11,065 newcomers connecting them to an array of opportunities to access resources and participate in community life.

SCHOOL'S OUT – LEADERSHIP SKILLS GROUP (LSG) (3.1.4)

Delivered by Touchstone Family Association, with support from the Community Schools Coordinator, the School's Out – Leadership Skills Group for Grades 5, 6, and 7 students at McNeely Elementary and Mitchell Elementary. The program is offered in the 2021/22 school year and fosters opportunities for social and emotional development, to find inspiration in learning, to explore their creativity, and to have fun while also engaging in physical activity. Elements of the program that support student development include: a Circle component to build positive relationships with others and learn social and emotional skills; projects that spark interest and promote academic learning; creative activities; games and exercises that promote fun and fitness; and a community project that benefits their school or neighbourhood.



Success Story

FARMERS' MARKET INITIATIVES (3.1)

Farmers' Markets offer fresh, local, in season foods that typically travel less than 300 km in BC. They enable the community to directly support farmers and other local businesses, which strengthens the local economy and allows consumers to meet the people who grow and produce the food they are purchasing. To ensure Farmers' Markets are financially accessible, the Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupon Program (FMNCP) strengthens food security in communities by providing coupons to lower-income families, pregnant people and seniors. Coupons may be spent at participating farmers' markets to purchase vegetables, fruits, nuts, eggs, dairy, cut herbs, meat and fish.

Vancouver Coastal Health dietitians identified several groups that would benefit from increased access to fresh produce, including seniors, pregnant women and young families. Through support and funding from Richmond Public Health and the Richmond Chinese Evangelical Free Church, dietitians distributed Nutrition Coupons (valued at \$21 per week) to VCH Healthiest Babies Possible and Colt Young Parent Program participants to spend at farmers' markets. In 2019, over \$10,000 in Farmers' Market Nutrition Coupons were distributed to young families, and this increased in 2020, to almost \$16,000 in coupons. In 2021, the Nutrition Coupons were fully funded by the Farmers' Market Association of BC and extended to seniors in the Falls Prevention Program. This initiative has provided young parents, parents-to-be and seniors in Richmond with increased access to fresh, local food.

Recognizing the importance of access to local fresh food, City Council directed \$20,000 be allocated to support and enhance farmers' markets in both 2020 and 2021. In 2020, this funding supported an extension of the Kwantlen St. Farmers Market into the fall season, as well as the Sharing Farm to do an additional planting and commit to four of the extended market dates. This extension provided Richmond residents with access to locally grown produce and food products every Tuesday until December 15th in an open air venue. In 2021, in addition to supporting the Kwantlen St. Farmers Market and the Sharing Farm Society, the funding has also enabled the re-launch of the Steveston Farmers and Artisans Market. By increasing access to and availability of farmers' markets in Richmond, the food security needs of residents continue to be supported.

This contributes to Objective: (3.1)

Align availability and access of programs and services to meet the needs of Richmond residents by addressing inequities at a neighbourhood level, e.g., geographical, cost of programs and transportation, timing, cultural relevance and language needs or facilitating outreach opportunities.



Quick Facts

Contribution towards:

- ↓ Reduced barriers to opportunities
- The Recreation Fee Subsidy Program (RFSP) helps people of all ages living in Richmond who are in financial hardship. RFSP participants receive financial support for many registered and drop-in parks, recreation and cultural programs offered by the City of Richmond and its Community Associations and Societies. Prior to the pandemic, the number of participants in the RFSP was steadily growing and included adults and seniors who were not eligible for support under the previous program.

	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
Total RFSP Clients	1367	1880	1241
Adults and seniors	883	1272	829





Focus Area 4:

Facilitate supportive, safe and healthy natural and built environments

Why is this important?

The physical environment can influence health and wellness in a number of ways. Increased connectivity within and among neighbourhoods via bike paths and linkages with public transit enhance active travel for work, school and other destinations, while green spaces, walking paths, trails, inviting amenities and recreation facilities can promote physical activity. Some evidence suggests that living in neighbourhoods with easy access to healthier food options is correlated with better diets and better overall health. Neighbourhoods with local destinations that draw neighbours to walk, talk and connect with each other provide a way to encourage social interaction and combat isolation and loneliness.¹²

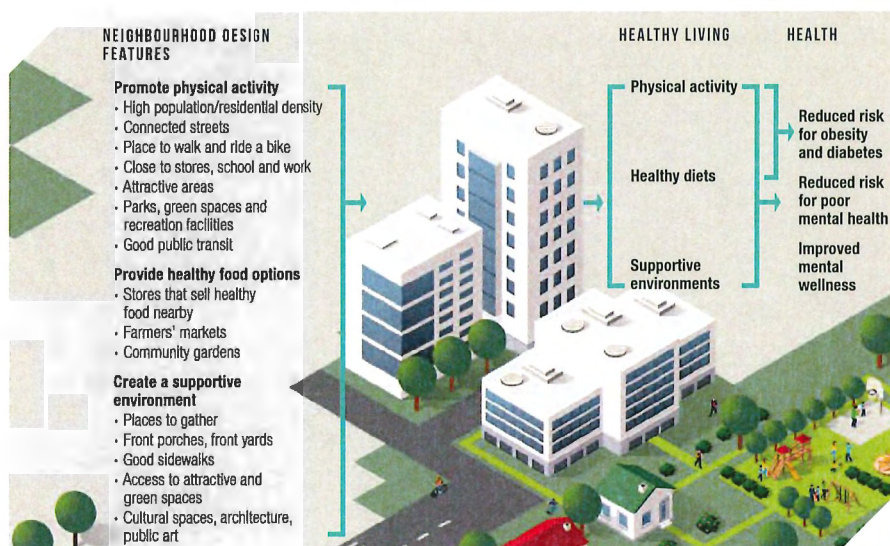


Photo credit: Public Health Agency of Canada (2017)

The strategic actions outlined in Focus Area 4 set the stage for improved wellness at the community level through the creation of public spaces that facilitate physical activity for active travel to access places for work, learning and resources like food assets and recreation centres. Additionally, there are actions that encourage leveraging the natural and built environments to create local spaces that are inviting, vibrant, and inspire physical activity, conversation or quiet contemplation.

Intended outcomes include:

- ↑ Walkability of neighbourhoods
- ↑ Outdoor unstructured play opportunities

Highlighted Achievements

PARKS IDENTIFICATION SIGNAGE PROGRAM (4.1.1)

Beginning in 2018, the City embarked on a signage initiative to better identify more than 40 of Richmond's neighbourhood parks and trails. The design of parks wayfinding signage takes into consideration the character, heritage and uniqueness of each park and trail, and provides information about what each site has to offer, regulatory information, and features consistency in the look and feel of materials and fabrication methods. To improve connectivity of walkable routes, priority locations include all arterial, city-street neighbourhood parks, key internal neighbourhood parks, and replacement and renewal of existing wayfinding signage on routes such as Shell Road Trail, Horseshoe Slough and South Dyke Trail.



Key Action: (4.1.1)

Improve connectivity by developing walkable routes in neighbourhoods that are accessible to all. Walkable routes could be further enhanced by: providing access to benches, washrooms and playgrounds, shade and gathering places; providing interactive and interpretive amenities; and implementing a wayfinding and signage plan for walkable routes within neighbourhoods.

TREE PLANTINGS IN PUBLIC SPACES (4.1.1)

Adopted in 2019, the Public Tree Management Strategy 2045 outlines the City's plan to manage Richmond's public urban forest, with a goal of enhancing and expanding the canopy cover over the public realm. Recent large-scale tree plantings have enhanced the following areas:

- Alexandra Greenway
- Garden City Park
- London-Steveston Neighbourhood Park
- MacCallan Park
- Paulik Park
- Railway Linear Park
- Terra Nova Park
- Woodward's Slough



E-SCOOTER PILOT PROJECT (4.1.2)

To keep pace with ever-evolving technology, in July 2021, the City received provincial and Council approval to participate in Province of BC's electric kick scooter (e-scooter) pilot project for a period of up to three years. Members of the community 16 years of age and over may legally ride e-scooters on some streets and paved pathways, as defined by City bylaws. In fall 2021, Council endorsed award of contract to Lime Technology, Inc. to operate a shared e-scooter and e-bike system as a pilot program for up to three years. The pilot program will also offer discounted rates for people enrolled in any federal, provincial, or local subsidy program. e-Scooters offer an alternate mode of active travel that is less expensive than a car or motorcycle, and relies on electricity rather than fuel.

RICHMOND RECREATIONAL TRAILS & CYCLING MAP (4.1.2)

A free updated cycling map was produced and distributed in partnership with Tourism Richmond to promote active transportation. The map identifies nearly 80 kilometres of designated on-and off-street bike routes, and suggests scenic destinations plus cycling safety tips and regulations. The map is downloadable from the City's Cycling in Richmond web page, and hard copies of the maps are available at City Hall, community centres and libraries.

Key Action: (4.1.2)

Continue to improve cycling networks across the city by: expanding the bike route network; expanding secured bike parking at City, health and school facilities; increasing access to bicycles and bicycle helmets to those facing barriers; and addressing barriers to using available bike routes.



WHEEL WATCH (4.1.2)

The City's Wheel Watch program provides secure bike parking at City events to encourage residents to cycle to attend community events. In 2019, over 2,000 people used the program as they cycled to 10 community events.



PAULIK FOOD FOREST (4.1.3)

The City received an Edible Trees Grant of \$3,500 through Tree Canada to plant fruit bearing species in Paulik Park that will benefit the neighbouring community. 93 trees, 235 shrubs and 110 ground covering plants were planted in the Fall of 2020. The vision is to establish an extension of the existing forest canopy and include native, edible berry-producing species to create the understory. The native berries will be available to anyone in the community.



Key Action: (4.1.3)

Enhance walkability/proximity to healthy food sources within neighbourhoods. Consideration can be given to one or more of the following best practice approaches: creating local spaces and incentives for community gardens, food sharing, farmers' markets and food skills programs; and creating mobile options that improve proximity to healthy food sources for areas with limited access (e.g., travelling 'pop up' units that sell fruit and vegetables).

NEW NEIGHBOURHOOD PARKS (4.1.4)

Richmond's City Centre and adjacent West Cambie areas have undergone a great deal of development and growth as the City shifts to a more compact urban community. Ensuring residents of Richmond's newest neighbourhoods continue to have access to parks and green spaces, and walkable linkages through the community is a priority.

- Capstan Neighbourhood Park, located at No. 3 Road and Capstan Way (adjacent to the future Canada Line Station), will be the central green space and urban plaza of this new neighbourhood in the Capstan Village area of City Centre. It features a children's playground with a public art piece that functions as a climbing feature, interactive water-play elements including a fountain and a nature-inspired channel, natural elements to inspire children's nature play, open lawn areas, tree and shrub plantings, an urban plaza and seating throughout the park.
- Aberdeen Neighbourhood Park, located at Cambie Road and Hazelbridge Way, is inspired by a 'Zen Garden' motif and aims to provide immersive spaces for quiet contemplation and passive recreation. It features a large urban square and gathering space, water feature, seating walls, and in Phase 2 (currently underway) an enclosed pavilion to house passive recreation activities, such as tai chi and yoga, and an all ages play ground will be added.
- Construction of Alexandra Neighbourhood Park is currently underway. This park is located along Odlin Road west of No. 4 Road, and will link the north and south sections of the Alexandra Greenway. Both the park and greenways will have extensive planting focused on native tree, shrub, and groundcover species to create a contiguous ecological habitat corridor between Cambie Road and the Garden City lands. The park will also feature recreational amenities such as a playground, basketball court, and off-leash dog park.

Key Action: (4.1.4)
Improve places and spaces at the neighbourhood level to make them accessible, inviting, healthy and safe through the addition of elements such as: furnishings and activities; nature; murals; book libraries; non-smoking outdoor and indoor spaces.



LEARNING ENVIRONMENTS AND SPACES GRANTS (4.1.4)

School District No. 38 offers a number of internal Innovation Inquiry Grants that aim to enhance collaborative inquiry, professional learning, and student learning in and among Richmond schools. In 2021, eleven schools are participating in Learning Environments and Spaces Pilot Grants. These schools are providing examples of how learning environments can be designed to support student learning in alignment with BC's redesigned curriculum and promote social belonging among students.

SCHOOL LIBRARY LEARNING COMMONS (4.1.4)

School libraries are evolving from places that simply hold resources to Library Learning Commons where a school community works together to create exciting learning opportunities. Library Learning Commons are flexible spaces that engage students with coding and robotics resources, Green Screens, 3D printers, art materials, games, puzzles and building materials, as well as a broad selection of print and digital books and periodicals. School District No. 38 school libraries are safe spaces that ensure equitable access to technology and diverse resources. Student well-being is further supported through wellness activities in libraries, book clubs and groups for gathering, and inviting spaces for reading and creating. Expanding the range of learning opportunities that appeal to diverse interests of students lays the foundation for more students to develop social connections with their peers, teachers and school.

TOGETHER AT MINORU CENTRE (4.1.4)

Composed of more than 300 steel silhouettes of local people and natural elements, the major artwork Together, by David Jacob Harder, depicts the shape of an adult and child. Installed in front of the Minoru Centre for Active Living in 2018, the public art piece was developed with dozens of individuals at Minoru Place Activity Centre, Minoru Aquatic Centre and Minoru Park as they were involved in a wide variety of activities. The piece reflects the sense of place of Minoru Park and the Richmond residents who enjoy it.



PLAYGROUND DEVELOPMENTS AND RENEWALS (4.1.5)

Playgrounds encourage health, fitness, and social liveability in the city while also supporting the healthy development of children. The City maintains 58 playgrounds across the community and as the city landscape changes and develops, playgrounds continue to be a central feature in parks new and old. As new park spaces are developed to meet population growth, playground design has emphasized the use of natural materials such as logs for climbing and balancing, inclusive play structures that facilitate participation of people with varying physical abilities, playgrounds that appeal to all ages, and structures that offer the opportunity to be challenged including rope-based playgrounds. Playground replacements and enhancements are implemented annually to meet current safety standards and to enhance unstructured play experiences through an updated design. Playground developments and renewals since 2018 include:

- Alexandra Neighbourhood Park
- Burkeville Neighbourhood Park
- Capstan Neighbourhood Park
- Garnet Tot Lot
- Kilgour Neighbourhood School Park
- London/Steveston Neighbourhood School Park
- Odlin Neighbourhood Park
- Palmer Garden City Park
- Richmond Nature Park
- Rideau Neighbourhood Park
- Talmey Neighbourhood School Park

Key Action: (4.1.5)

Increase indoor and outdoor unstructured play opportunities citywide and at a neighbourhood level at school and City playgrounds, parks and facilities by: increasing nature play elements; providing play equipment accessible to all e.g., playboxes available at community centres and parks; and creating learning opportunities in natural and built environments.



RAILWAY BIKE PARK (4.1.5)

Mountain and BMX biking is a popular sport and current trends dictate that in order to safely enjoy this activity, regularly practicing essential bike handling techniques and skills are important to develop one's abilities. Identified in the original Railway Greenway concept plan, the new Railway Bike Park provides an opportunity for beginner and intermediate riders to develop their skills on varied terrain, complementing the more advanced Garden City Bike Terrain Park. The bike park features both timber and landforms such as a pump track, ramps, teeter-totters and other features that teach and enhance essential mountain and MNX biking skills, a drinking fountain, plantings and natural features such as boulders, logs and stumps. Connected to existing trail networks and located near existing recreation facilities, the Railway Bike Park provides a new outdoor physical activity space for all ages.

COOK WHIMSICAL GARDEN (4.1.5)

The Whimsical Garden project by J Peachy, supported by Pat Calihou, Melissa West Morrison, Yolanda Weeks and Tiffany Yang, is an artist in residency project with grade 4 and 5 students at William Cook Elementary. Informed by the Community Wellness Strategy, this project enables students to activate outdoor spaces in their schoolyard through a series of virtual and outdoor in-person art activities and workshops incorporating Indigenous carving, puppetry and eco-arts. In September 2021, the project celebrated the Four Directions Canoe Garden installation.

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT (ECD) HUBS IN RICHMOND NEIGHBOURHOODS (4.1.5)

The City of Richmond's ECD Hubs are neighbourhood-based facilities that provide family and child support services, including licensed child care programs, structured and unstructured play opportunities, food skills programming and garden spaces, as well as lending libraries for families. Designed with nature play elements in the play spaces, they offer learning opportunities for young children and parents and caregivers in two of the City's growing neighbourhoods. The Sprouts ECD Hub is located in Capstan Village and operated by the YMCA of Greater Vancouver. The Seedlings ECD Hub, located in central Richmond on No. 3 Road near the Brighthouse Canada Line Station, will be operated by the Richmond Society for Community Living when it opens in 2022.



Whimsical Garden, Creative Café Artist Collective, William Cook Elementary School, 2021

Visit the project blog for more information:
cookwhimsicalgarden.ca.

Success Story

ACTIVE TRANSPORTATION NETWORK (4.1.2)

Transportation networks that encourage active transportation improve equitable mobility and access, support placemaking and social cohesion as more people enjoy walking and cycling to destinations within and across neighbourhoods, and contribute to improved health and environmental sustainability.

As of 2020, Richmond's nearly 80 km (78.2 km) of cycling and rolling routes comprised of on-street bike routes and off-street bike paths, greenways and multi-use paths (excluding unpaved dyke trails), has increased from 72.6 km at the end of 2017. The completion of River Parkway in 2020 provides a safe cycling connection between the Gilbert Road Greenway and Cambie Road, with protected bike lanes and asphalt walkways for pedestrians. A multi-use pathway links River Parkway to the adjacent Middle Arm Waterfront Greenway, a paved section of the Dyke Trail, which features separated cycling and pedestrian paths providing connectivity from the cycling network west of the Richmond Olympic Oval to key active transportation linkages in the City Centre.

The City's cycling network is expanding in an effort to support sustainable, active modes of travel, improve safety, and increase physical activity levels. Multi-use pathways have been installed or improved across the city on: Alderbridge Way, Cambie Road, Garden City Road, No. 2 Road, No. 6 Road, Odlin Road, Railway Avenue, River Drive, Sexsmith Road, and Westminster Highway. Neighbourhood bikeways have also been established to serve local destinations such as parks and schools, including:

- Parkside Bikeway along Ash Street;
- Crosstown Bikeway between Railway Avenue and Garden City Road;
- Saunders-Woodwards Bikeway between Railway Avenue and Ash Street; and
- Along Odlin Road to Hazelbridge Way.

Existing bike routes are being upgraded to improve safety with the installation of physical protection between the bike lane and the vehicle lane, such as along Granville Avenue. Additionally, Phase 1 of community engagement to seek feedback to update the City's Cycling Network Plan was completed in June 2021. The Phase 2 engagement commenced in November 2021 to inform the prioritization of future cycling network improvements. The updated plan is anticipated to be finalized in Spring 2022.

This is ongoing progress towards Key Action: (4.1.2) Continue to improve cycling networks across the city by: expanding the bike route network; expanding secured bike parking at City, health and school facilities; increasing access to bicycles and bicycle helmets to those facing barriers; and addressing barriers to using available bike routes.



Success Story

COMMUNITY MURAL PROGRAM (4.1.4)

The City of Richmond's Community Mural Program has been the catalyst for 10 murals since the program's inception in 2018. Murals make public spaces inviting and activate them by adding beauty and colour, while the images foster community dialogue and help people connect with places. As well, the process of designing community murals fosters social connections as project participants share ideas to co-create a collaborative vision. A cornerstone of the Richmond Community Mural Program is the community-involved process that brings artists, students, community groups and local businesses together to transform the places where community members live, work, learn and play.

"As a local Richmond artist, I was thrilled to paint a mural for the city I grew up in. Throughout the painting process, I enjoyed connecting with the people of West Richmond and truly felt the support of the local community. This project gave me the opportunity to create a piece of public art that will hopefully be enjoyed by others for years to come."

- Laura Kwok, Ladybug and the Sun @ West Richmond Community Centre

Local Indigenous artist, Athena Picha, is working with students at Tomekichi Homma Elementary School to complete a mural as part of the 2021 Community Mural Program that explores local Indigenous stories and themes of belonging and community. In addition to adding vibrancy to the schoolyard, this project fosters learning and dialogue among the school community, including the children, families, teachers and staff, and neighbourhood residents.

Murals have been commissioned in partnership with many Richmond Community Associations and Societies, Richmond School District No. 38 elementary and high schools, and private businesses. The Community Mural Program is funded from the Public Art Program Reserve with matching and contributed funds from community project partners.

This is ongoing progress towards Key Action: (4.1.4) Improve places and spaces at the neighbourhood level to make them accessible, inviting, healthy and safe through the addition of elements such as: furnishings and activities; nature; murals; book libraries; non-smoking outdoor and indoor spaces.



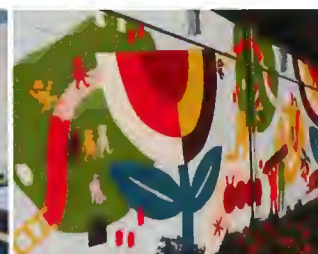
Homma Mural @ Tomekichi Homma Elementary School, by Atheana Picha (2021)



McMath Mural @ McMath Secondary School, by Dean Lauzé (2021)



Thinking Learning Caring @Thompson Elementary School, by Fiona Tang (2021)



Let's Play Let's Go @ Westwind Elementary School, by Dawn Lo and April de la Noche (2021)



Stages of Bloom @ Gateway Theatre, by Carmen Chan (2021)



Metamorphosis @ Lehigh Hanson, by Karen Yurkovich and Tristesse Seeliger (2021)



Richmond Ice Centre Community Mural, by Andrew Tavukciyan (2021)



Ladybug and the Sun @ West Richmond Community Centre, by Laura Kwok Uy (2020)



Richmond's home of Curl'ture & Curl'munity @ Richmond Winter Club, by Mark Anderson (2020)



Continuum @ Richmond Richmond Cultural Centre, by Richard Tetrault and Jerry Whitehead (2019)

Quick Facts

A sample of measures on walkability and unstructured play in Richmond.

- In 2020, Richmond had 134 km of public walking paths and trails.
- Outdoor spaces that offer opportunities for unstructured play across the city:
 - 58 playgrounds
 - 2 skate parks
 - 2 bike parks
 - 71 basketball full-courts and 40 half-courts
- From the Human Early Learning Partnership's Middle Years Development Instrument (MDI), Grade 8 and Grade 5 reports (conducted in Richmond (SD38), 2020-2021).
 - 75% of grade 5 students and 79% of Grade 8 students in Richmond reported that, from their perspective, in their neighbourhood/ community, there are safe places where they feel comfortable hanging out with friends.



Senior Week

Richmond

in others for and low cost
ivities and events all week long

RICHMOND.CA/SENIORSWE

activate!
wellness fair 55+

Focus Area 5:

Promote wellness literacy for residents across all ages and stages of their lives

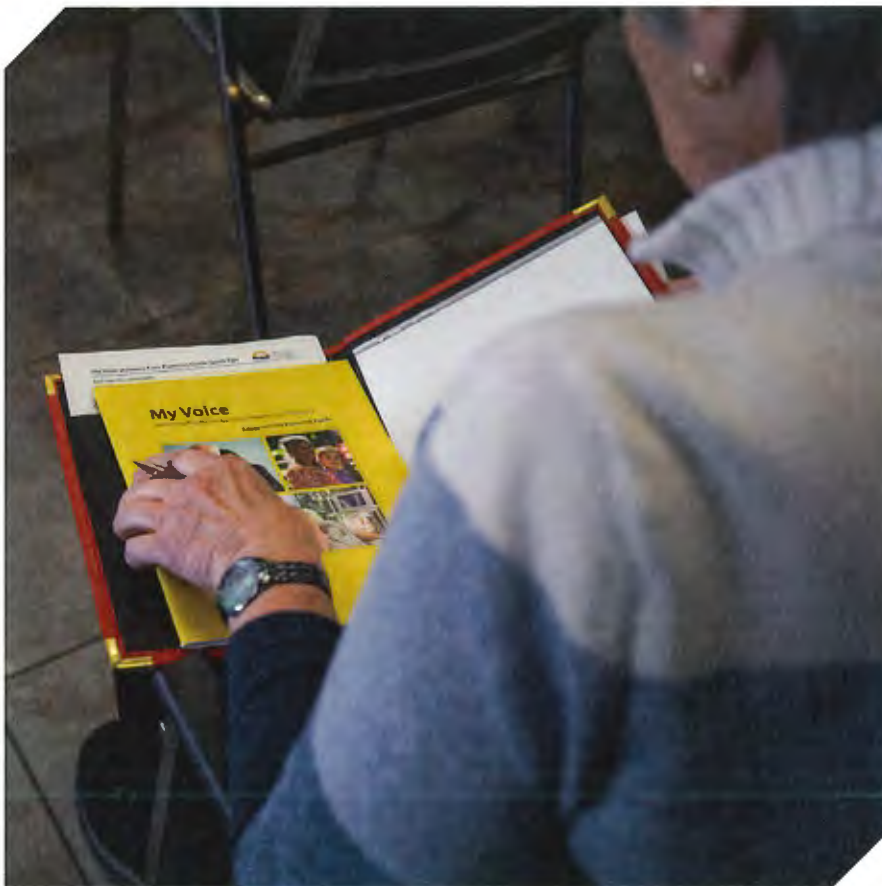
Why is this important?

Wellness literacy can be understood as the ability to access, understand, evaluate and communicate information as a way to promote, maintain and improve health and wellness across the life-course. Lower levels of health and wellness literacy are often associated with equity dimensions such as lower levels of literacy, lower educational attainment, and older adults.¹³ Improving health and wellness literacy can empower people to better navigate systems and share relevant information with service providers that can help improve their state of health and wellness, take action to address their health and wellness concerns, and adopt health and wellness promoting behaviours.

The strategic actions in Focus Area 5 aim to align community resources that contribute to building health and wellness literacy of community members.

Intended outcome:

- ↑ Awareness of wellness components



Highlighted Achievements

G.O. DAY (5.1.1.3)

G.O. Day is an annual, day-long expo where a selected group of Grade 8 and 9 girls are provided the opportunity to participate in both educational and activity workshops in a day long conference setting. This is a joint initiative of the City of Richmond, Vancouver Coastal Health and Richmond School District. Participants identified that participating with friends, building confidence and having more affordable opportunities were three things that could help them participate in physical activity more. To support continued participation after the event, community centres across Richmond offer G.O. Day Clubs and many other affordable activities to help provide ongoing social and skill development opportunities.

55+ ACTIVATE! WELLNESS FAIR (5.1.1.3)

The 55+ Activate! Wellness Fair is a biennial information fair held in June promoting health, wellness, safety and independence for the 55+ community. In past years, the information fair had over 40 booths, 21 workshops, presentations, a free wellness clinic, prize draws and Try-It activities, drawing up to 1,500 participants. In 2021, held in tandem with Seniors Week, seven online or phone-in wellness information sessions were offered, reaching 78 participants. Topics included: benefits of walking, meditation techniques, coping skills for caregivers (Cantonese), and community programs and services for seniors. As well, over 300 information bags filled with health and wellness resources were distributed to seniors across Richmond, from organizations such as Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives, Self-Management BC, Pathways Clubhouse, Richmond Food Bank Society, Alzheimers Society of BC, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and more.



BETA-U CASE COMPETITION (5.1.3)

In early 2020, City Centre's Youth Leadership Team Beta-U hosted a Case Competition, tasking 16 competitors to work in teams to develop a business idea or initiative to address physical inactivity in youth. Teams developed proposals for apps, contests, and school-based programs. Youth reflected on barriers to physical activity in their own lives, and on what they need to stay physically active themselves. At the end of the competition, youth gained public speaking and business based skills, as well as an understanding of the importance of physical activity. The ideas generated during this event are being used to inform youth programming at City Centre Community Centre.

Priority Action:

(5.1.1.3) Provide educational workshops on wellness led by experts or high profile community members.



Key Action: (5.1.3)

Develop and implement incentives to promote wellness literacy.

Success Story

WELLNESS LITERACY IN CITY CENTRE (5.1.1.3)

The City Centre area of Richmond continues to undergo a transformation into the envisioned compact, transit-oriented, network of urban villages laid out in the City's City Centre Area Plan. With increased medium- and high-density housing and an emphasis on walkability and transit connectivity, the City's core has attracted a diverse population from around the world. According to the 2016 Census, 67% of City Centre residents reported speaking primarily a language other than English at home, and a median family income of \$58,621 (compared with a city-wide median of \$77,688). As well, City Centre has the highest number of seniors, aged 55 years and over, 19% of whom could not speak English or French (Census, 2016). In recognition of the diversity among older adults in the city core, the City Centre Community Association has been committed to intentional programming that serves the varied wellness needs of community members, including promoting social connectedness through the Artful Aging Enrichment Project, an intergenerational initiative offering a variety of art-based and wellness literacy workshops in different languages.

Through an ongoing partnership, City Centre Community Centre and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. collaborate to deliver programs and services, such as the provision of community resources during monthly seniors' wellness clinics that were a staple prior to the pandemic. This partnership has continued as the organizations co-deliver online programs that provide health and wellness information and resources to immigrants, including information on vaccines, nutrition, and falls prevention. A strength of this partnership is that participants may register with either organization, which increases the reach for both partners and introduces community members to new resources. As COVID-19 restrictions have eased, both organizations continue to work together on a range of online and in-person programs to address varying access and language barriers and wellness information needs of the City Centre community.

In another effort to promote health and wellness literacy, City Centre Community Centre has embarked on a new partnership with the UBC InterCultural Online Health Network (iCON). iCON is a university community engagement initiative that brings together health practitioners and community members to learn about chronic disease prevention and management, including diabetes, heart disease, and mental wellness. In Fall 2021, the community centre piloted two online iCON workshops. "Coping Well with Chronic Conditions at Home," delivered in Cantonese in September, and "Healthy Eating for Chronic Disease Management," delivered in Mandarin in October, engaged approximately 60 seniors. The sessions featured a presentation by a health expert and a registered nurse facilitated discussion to help participants interpret the information and provide guidance on how to access resources. Through educational and engaging programming aimed at improving health and wellness literacy, City Centre Community Centre is enabling community members to take action to improve their own health and well-being.

This contributes to
Priority Action: (5.1.1.3)
Provide educational
workshops on wellness
led by experts or high
profile community
members.



Success Story

COMMUNITY BETTER CHALLENGE (5.1.1.1)

ParticipACTION is a Canadian health promotion organization that makes physical activity research and best practices accessible to municipalities and the public. The Community Better Challenge is an annual initiative to mobilize communities across the country, leveraging ParticipACTION's mobile app for participants to track their physical activity, 'gamify' their progress by challenging friends and family to set physical activity targets, as well as view evidence-based messaging about the benefits of physical activity and tips for healthy sleep and mental wellness.

The City actively participates in the Community Better Challenge by not only promoting the 30-day challenge through social media and other communication channels, but also coordinating over 100 free online and in-person workshops, events, and activations city-wide to provide residents with ample opportunities to join the challenge. The added value is that once residents access the mobile app, they subsequently have access to a wide range of wellness information beyond the month of June to help keep them knowledgeable and motivated to continue being physically active.

In 2021, Thompson Community Association offered an eight-week Virtual Family Fitness Challenge, an online program that provided families an opportunity to engage in playful and inclusive workouts, led by a certified fitness instructor with a background in Early Childhood Education. The program ran every Tuesday and Saturday throughout May, culminating in June, and weekly challenges and prizes were offered to promote physical activity throughout the week. In the lead-up to this initiative, a trained facilitator ran two free Try-It fitness sessions for Thompson Community Centre preschool families. Staff took action on ParticipACTION's best practice recommendations and created awareness about the importance of parents' role modeling physical activity and the many benefits of being active as a family.

The Community Better Challenge is also an effective workplace wellness initiative. In 2019, Vancouver Coastal Health–Richmond promoted the challenge among staff through an employee wellness fair held at the beginning of the June at the Richmond Hospital. City of Richmond staff provided giveaway prizes to VCH employees who did 'Take Tens', such as ten jumping jacks, ten squats or ten push-ups. Collectively, VCH-Richmond staff logged over 182,000 minutes – or the equivalent of 125 days – of physical activity through the month of June.

2019 – Richmond placed 11th in BC with over 4,000,000 minutes of physical activity logged by participants.

2020 – Not offered due to COVID-19

2021 – Richmond placed 6th in BC with over 9,000,000 minutes of physical activity logged by participants.

This contributes to Priority Action:

(5.1.1.1) Develop and disseminate brief and easy to understand wellness messages in promotional materials.



Quick Facts

Contributions towards:

- ↑ Awareness of wellness components
- G.O. Day is a day-long event for girls in grades 8 and 9 to learn about physical activity, healthy eating and other wellness topics. Since its inception in 2006, over 1100 youth girls have participated in the educational workshop.

G.O. Day	2018	2019	2020
Total Participants	87	68	74

- The 55+ Activate! Wellness Fair is a biennial event offered in tandem with Seniors Week in June. Prior to the pandemic the event reached 1000 seniors through a variety of in-person wellness focused workshops and activities. It was offered virtually in 2021 with a reduced schedule.

55+ Activate!	2019	2020	2021*
Participants	1000	-	78
Opportunities	20	-	7

*In 2021, 55+ Activate! was offered through online workshops with a reduced schedule due to COVID-19.





Conclusion

The Community Wellness Strategy (2018–2023) is a renewed commitment of the three partners—the City of Richmond, Vancouver Coastal Health-Richmond and Richmond School District No. 38—to work collectively to improve wellness. The collaborative and holistic approach to improve health and well-being for Richmond residents is an asset, which proved even more valuable during the COVID-19 pandemic. Through the collective and independent efforts of the City, Health Authority and School District, increased opportunities as well as support for physical activity, access to healthy food, mental wellness and social connectedness remained a priority.

The partners are collaborating on several projects that are on the horizon for the next phase of strategy implementation. Foundry Richmond will open its permanent location, offering expanded services through a collaborative model to provide health and mental wellness services to Richmond children, youth and families. A related initiative, the Integrated Child and Youth team that will provide health and wellness services through an outbound model will further increase access to these vital supports to young people and their families in Richmond.

Other collaborative efforts currently underway aim to improve equitable access to programs, services and amenities. Funding through a Plan H grant from BC Healthy Communities will support the initial stages of developing an equity lens framework, while planning for the development of a social prescribing program has begun.

The completed Food Asset Map has set the stage for identifying the need and potential locations for food hubs in neighbourhoods with a dearth of healthy food outlets. And the demand for community gardens, which offer residents the ability to grow their own vegetables, has prompted a community engagement process to identify need and inform the site selection of future gardens.

Last, but not least, the pandemic has highlighted the need for the community as a whole to rally around fostering resilience by creating supportive social environments and raising awareness about resources for mental health. Through the collaborative work between the City, Health Authority and School District, and through partnerships with other community organizations, Richmond will surely be a more active, caring, connected, healthy and thriving community.



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Appendix: Summary of Progress

Focus Area #1: Foster healthy, active and involved lifestyles for all Richmond residents with an emphasis on physical activity, healthy eating and mental wellness.

OBJECTIVE #1

Increase the number of Richmond residents across all ages involved in physical activity and active, healthy lifestyles.

Key Action/Program/Initiative	Implementation Time-frame	Progress
1. Develop and implement a healthy active living campaign to increase awareness, understanding and participation in physical activity, healthy eating, and mental wellness opportunities and benefits.	Develop 2018–2019 Implement 2019–2023	Reassigned to 2022
2. Implement initiatives to keep Richmond residents active through enhancing walking and cycling programs city-wide and at a neighbourhood level.	2019–2023	Ongoing
Priority Action 1: Expand the scope of 'Move for Health Week' by including initiatives of the three partners (VCH-Richmond, SD38 and CoR), while also incorporating a focus on cycling.	2019–2020	In progress (now Community Better Challenge)
Priority Action 2: Increase neighbourhood level participation in the Walk Richmond program.	2020–2021	In progress
3. Increase structured and unstructured physical activity opportunities in the after school hours and encourage after school programs to include a minimum of 30 minutes of moderate to vigorous physical activity.	2018–2020	Ongoing
Priority Action 1: Scale-up the Art Truck initiative which includes physical activity, arts and culture and healthy eating.	2018–2019	Ongoing
4. Implement initiatives which encourage physical activity through programs and services that are neighbourhood specific.	Pilot Initiative 2018–2019 Implement 2019–2023	Completed Ongoing
Priority Action 1: Implement the Active Communities Grant Project focusing on physical activity initiatives in the City Centre neighbourhood.	2018–2019	Completed
Priority Action 2: Encourage 30 minutes of daily moderate to vigorous physical activity in school.	2018–2019	Ongoing

Ongoing = Long-term, continuous activities.

In progress = Activities that have been initiated, but not near completion.

OBJECTIVE #2

Increase the number of Richmond residents across all ages making healthy food choices.

Key Action/Program/Initiative	Implementation Time-frame	Progress
1. Implement a Healthy Eating Strategy that increases access to healthy and safe foods at a neighbourhood level and builds upon and aligns with the Richmond Food Charter and the Regional Food System Action Plan. ¹ This includes coordinating and enhancing healthy eating opportunities in schools, public buildings, and where gaps have been identified at a neighbourhood level.	Ongoing to 2023	Ongoing
Priority Action 1: Include healthy and, where possible, local food at concession stands, in vending machines and cafes in public facilities and schools. ²	2019–2020	In progress
Priority Action 2: Expand community gardens in neighbourhoods across Richmond, to encourage social interaction, physical activity and access to fresh affordable vegetables and fruits for residents.	2018–2020	Ongoing
2. Expand or implement neighbourhood food hubs in underserved areas to address the lack of fresh and local produce and establish a healthier food environment at the neighbourhood level.	Ongoing to 2023	Ongoing
Priority Action 1: Complete the Richmond Food Asset Map to inform the Neighbourhood Food Hub initiative.	2018–2019	Completed
Priority Action 2: Conduct school food environment audits within identified neighbourhoods to inform and strengthen the Neighbourhood Food Hub initiative.	2018–2020	In progress

¹ Links to: Richmond Food Charter: https://www.richmond.ca/_shared/assets/7_RichmondFoodCharter44751.pdf
 metrovanancouver Regional Food System Action Plan 2016 <http://www.metrovanancouver.org/services/regional-planning/agriculture/rfs-strategy/Pages/about-the-strategy.aspx>
² <https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/schools-and-communities>

Key Action/Program/Initiative	Implementation Time-frame	Progress
<p>3. Enable residents of all ages to make healthy food choices through educational opportunities and programs that are culturally relevant.</p> <p>Priority Action 1: Develop effective teaching tools to assist residents to make healthy food choices.</p> <p>Priority Action 2: Develop new or expand current partnerships that provide food skills programs for Richmond residents, e.g., Diabetes Canada 'Food Skills for Families' program; The Sharing Farm cooking and nutrition food skills program; and community centre cooking classes.</p> <p>Priority Action 3: Promote and support the implementation of 'Appetite to Play' in Richmond early childhood programs including daycares, preschools and those provided or funded by the partners.</p> <p>This initiative is focused on training and supporting early years' providers to enhance knowledge, skills and confidence in providing environments for children that incorporate healthy eating and physical activity.</p> <p>Priority Action 4: Focus the annual VCH- Richmond/SD 38 Book Mark contest on healthy food choices in year1, physical activity in year 2, mental wellness in year 3 and social connectedness in year 4.</p>	<p>Ongoing to 2023</p> <p>2018–2020</p> <p>2019–2021</p> <p>2018–2020</p> <p>2018–2022</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>In progress</p> <p>Ongoing</p>

OBJECTIVE #3

Increase the number of individuals across all ages reporting a positive state of mental wellness.

Key Action/Program/Initiative	Implementation Time-frame	Progress
1. Implement initiatives to increase access to mental wellness resources for residents.	2019–2023	Ongoing
Priority Action 1: Enhance activities of the three partners to promote Mental Health Week.	2019–2020	Under review
Priority Action 2: Implement an initiative to support residents' mental wellness through a 'Go-To' Mental Wellness Referral program. This initiative would involve enhancing the capacity of front line staff at City, public health and school facilities, so they would have the ability to connect individuals with the appropriate resources in Richmond.	2019–2021	Reassigned to 2022
2. Implement the 'Foundry' Initiative, which is an integrated one stop shop for mental health, primary health care and social services for young people ages 12–24 with a focus on ready access to services and early intervention for wellness. This initiative is currently being implemented in cities across British Columbia. ³	Ongoing to 2023	Significant progress
3. Develop a common language around what mental wellness means and integrate it into resources developed to support mental wellness.	Ongoing to 2023	Ongoing
Priority Action 1: Adopt a common social/emotional competency curriculum that can be applied to children, youth and adult programs aimed at supporting mental wellness. Utilize the EDI, MDI and McCreary data and research for Richmond to inform the curriculum and other programs/strategies that have the potential to decrease risk factors and increase protective factors during developmental stages.	2018–2020	Ongoing

³ www.foundrybc.ca.

Focus Area #2: Enhance physical and social connectedness within and among neighbourhoods and communities.

OBJECTIVE #1

Provide opportunities to increase Richmond residents' sense of belonging to their neighbourhoods.

Key Action/Program/Initiative	Implementation Time-frame	Progress
1. Develop and implement a Neighbourhood Strategy with a focus on programs, services and initiatives, as well as built and natural environment elements that enhance social connectedness within and among neighbourhoods.	Develop 2019–2021 Implement 2021–2023	Reassigned to 2023
Priority Action 1: Implement the 'Resilient Streets Program' which aims to increase neighbour-to-neighbour connections, starting with the East and West Cambie Neighbourhoods. Learnings from this program will inform the Neighbourhood Strategy.	2018–2019	Completed

Focus Area #3: Enhance equitable access to amenities, services and programs within and among neighbourhoods.

OBJECTIVE #1

Align availability and access of programs and services to meet the needs of Richmond residents by addressing inequities at a neighbourhood level, e.g., geographical, cost of programs and transportation, timing, cultural relevance and language needs or facilitating outreach opportunities.

Key Action/Program/Initiative	Implementation Time-frame	Progress
1. Adopt an equity lens framework and assess what and where the inequities are at a neighbourhood level.	2018–2020	In progress
2. Create wayfinding tools which help residents and service providers to make best use of amenities, services, programs, natural and built environment opportunities that the neighbourhood offers.	2019–2022	Ongoing
Priority Action 1: Create a visually appealing map illustrating City parks, recreation and arts amenities.	2019–2020	Reassigned to 2022
3. Introduce a 'Prescription for Health' initiative where local health care providers and school counsellors would prescribe physical activity utilizing local amenities, services, programs, natural and built environments in neighbourhoods.	Ongoing to 2023	In progress
4. Enhance partner outreach to groups where barriers to access and participation in services and programs have been identified.	Ongoing to 2023	Ongoing
Priority Action 1: Establish a partner task group to clarify existing barriers to be addressed and priority solutions.	2019–2020	Reassigned to 2022

Focus Area #4: Facilitate supportive, safe and healthy natural and built environments.

OBJECTIVE #1

Identify and implement healthy natural and built environments to improve the wellness of Richmond residents.

Key Action/Program/Initiative	Implementation Time-frame	Progress
<p>1. Improve connectivity by developing walkable routes in neighbourhoods that are accessible to all. Walkable routes could be further enhanced by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Providing access to benches, washrooms and playgrounds, shade and gathering places ■ Providing interactive and interpretive amenities ■ Implementing a wayfinding and signage plan for walkable routes within neighbourhoods. 	Ongoing to 2023	Ongoing
<p>2. Continue to improve cycling networks across the City by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Expanding the bike route network ■ Expanding secured bike parking at City, health and school facilities ■ Increasing access to bicycles and bicycle helmets to those facing barriers ■ Addressing barriers to using available bike routes 	Ongoing to 2023	Ongoing
<p>3. Enhance walkability/proximity to healthy food sources within neighbourhoods. Consideration can be given to one or more of the following best practice approaches:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Creating local spaces and incentives for community gardens, food sharing, farmers' markets and food skills programs ■ Creating mobile options that improve proximity to healthy food sources for areas with limited access (e.g., travelling 'pop up' units that sell fruit and vegetables) 	Ongoing to 2023	Ongoing
<p>4. Improve places and spaces at the neighbourhood level to make them accessible, inviting, healthy and safe through the addition of elements such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Furnishings and activities ■ Nature ■ Murals ■ Book libraries ■ Non-smoking outdoor and indoor spaces 	Ongoing to 2023	Ongoing

Key Action/Program/Initiative	Implementation Time-frame	Progress
<p>5. Increase indoor and outdoor unstructured play opportunities city-wide and at a neighbourhood level at school and City playgrounds, parks and facilities by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Increasing nature play elements ■ Providing play equipment accessible to all e.g., playboxes available at community centres and parks ■ Creating learning opportunities in natural and built environments 	Ongoing to 2023	Ongoing

Focus Area #5: Promote wellness literacy for residents across all ages and stages of their lives.

OBJECTIVE #1

Strengthen awareness and understanding of wellness including benefits and opportunities for improving wellness.

Key Action/Program/Initiative	Implementation Time-frame	Progress
1. Develop and implement a wellness literacy campaign as a key component of the healthy active living campaign.	Develop 2018–2019 Implement 2019–2023	Reassigned to 2022
Priority Action 1: Develop and disseminate brief and easy to understand wellness messages in promotional materials.	2019–2020	In progress
Priority Action 2: Host a wellness literacy fair for staff from the three partner organizations.	2019–2020	In progress, paused due to COVID-19
Priority Action 3: Provide educational workshops on wellness led by experts or high profile community members.	2020–2021	Ongoing
2. Coordinate and connect the wellness communications and information sharing tools of the three partners. Aim to establish a common place/platform for wellness information.	2019–2021	Under review
Priority Action 1: Develop linkages among current partner websites for sharing evidence-based wellness messages endorsed by the three partners.	2019–2020	Under review
3. Develop and implement incentives to promote wellness literacy.	Develop 2019–2020 Implement 2020–2023	Reassigned to 2022
Priority Action 1: Share wellness success stories to celebrate the wellness achievement of Richmond residents and report on progress using a common platform endorsed by the three partners.	2020–2021	In progress



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