



# City of Richmond

## Report to Committee

**To:** Planning Committee **Date:** January 16, 2026  
**From:** Kim Somerville **File:** 07-3300-01/2025-Vol 01  
 Director, Community Social Development  
**Re:** **Cultural Harmony Plan 2024–2025 Highlights Report**

### Staff Recommendations

1. That the Cultural Harmony Plan 2024–2025 Highlights Report as outlined in the report titled, “Cultural Harmony Plan 2024–2025 Highlights Report”, dated January 16, 2026, from the Director Community Social Development, be received for information; and
2. That the Cultural Harmony Plan 2024–2025 Highlights Report be posted on the City website and distributed to key partners, local Members of Parliament and the Legislative Assembly, and federal and provincial ministries related to multiculturalism, immigration and anti-racism.

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

Att. 2

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Arts, Culture & Heritage	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Economic Development	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Human Resources	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Intergovernmental Relations & Protocol Unit	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
PRC Planning & Strategic Initiatives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
RCMP	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Recreation & Sport Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Richmond Public Library	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<b>SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW</b>	INITIALS: 	<b>APPROVED BY CAO</b> 

## Staff Report

### Origin

Since its adoption in 2019, the Cultural Harmony Plan (the Plan) has provided a guiding framework for strengthening intercultural connections in Richmond. The Plan has helped shape City policies, programs and community partnerships to foster intercultural understanding and better serve the needs and priorities of newcomers, racialized groups and the broader community.

The purpose of this report is to provide a summary of the accomplishments that the City, in partnership with the community, has achieved in 2024 and 2025 to advance the Cultural Harmony Plan. As part of the City's ongoing implementation and regular reporting on Council-approved plans and strategies, this report also serves as a midpoint review of the Plan, highlighting key milestones since 2019.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Focus Area #6: A Vibrant, Resilient and Active Community:

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

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

This report supports the City of Richmond's Building Our Future Together: Social Development Strategy (2025–2035) Strategic Direction #2: Enhance Inclusion and Belonging:

*2.1 Advance initiatives that promote dialogue, foster understanding and support harmonious living in collaboration with community members, including equity-deserving groups and community partners.*

This report also supports the Cultural Harmony Plan 2019–2029:

*1.1 Continue to recognize and celebrate Richmond's diverse cultures and unique heritage through intercultural celebrations and events.*

*3.4 Explore and implement mentorship and internship opportunities targeted to recent immigrants within the City.*

### Analysis

Richmond's population continues to be shaped by immigration patterns, cultural and religious diversity, and broader social and economic forces. Although the city remains highly diverse, the 2021 Census showed a 10 per cent decline in recent immigrant arrivals. This mirrors a wider slowdown across Canada's three largest metropolitan areas—Toronto, Vancouver and Montreal—which historically attracted the majority of newcomers. Settlement patterns have also been shifting in Greater Vancouver. For example, immigrant-serving agencies in Richmond note that many newcomers are choosing neighbouring cities such as Surrey and New Westminster, which saw increases of nine per cent and 44 per cent respectively in their recent immigrant populations during the same Census period.

In addition, recent policy changes from Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) have had significant impacts on Richmond’s newcomer population and the local settlement sector. The IRCC Immigration Levels Plans signaled a 21 per cent reduction in permanent resident admissions for 2025 and a 50 per cent reduction in the temporary foreign worker cap in 2024. These shifts resulted in more than \$1.4 million in funding cuts to Richmond settlement agencies in 2025, leading to staff layoffs, program closures and reduced services at organizations such as Chimo Community Services and Richmond Multicultural Community Services. In response, the City has advocated to senior levels of government to reinstate funding for settlement service providers, including letters to the Prime Minister and Minister of IRCC, as well as a resolution submitted at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Convention in 2025. The status of the resolution is anticipated to be shared by UBCM in spring 2026. Despite fewer recent immigrants, demand for newcomer supports remains high. In 2024, the Richmond Food Bank reported that newcomers accounted for 44 per cent of the individuals it served, underscoring the critical role of settlement supports in the community.

These demographic and policy changes reinforce the importance of the Cultural Harmony Plan as a guiding framework for fostering inclusion and belonging in Richmond. The Plan’s vision of “recognizing and respecting diversity in the community and enabling each individual’s contributions in all aspects of community life” remains highly relevant as the City and its partners navigate evolving community needs. With 27 actions across five strategic directions—intercultural connections; collaboration and partnerships; targeted training and professional development; communication and community engagement; and programs and services—the Cultural Harmony Plan provides a comprehensive roadmap for strengthening intercultural understanding and supporting a cohesive, welcoming community.

#### 2024–2025 Highlights

The City and its partners have made notable strides over the past two years in advancing priority actions under the Cultural Harmony Plan. Key highlights include:

- The names of Private Hikotaro Koyanagi and Private Kazuo Harada were added to the Cenotaph at City Hall, marking the first time men of Japanese descent were formally recognized on Richmond’s Cenotaph for their service in World War I. This initiative acknowledges the contributions and sacrifices of Japanese-Canadian soldiers that had previously been overlooked, ensuring a more inclusive historical narrative and promoting greater recognition of Japanese communities in Richmond.
- A temporary City staff position, Communications Coordinator (Chinese Media) was created to strengthen engagement and proactive outreach with Richmond’s Chinese-speaking community. With over 44 per cent of residents reporting a Chinese language as their mother tongue, this role has been pivotal in building partnerships with local Chinese media and expanding translation of City communications.
- The City upgraded its *Let’s Talk Richmond* online engagement platform to enable one-click translation into Richmond’s 11 most widely spoken languages, along with customizable on-screen options such as adjustable text size, contrast and readability tools. By removing technological barriers and improving language accessibility and overall user experience, the City makes it easier for residents to share their perspectives and participate in shaping City initiatives.
- The Community Services Pop Ups, originally launched by the City in partnership with Richmond Public Library in 2023, continues to assist residents in navigating government benefits, employment and volunteer supports, and settlement services. Now led by the Library,

22 pop ups were hosted in 2024 and 2025, offering residents access to vital community and government services. In recognition of the Pop Ups' success and impact, the City received an Honourable Mention at the 2024 Union of British Columbia Municipalities Community Excellence Awards for excellence in service delivery, and the Library was awarded the 2025 British Columbia Library Association's Building Better Communities Award.

- A new Indigenous Resource Library in the Archives Public Reference Room of the Richmond Cultural Centre was developed in partnership with Richmond Public Library. This addition supports truth and reconciliation by promoting cultural awareness and understanding of Canada's history, making information about Indigenous cultures more accessible to staff and community researchers.
- The City partnered with the Immigrant Employment Council of BC to launch the Immigrant Mentorship Program, designed to support professional growth and workplace connections for newcomers. Through the program, 20 City staff from a wide range of departments and roles were paired with newcomer mentees, creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, career exploration and leadership development. The initiative has helped newcomers better navigate the Canadian employment landscape and foster professional relationships.

The Cultural Harmony Plan 2024–2025 Highlights Report (Attachment 1) outlines additional achievements across the Plan's five strategic directions and includes midpoint milestones accomplished since the Plan's adoption in 2019. Attachment 2 provides a comprehensive list of the status of Cultural Harmony Plan actions.

Upon Council approval, the Cultural Harmony Plan 2024–2025 Highlights Report will be posted on the City's website and distributed to key partners, local Members of Parliament and the Legislative Assembly, and federal and provincial ministries related to multiculturalism, immigration and anti-racism.

### **Financial Impact**

None.

### **Conclusion**

The Cultural Harmony Plan demonstrates the City's ongoing commitment to advancing inclusion, intercultural understanding and equitable access to programs and services for all residents. The City will continue working closely with social service partners, Community Associations and Societies, Richmond Public Library and community members to implement the Plan's actions and respond to the evolving needs of Richmond's diverse population.



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Att. 1: Cultural Harmony Plan 2024–2025 Highlights Report  
2: 2019–2029 Cultural Harmony Plan: Status of Actions



CITY OF RICHMOND  
**Cultural Harmony Plan**  
**2024–2025 Highlights Report**



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# INTRODUCTION

The *2019–2029 Cultural Harmony Plan* (the Plan) provides the City of Richmond with a long-term, adaptable framework for strengthening intercultural connections and fostering an inclusive community where residents of all backgrounds can participate fully in community life. Since its adoption in November 2019, the Plan has guided the City's efforts to advance intercultural understanding through policy development, program and service delivery, community engagement and collaboration with key partners. As Richmond continues to welcome citizens from diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds, the Plan remains a vital tool to ensure that Richmond is welcoming, inclusive and supportive of opportunities for residents to contribute to the community.

Developed in collaboration with key social service partners, Community Associations and Societies and community members, the Plan identifies five strategic directions to enhance cultural harmony in Richmond:

1. Intercultural Connections
2. Collaboration and Partnerships
3. Targeted Training and Professional Development
4. Communication and Community Engagement
5. Programs and Services

These directions provide a framework for actions that respond to the unique needs and experiences of Richmond's diverse communities, while building staff and community capacity through professional development and training, strengthening community partnerships by convening resource networks and supporting residents with grants that foster cultural understanding and inclusion. In total, 27 actions support the Plan's vision of "recognizing and respecting diversity in the community and enabling each individual's contributions in all aspects of community life."

This highlights report provides an update on the progress made during 2024 and 2025 in implementing the Cultural Harmony Plan. It offers a high-level overview of initiatives and programs led by the City and its partners, including settlement agencies, Community Associations and Societies and Richmond Public Library, that have strengthened intercultural connections, improved access to services and promoted equity and inclusion. This report also serves as the midpoint review of the Plan, highlighting how the City and its partners have responded to community needs since the Plan's adoption by Council in 2019.



## EVOLVING COMMUNITY LANDSCAPE

### Population and Social Trends Since 2019

Since City Council's adoption of the Cultural Harmony Plan in 2019, Richmond's community has continued to evolve, shaped by shifts in immigration patterns, language use, racial and cultural composition, and other social trends. These developments highlight emerging needs and opportunities for diverse cultural- and faith-based groups as well as newcomer communities, providing important context for the City's ongoing efforts to foster cultural harmony during the remaining years of the Plan. This section outlines key demographic and social trends since 2019, offering insights into how the City and its partners can remain responsive to Richmond's changing landscape.

### Changing Immigration Patterns in Richmond

Richmond is recognized as one of the most diverse cities in Canada, with 60% of its population born outside the country. However, both Census data and local settlement agencies indicate that immigration to Richmond has declined. Between 2016 and 2021, the city experienced a 10% decrease in recent immigrants<sup>1</sup>, compared to an 8% increase across Greater Vancouver. According to immigrant-serving agencies in Richmond, newcomers are settling in neighbouring cities such as Surrey and New Westminster, which saw increases of 9% and 44% in their recent immigrant population during the same Census period.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Recent immigrant refers to a person who obtained landed immigrant or permanent resident status in the five years preceding a given census. In the 2021 Census, this refers to the period from January 1, 2016 to May 11, 2021. In comparison, immigrant refers to a person who is, or who has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident. Such a person has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. In the 2021 Census, this includes immigrants who were admitted to Canada on or before May 11, 2021.

<sup>2</sup> NewToBC (2025). [Immigrant Demographics by Community](#).



The decline in recent immigrants between 2016 to 2021 primarily reflects fewer newcomers arriving from China, whose share of recent immigrants to Richmond dropped from 59% in 2016 to 52% in 2021. This trend is consistent with patterns observed across Greater Vancouver and is likely due to tightened immigration restrictions during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic.<sup>3</sup> Conversely, immigration from Hong Kong and India in the same period has increased, reflecting new immigration pathways, developments in the international landscape and Canada's appeal to highly skilled professionals and international students:

- **Hong Kong:** In response to heightened political complexity in Hong Kong following national security law changes in 2020, the federal government implemented a special immigration pathway for Hongkongers in 2021.<sup>4</sup> As a result, the number of recent immigrants in Richmond from Hong Kong rose from 490 in 2016 to 820 in 2021, a trend that continues today as observed by Richmond's settlement agencies. This policy remains in effect until 2026 and further increases are expected to be reflected in the 2026 Census of Population.<sup>5</sup>
- **India:** Recent immigrants from India grew from 565 to 950 over the same period and continued to grow in 2022 and 2023. Across Canada, immigration from India has quadrupled in the past decade, resulting in an increase in Indian professionals and international students.<sup>6</sup> Settlement providers in Richmond report that this is due to Canada's favourable immigration policies for professionals and strong education and economic opportunities, with cost of accessing higher education being lower than countries like the United Kingdom or United States.

3 Think Global Health (2020). [Travel Restrictions on China due to COVID-19](#).

4 Government of Canada (2021). [Temporary public policy creating pathways to permanent residence to facilitate the immigration of Hong Kong residents](#).

5 Government of Canada (2024). [Hong Kong Permanent Residence Pathways](#).

6 National Foundation for American Policy (2024). [International Students in Canada and the United States](#).



Another growing newcomer group in Richmond is refugees and asylum seekers. Between 2016 and 2021, the total number of refugees in the city rose by nearly 19% while asylum claims across British Columbia have continued to increase steadily from 2019 to 2024.<sup>7</sup> Since 2019, complex global shifts have contributed to rising numbers of refugees and humanitarian arrivals in Canada, particularly from Ukraine, Afghanistan and Palestine. While federal initiatives such as the Canada-Ukraine Authorization for Emergency Travel (CUAET) program facilitated some of these arrivals between 2022–2024, refugees continued to enter through established federal refugee and asylum pathways. While the CUAET program has concluded and less Ukrainians are settling in Richmond, settlement providers are still observing an overall rise in refugees and asylum seekers, resulting in higher demand for specialized programs and services that require coordinated, wrap-around support from multiple agencies.

<sup>7</sup> BC Refugee Hub (2025). [Asylum Claims in British Columbia: Yearly Comparison](#).

In response, the Province of British Columbia's Ministry of Municipal Affairs launched the BC Services and Assistance for Humanitarian and Vulnerable Newcomers (BC Safe Haven) Program in 2024. Delivered by settlement service providers across the province, including Chimo Community Services in Richmond, the program provides specialized wrap-around support services to refugee claimants and asylum seekers, including access to food, housing and community orientation. Since its launch in May 2024, Chimo has supported over 300 refugee claimants in Richmond through this program, with most arriving from Latin America and the Middle East.

While the City and its partners play an important role in supporting newcomers, the federal government holds primary responsibility for immigration policy, planning and funding – factors that directly shape Richmond's newcomer population and the settlement supports available locally. Federal policy changes announced in 2024 have begun to influence demographic trends in Richmond, with further overall immigration decreases expected in coming years and implications for both newcomers and the broader community:

- **Immigration Levels Plan (ILP):** In 2024, Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada (IRCC) announced the 2025–2027 ILP, reducing permanent resident admissions from 500,000 to 395,000 in 2025 with further reductions in subsequent years.<sup>8</sup> The 2026–2028 ILP, announced in late 2025, further lowered targets for permanent residents to 380,000 admissions annually, as well as temporary residents, including temporary foreign workers and international students.<sup>9</sup> These 2026–2028 changes are expected to further slow the growth of newcomer populations in Richmond.
- **Temporary Foreign Worker Program (TFWP):** In 2024, the federal government reduced the cap on low-wage foreign workers from 20% to 10%.<sup>10</sup> Under the 2026–2028 ILP, the overall TFWP cap is set at 60,000 new entries in 2026 and 50,000 annually in 2027 and 2028. The reduction of the overall temporary resident population to 5% of Canada's population by the end of 2027 will present challenges for industries in Richmond that rely on temporary foreign workers.

In Richmond, the effects of these policy changes are becoming apparent. Settlement service providers have reported IRCC funding reductions exceeding \$1.4 million as of March 2025, the start of the federal fiscal year, resulting in program cuts, staffing reductions and diminished supports for newcomers. This included the discontinuation of Settlement Programs at Chimo Community Services and Richmond Multicultural Community Services, and the Early Years Refugee Program at Richmond Family Place. In response, the City has actively advocated to senior levels of government to reinstate funding for settlement service providers, including letters to the Prime Minister and Minister of IRCC and a resolution submitted at the Union of British Columbia Municipalities (UBCM) Convention in 2025. The status of the resolution is anticipated to be shared by UBCM in Spring 2026.

8 Government of Canada (2024). [Supplementary information for the 2025-2027 Immigration Levels Plan.](#)

9 Government of Canada (2025). [Supplementary Information for the 2026-2028 Immigration Levels Plan.](#)

10 Government of Canada (2024). [Temporary Foreign Worker Program – November 25, 2024.](#)

While these shifts in Richmond’s newcomer population reflect the city’s evolving cultural and linguistic diversity, they also underscore the ongoing need for comprehensive newcomer supports. In 2024, the Richmond Food Bank reported that newcomers accounted for 44% of the individuals it served. This demonstrates the critical role of settlement supports and indicates that continued funding cuts would have significant impacts on newcomers, some of whom are already relying on food banks to make ends meet.



The City and its partners continue to respond to these changing needs by maintaining strong local networks that support newcomer settlement and integration, including active participation in the Local Immigration Partnership (LIP) network, a community planning table that brings together settlement agencies and immigrant-serving organizations to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for newcomers in Richmond. Through the City’s Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee and the Richmond Employment Resources Network, co-led with Back in Motion and Pacific Autism Family Network, the City also facilitates collaboration between social service providers and residents to identify emerging social needs and come up with effective community-led solutions. In addition, the City’s Economic Development Office works with local businesses on workforce challenges and opportunities to support Richmond’s vitality as a competitive and attractive economic hub.

The City also delivers programming for newcomers in collaboration with settlement agencies to help build meaningful connections and access to essential resources. Since its relaunch in January 2024, the City's Newcomers Bus Tour has conducted more than 20 tours of City facilities, enhancing civic knowledge for over 450 newcomers and increasing awareness of municipal processes, programs and services. Community Associations and Richmond Public Library collaborate with settlement agencies to deliver tailored programs that reflect the needs of recent immigrants, including programs offered in languages other than English. These coordinated efforts enable the City to better respond to demographic changes, strengthen the capacity of organizations serving Richmond's diverse population by convening community tables and partnerships, and advocate for policy change and sustainable funding from senior levels of government to support the newcomer community. By remaining attentive to demographic and social changes, the City, together with its partners, works to ensure newcomers can fully participate in Richmond's social and civic life.



### Addressing Racism and Hate

In 2021, 80% of Richmond's population identified as racialized, up from 76% in 2016, representing an increase of 17,380 individuals. This increase is consistent with broader trends across Greater Vancouver and gives Richmond the distinction of having the highest proportion of racialized groups of any municipality in British Columbia. The largest racialized populations in Richmond are Chinese (67.5%), South Asian (9.2%) and Filipino (9.0%). While smaller in number, some racialized populations are growing rapidly. For example, the Southeast Asian population increased by 69%, the Korean population by 58% and the Arab population by 48% between 2016 and 2021. Local settlement agencies observed a notable increase in Spanish-speaking clients from Latin America in 2024 and 2025. These trends reflect the evolving makeup of Richmond and the diverse needs of these growing communities, including language accessibility and culturally relevant engagement strategies to ensure equitable access to programs and services.

Richmond’s cultural diversity underscores the need for sustained anti-racism and anti-hate initiatives. Since 2019 and particularly throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, incidents of anti-Asian sentiments, Islamophobia and antisemitism have steadily increased.<sup>11</sup> In response, the federal government created the position of Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism in 2020 and the position of Special Representative on Combatting Islamophobia in 2023, to strengthen efforts against racial discrimination and religious intolerance. This has also led to the development of federal, provincial and local anti-racism strategies, which provide important resources to enhance the City’s capacity to advance racial equity and enable Richmond to respond proactively to incidents of racism and hate.

- The Government of Canada released its first anti-racism strategy in 2019, *Building a Foundation for Change: Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2019–2022*, followed by a second strategy in 2024, *Changing Systems, Transforming Lives: Canada’s Anti-Racism Strategy 2024–2028*. In 2024, Canada also introduced its first federal *Action Plan on Combatting Hate*. Together, these strategies support the implementation of federal programs such as the *Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Program*, providing funding to help reduce barriers to employment, justice and social participation among Indigenous Peoples, racialized communities and religious minorities.<sup>12</sup> The City has benefited from federal anti-racism funding in 2022, receiving a \$92,000 contribution from the Government of Canada to implement an anti-racism art project for youth and seniors from multicultural backgrounds to raise awareness of racism and strengthen community capacity to respond to discrimination. City partners such as Richmond Multicultural Community Services have also benefited from these funding opportunities to address racism in Richmond by facilitating community dialogues and conducting an anti-racism needs assessment, which led to the development of the Richmond Community Protocol, a framework for organizations and individuals to respond to racism and hate.
- In 2022, the Province of British Columbia introduced the Anti-Racism Data Act, establishing a whole-of-government action plan to address systemic racism and inequities in public services. As part of the Act, a Racist Incident Helpline was launched in 2024 for victims and witnesses of racism to receive trauma-informed, culturally appropriate support in more than 240 languages. Operated by organizations across the province, including City partners such as S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and Multicultural Helping House Society, the helpline received 807 calls across the province in its first year with 93% of callers reporting their needs were met.<sup>13</sup> The anonymized and aggregated data collected through the helpline will inform provincial efforts to better understand and address racist incidents across BC. While Richmond-specific data from the helpline is not currently available, local social service providers report referring clients who have experienced racism to the helpline, and where appropriate, encouraging them to also report to the Richmond RCMP.

11 Government of Canada (2025): [Memory, Truth, and Responsibility: Canada’s Role in Confronting Antisemitism and Holocaust Distortion After October 7th](#).

12 The Multiculturalism and Anti Racism Program was renewed and relaunched in 2023 to include past funding streams, including the Community Support, Multiculturalism, and Anti-Racism Initiatives (CSMARI) program and Anti-Racism Action Program (ARAP).

13 Province of BC (2025): [Racist incident helpline making a difference](#).

- As part of its commitment to anti-racism, the City has expanded partnerships with community organizations to prevent and address racism and hate. In 2023, the City endorsed the *Richmond Community Protocol: Responding to Racism and Hate*, joining 17 other Richmond organizations in a commitment to act promptly and effectively when incidents of racism or hate occur. These organizations include the Richmond RCMP, Richmond Family Place and Richmond Addiction Services Society. The Protocol continues to be updated by Richmond Multicultural Community Services in collaboration with community partners, with a new update expected to be released in 2026. In addition, the City’s annual Diversity Symposium has invited community leaders to facilitate workshops on anti-racism response training and anti-racist writing to equip staff and partners with cultural competency and racial awareness.

By leveraging provincial and federal resources, the City and its partners strengthen Richmond’s racial equity and anti-racism initiatives. Race-based data and research present an opportunity to address both systemic and individual racism by offering programs that allow for intercultural engagement and understanding, and professional development opportunities to build capacity on standing up against incidents of racism. Through these efforts, the City fosters a culture of inclusion and belonging to create a community where all residents feel safe and respected.

### Racial and Economic Disparities in Richmond

The COVID-19 pandemic disproportionately affected some groups more than others, while also exposing underlying social and economic inequities that existed long before the global health crisis. Across Canada, Indigenous Peoples, racialized Canadians and newcomers were more likely to experience job losses and financial insecurity throughout the pandemic, and these populations continue to face challenges in the post-pandemic labour market.<sup>14</sup> While employment has grown, overall rates of low-wage employment among racialized workers are rising and many immigrants from racialized backgrounds report lower overall income, a gap linked not only to wage disparities, but also to fewer hours, insecure work and overrepresentation in lower-paid sectors in 2024 and 2025.<sup>15 16</sup>



14 The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health (2022). [COVID-19 and its Influence on the Mental Health of Newcomers in Canada](#).

15 Canadian Centre for Policy Alternatives (2025). [Still struggling: Racialized workers in the post-pandemic labour market](#).

16 Government of Canada (2024). [2024 Annual Report to Parliament on Immigration](#).



The pandemic also exacerbated experiences of discrimination and hate incidents targeting racialized residents. Findings from the 2023 inquiry by the BC Office of the Human Rights Commissioner confirmed a rise in anti-Asian hate and gender-based violence during the pandemic, highlighting the need for community-level strategies that advance safety, belonging and accountability. The Commissioner’s recommendations—understanding hate and acknowledging its harm, building safety and belonging, and fostering accountability and repairing harm—offer valuable direction for local governments and community partners.<sup>17</sup>

Census data from 2021 further highlights disparities in employment and income in Richmond. Recent immigrants who have worked in Canada for less than five years, regardless of racial background, experience higher unemployment rates and lower median employment incomes than Canadian-born residents with comparable education levels. Length of time in Canada and race also influence labour-force participation: recent immigrants, both white and racialized, earn less than their Canadian-born peers, while racialized Canadian-born residents earn less than white Canadian-born residents with similar educational attainment. This data is consistent with what is observed by social service providers from 2022 to 2025.

Contributing factors to these disparities include English fluency, foreign credential recognition and systemic barriers in hiring practices.<sup>18</sup> Richmond service providers report that such barriers often manifest as bias in recruitment, including favouring jobseekers without an accent or not considering applicants with ethnic-sounding names. The Province of BC’s International Credentials Recognition Act (The Act), introduced in 2024 and implemented in 2025, is intended to improve the integration of internationally trained professionals by phasing out Canadian work-experience requirements in designated professions and accelerating credential recognition.<sup>19</sup> While the Act is expected to reduce income disparities among internationally trained workers, settlement agencies in Richmond have yet to observe improvements in their clients’ employment outcomes, noting that many employers continue to place high value on Canadian work experience.

17 British Columbia’s Office of the Human Rights Commissioner (2023). [Inquiry into hate in the pandemic](#).

18 Institute for Canadian Citizenship (2022). [A Review of Immigrant Labour Market Barriers, Outcomes and the Role of Employers in Canada](#).

19 Province of BC (2024). [New regulations streamline pathway for international credentials](#).

These disparities affect a significant portion of Richmond's population—80% of whom identify as racialized and 60% of whom were born outside Canada. In partnership with the Immigrant Employment Council of BC, the City delivers the Immigrant Mentorship Program, helping newcomers overcome employment barriers and connect to opportunities aligned with their skills and qualifications through mentorship with City staff (see page 27 for details). Settlement agencies in Richmond also continue to offer employment services and English-language learning opportunities to help improve the employability of newcomer clients. Many of these agencies, such as S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and ISSo/BC, further participate in community resource fairs to raise awareness of their employment and settlement services.

Richmond has made meaningful contributions in supporting newcomers and racialized residents; however, economic and social disparities persist, demonstrating that there is still more work to be done. The City continues to collaborate with community organizations, immigrant-serving agencies and partners through networks such as the Local Immigration Partnership Table and the City's Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee to strengthen connections and build community capacity to ensure equitable access to opportunities. By combining targeted measures, such as expanding employment opportunities and anti-racism initiatives, with programs that foster understanding, trust and belonging, the City reaffirms its commitment to ensuring that all residents can fully participate in and contribute to Richmond's diverse and evolving community.



## MIDPOINT MILESTONES

Since the adoption of the Cultural Harmony Plan in 2019, the City and its community partners have achieved significant milestones that advance intercultural understanding and belonging in Richmond. The milestones highlighted in this section showcase initiatives and projects implemented up to the midpoint of the Plan to date. They directly support the Plan's goals of increasing awareness of Richmond's rich and diverse communities, enhancing the skills and cultural competency of City staff and community members, and expanding opportunities for residents of different cultural backgrounds to build relationships with one another. Through these accomplishments, the City continues to advance its vision of an inclusive and culturally harmonious community.



### Aspire, Build, Celebrate Project

#### Increasing community awareness of racism and fostering intercultural connections

From 2022 to 2024, the City of Richmond collaborated with Richmond Multicultural Community Services, Minoru Seniors Society and City Centre Community Association to deliver *Aspire, Build, Celebrate (ABC)*, an intergenerational and intercultural arts project that deepened community understanding of multiculturalism, diversity and anti-racism. Funded through a \$92,000 contribution from the Department of Canadian Heritage's Community Support, Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Initiatives Program, the project created opportunities for youth and seniors to explore their cultural identities and lived experiences through dialogue, creative expression and performance.

Through a series of over 20 workshops and intergenerational forums, participants worked with an artist team from Presentation House Theatre and Vancouver Asian Canadian Theatre to develop skills in storytelling and theatre. These collaborative sessions encouraged learning across generations, strengthened cultural connections among participants and fostered greater awareness of Richmond's cultural diversity and shared histories. The project culminated in *Mosaic Firefly: Richmond Edition*, a theatrical performance featuring the personal migration stories of youth and seniors presented at the Richmond Cultural Centre during the 2023 Culture Days and Diversity Symposium events.

By fostering cultural understanding, learning and connection through the arts, the ABC project advanced the Cultural Harmony Plan's goals of recognizing Richmond's diverse cultures, building community capacity to respond to racism and strengthening civic participation across generations and multicultural communities. Close to 90% of ABC project participants reported having increased knowledge and awareness of Canada's cultural diversity and close to 80% shared they have increased capacity within communities to address racism and discrimination. The project's collaborative workshops and performances showcased Richmond's diverse voices and strengthened connections across generations and communities, providing a vivid example of how partnerships among the City, senior levels of government and community partners can generate collective impact.

### Testimonials

*"This program really equipped us with important tools to tackle racism head-on. The power of playacting was surprising because it changed our perspectives."*

*"This program taught [me that] embracing and proudly owning our identity, regardless of the circumstance, is a way to combat racism and discrimination."*



### Program Outcomes

Since 2022, the Community Celebration Grant program has distributed over \$250,000 to support over 200 projects, building local capacity to deliver community-driven events.

### Community and Neighbourhood Celebrations

Supporting community-led events that promote intercultural interaction and understanding

The City provides funding for not-for-profit organizations, neighbourhoods and residents to host free, public gatherings that connect people and build community through the Richmond Community Celebration Grant Program and Richmond Neighbourhood Block Party Program. The Community Celebration Grant Program offers funding for non-profit organizations, faith-based groups and Parent Advisory Committees to host community-wide celebrations that emphasize collaboration and connection. The Neighbourhood Block Party Program offers funding for residents living in the same neighbourhood or strata to host local block parties that build relationships at the neighbourhood level. Together, these initiatives activate local neighbourhoods, parks and public spaces with activities that celebrate Richmond's diversity and foster meaningful connections, reflecting the City's commitment to increasing opportunities for residents to build intercultural relationships.

In 2022, the Community Celebration Grant Program advanced a key Cultural Harmony Plan action by introducing new criteria that prioritize projects fostering intercultural interaction and promoting intercultural understanding. One supported event, Intercultural Celebrations in the Plaza, exemplified these goals in action. Led by the Minoru Seniors Society, the event connected seniors and community members through music, dance and cultural exchange at the Minoru Centre for Active Living outdoor plaza. The 2025 event featured performances representing Japanese, Scottish, Austrian and Filipino cultures, with 42 performers and 121 attendees coming together to celebrate Richmond's vibrant multiculturalism. Participants learned about the origins of traditional dances, took part in instructed demonstrations and sampled foods representing each featured culture. These shared experiences created spaces for learning and cultural appreciation, where performers felt recognized for their heritage and participants deepened their understanding of others' traditions.

Alongside building community capacity to lead local initiatives, the City also partners with local community groups to deliver annual signature events, including the Steveston Salmon Festival and Cherry Blossom Festival, providing larger-scale opportunities for residents and visitors to come together and celebrate Richmond's diverse cultural traditions. These events strengthen intercultural connections by creating inclusive, shared spaces where cultural expression, learning and participation are accessible to the broader community.

By supporting community-led celebrations that bring people together, the City increases awareness of Richmond's diverse populations, expand opportunities for residents to participate in community life and strengthen relationships across neighbourhoods. Through sustained investment in community-led events, the City continues to strengthen social cohesion and empower residents and partners to bring cultural harmony to life at both neighbourhood and city-wide levels.



### Program Outcomes

Since its relaunch in January 2024, the City's Newcomers Bus Tour has offered over 20 tours at City facilities, increasing the civic knowledge of over 450 newcomers to learn more about civic processes, programs and services.

### Programs and Services for Newcomers

#### Welcoming newcomers to Richmond and reducing barriers to participation in civic life

The City is committed to creating opportunities that help newcomers connect with the community and access City programs and services. The City's Newcomers Bus Tour program, which was put on pause in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, relaunched in 2024 and introduces newcomers to a variety of locations, including City Hall, community centres, Britannia Shipyards and the Richmond Olympic Oval. The City's *Newcomers Guide to Richmond*, which includes resources and services available to help newcomers settle into life in Richmond, is available in eight languages (English, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Ukrainian, Punjabi, Arabic, Farsi and Korean) and was updated in 2025. In 2022, the City also developed a Newcomers Video Series, a five-part series which features stories of newcomers who have settled in Richmond and the resources provided to them to access services in the community.

Partnerships with settlement agencies play a vital role in delivering culturally relevant programs that support newcomer integration. In 2024, the Minoru Seniors Society partnered with S.U.C.C.E.S.S. to deliver a *Wellness Walk & Tour for Newcomers* at the Minoru Centre for Active Living and London Farms. The program included transportation, guided aquatic activities and facility tours with language interpretation, increasing awareness of City programs and services among newcomers. The Richmond Public Library's *Library Champions* program, delivered in collaboration with NewToBC, continues to train newcomer volunteers in outreach and advocacy for library services. Since its inception in 2013, the program has trained over 300 newcomer volunteers in Richmond, who have collectively reached over 15,000 community members. Although federal funding for the program concluded in late 2024, the program continued in 2025 with Provincial Enhancement Grant funding to support a two-year pilot project with InterLINK, the federation of public library systems in British Columbia, demonstrating the Library's ongoing commitment to connect newcomers to services and strengthen community networks.

Together, these initiatives demonstrate the City's commitment to meeting newcomer needs through partnerships, accessible resources and engagement opportunities. By connecting newcomers with City services, community organizations and peers, these programs advance the Cultural Harmony Plan by reducing barriers to participation in City facilities and fostering inclusion for those who have made Richmond their home.



### **Truth and Reconciliation**

**Advancing truth and reconciliation by enhancing community awareness and representation of Richmond's Indigenous communities**

The City recognizes that the process of reconciliation requires a long-term commitment to renew and develop relationships with Indigenous Peoples and address the harms caused by colonization and systemic racism.

In 2022, the City conducted a comprehensive review of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's 94 Calls to Action and identified areas the City could address as a municipality. The 94 Calls to Action is an appeal to all levels of government and organizations to redress the legacy of residential schools and advance the process of reconciliation. This review led to the creation of a Manager, Indigenous Relations position in 2023 to build relationships with local First Nations and guide a coordinated, City-wide approach to reconciliation.

The City has deepened its observance of key Indigenous days of significance, including Red Dress Day, National Indigenous History Month, National Indigenous Peoples Day and the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation through public communications that encourage community reflection, learning and commemoration:

- In 2023, the City displayed the Survivors' Flag at City Hall for the first time on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour Survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities. Since then, the Survivors' Flag continues to be displayed annually at City Hall.
- In 2025, the City launched a dedicated Indigenous Relations webpage on its website to share updates on the City's progress in advancing Truth and Reconciliation, including the development of the Indigenous Relations Strategy, highlights of Indigenous public art, programming and learning resources for the public.

Staff training has also expanded significantly. Since its introduction in 2021, more than 1,100 City employees have completed the *4 Seasons of Reconciliation* course, supplemented by Indigenous education and anti-Indigenous racism workshops offered through the City's corporate training program and events such as the annual Diversity Symposium.

Indigenous-led programs remain an important avenue for community learning. The City continues to collaborate with Indigenous Elders, knowledge keepers and artists to integrate Indigenous arts and cultural practices into programs and events. For National Indigenous Peoples Day in June 2025, the City offered an Indigenous wool dyeing workshop led by Musqueam Elder Rita Kompst-Point and a cedar rope bracelet-making workshop facilitated by Moon Tide Reconciliation. Together, these efforts demonstrate the City's ongoing commitment to advancing Truth and Reconciliation and increasing awareness of the histories, cultures and experiences of Indigenous peoples.



## Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI)

Applying an equity lens to enhance City programs and services while fostering belonging across the community

Strengthening programs and services through a diversity, equity and inclusion (DEI) perspective allows the City to recognize that residents experience community life differently based on intersecting identities such as culture, race, gender, age and migration experience. An intersectional approach is central to the Cultural Harmony Plan, enabling a deeper understanding of the diverse experiences of newcomers, racialized individuals and other equity-deserving groups.

A key milestone in this work was the fourth Community Needs Assessment study conducted in 2023. The study's methodology applied a DEI lens to develop a comprehensive understanding of community needs and support future planning for the City's Library, Parks, Recreation and Culture services, programs and facilities. The study engaged residents on their experiences and resulted in 14 recommendations, including recommendations that will improve program relevance, accessibility and inclusion. Implementation of these recommendations began in 2024, including initiatives to further support immigrants to build social connections and feel welcomed in City programs and facilities.

The City established a Manager, DEI position in 2023 to coordinate a City-wide approach to inclusion. This included launching a multi-year DEI Training Program for staff, with Gender Diversity Training introduced in 2025 to equip employees with tools to better support gender-diverse residents. Cultural recognition in the workplace was further expanded, with the introduction of Lunar New Year observances at City Hall in 2025, fostering greater cultural understanding among staff and visitors.

The annual Diversity Symposium continues to be a cornerstone of learning and capacity-building for City staff and community partners. Recent sessions have focused on decolonizing practices, anti-racism training, 2SLGBTQIA+ and disability inclusion, and equity in program design. From 2020 to 2023, the Symposium pivoted online due to COVID-19, enabling participation from across Canada. In 2024, the Symposium celebrated its 10th anniversary and returned to an in-person format, reaffirming its role as an important platform in the community for sharing best practices in DEI.

Together, these efforts advance the Cultural Harmony Plan goals of increasing awareness of Richmond's diverse communities and the barriers they face, while building staff and partner capacity to respond to community needs. By working through a DEI lens, the City builds the capacity of its workforce to design programs and services that are responsive to community needs, working towards a community where everyone belongs.

# HIGHLIGHTED ACHIEVEMENTS

## 1 Strategic Direction #1: Intercultural Connections

The City promotes intercultural awareness among Richmond’s diverse communities by supporting events and initiatives that foster cultural connections and strengthen community bonds. In addition, by recognizing community champions and the histories and cultural practices of diverse groups, including Indigenous peoples and Japanese-Canadians with deep roots in Richmond, the City raises awareness of those who shape the community’s collective history and identity. These efforts contribute to a culture of respect and shared identity that enriches the overall quality of life among residents.

### Highlighted Achievements

- In 2024, the Minoru Seniors Society, in collaboration with Richmond Multicultural Community Services and Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives, received funding from United Way BC’s Social Meals Enhancement program to organize four Intercultural Meals. These gatherings took place at the Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living, the Richmond Caring Place and Beth Tikvah Synagogue, each welcoming groups of 50 seniors. The initiative offered participants healthy, nutritious lunches while creating opportunities for social connection and intercultural exchange. By bringing together seniors from diverse backgrounds to share meals, the program created opportunities for social connections and shared experiences, strengthening social cohesion within Richmond’s community.
- The City is committed to advancing reconciliation by recognizing and learning from Indigenous leaders, stories and practices, both past and present. Some highlights of the City’s reconciliation efforts in 2024 and 2025 include:
  - City Centre Community Centre hosted a *Leadership Through a Reconciliation Lens* workshop which engaged 110 youth participants, exploring historical topics including Residential Schools and the Sixties Scoop, alongside broader concepts of colonization, decolonization and reconciliation. Through these learning experiences, youth deepened their understanding of Indigenous histories and enhanced their ability to engage respectfully and thoughtfully across cultures.
  - The Richmond RCMP has adopted the Eagle Feather Protocol, which was first introduced in Nova Scotia in 2017. This Protocol enables Indigenous and non-Indigenous individuals, such as witnesses and victims, to make sworn statements using a blessed eagle feather, offering an alternative to traditional oath-taking. Richmond RCMP’s frontline officers have received training in its use, joining detachments across the country in providing emotional and spiritual support while honouring and respecting Indigenous traditions.



- A new Indigenous Resource Library in the Archives Public Reference Room of the Richmond Cultural Centre was developed in partnership with the Richmond Public Library. This addition supports truth and reconciliation by promoting cultural awareness and understanding of Canada's history, making information about Indigenous cultures more accessible to staff and community researchers.
- The City remains committed to recognizing and celebrating the arts and heritage of the diverse cultures that contribute to Richmond's unique identity. Through community-led exhibits and artist collaborations, these initiatives showcase the histories, resilience and creative expressions of Richmond's many cultural communities, deepening understanding and appreciation across generations. Key initiatives in 2024 and 2025 include:
  - A new Richmond Museum Extension space was launched to support community-led exhibits. The inaugural exhibit, *Canada, Here We Are!*, highlighted the stories and contributions of Ukrainian-Canadians to Richmond and Canada. This was followed by *From Then to Now: How Japanese-Canadians Contributed to Richmond Over 100 Years*, which explored the rich history of Japanese-Canadians in the community. Both exhibits were curated by members of the respective cultural groups, reflecting lived experiences and fostering intercultural understanding.
  - Richmond Art Gallery presented "xʷə́niwə́n se:p kʷə́θəθ nəwəyət (((Remember your teachings)))", the first major multi-media exhibition by Musqueam artist Manuel Axel Strain. The exhibition highlighted Musqueam traditional knowledge and familial histories, offering insight into Indigenous ways of knowing and the enduring power of intergenerational teachings.
  - A new exhibit and set of interactive displays were completed in the Richmond Boat Builders building at Britannia Shipyards. The exhibit explores the history of wooden boat building practices in Richmond and highlights the significant contributions of local Japanese-Canadian boat builders. Descendants of Steveston's Japanese-Canadian boat builders played an active role in shaping the exhibit's content, ensuring that the stories were presented with authenticity and respect for their family legacies.





## 2 Strategic Direction #2: Collaboration and Partnerships



Strong partnerships are key to an inclusive Richmond community that supports all residents. Over the past two years, collaboration with settlement agencies, social service organizations, academic institutions and community groups has played a vital role in supporting newcomers, amplifying the histories of diverse cultural identities and creating spaces for dialogue on anti-racism and lived experiences. These partnerships help the City recognize emerging needs and ensure that programs and services are shaped by community voices and expertise. By working together across sectors, the City and its partners are better positioned to respond to social priorities and ensure that supports meaningfully reach those who need them most.

### Highlighted Achievements

- Throughout 2024 and 2025, Richmond Public Library continued its longstanding partnership with NewToBC to deliver the Library Champions Project, a three-month volunteer program that helps newcomers develop outreach and communication skills while learning about library and community resources. After federal funding for the program ended in late 2024, the Library continued the program in 2025 with Provincial Enhancement Grant funding to support a two-year pilot project with InterLINK, the federation of public library systems in British Columbia. This ongoing collaboration continues to empower newcomers with confidence, skills and connections needed to actively participate in community life and navigate a successful settlement journey.
- In 2024, the City and the Library launched the Community Services Connectors Pilot Program at the Ironwood library with \$50,000 in funding from a Union of BC Municipalities' Poverty Reduction Planning and Action Program Grant and an additional investment of \$10,000 from the Government of BC's Public Library Enhancement Grant. The program connects Richmond residents living on low income with peer-to-peer assistance to find information about social service benefits, affordable housing supports, employment resources and other community programs. Participants from the Library Champions Project were recruited to become Connectors due to their lived experience as newcomers navigating services in Richmond. The program has since expanded to Cambie library to broaden its reach and improve access for Richmond's long-time residents and newcomers.
- The Richmond Museum continued to collaborate with the University of British Columbia's Centre for Asian Canadian Research and Engagement to develop a new exhibit and related programs that promote intercultural exchange and understanding through shared stories and lived experiences. In 2025, a community advisory group composed of Chinese-Canadian representatives from UBC and the Richmond community was established to help guide the exhibit's content. This partnership strengthens community connections and ensures that Richmond's local histories are represented through the voices of those who lived them.

- In 2025, the Richmond Youth Media Program, presented by the City and Richmond Addiction Services Society, partnered with Richmond Multicultural Community Services to host a Poetry Open Mic Night focused on anti-racism. This all-ages event brought together 20 youth and adults, including five performing poets, who shared personal reflections through spoken word. By creating a safe and inclusive space for dialogue and artistic expression, the event fostered greater understanding of cultural identity and the lived experiences of racism in Richmond.
- The City facilitates and participates in a range of networks and resource tables dedicated to building inclusive communities. In addition to the City's Council-appointed advisory bodies, the City co-leads Richmond's Employment Resources Network and Youth Network, convening service providers to address social issues and share resources. The City also engages in regional and national networks, including the Indigenous Municipal Connections Circle and Municipal DEI Learning Group. Through these collaborations, the City remains informed on best practices and emerging trends to advance cultural harmony, while supporting partner organizations in strengthening their approaches to diversity and inclusion.
- The City is an active member of the Richmond Local Immigration Partnership (LIP), a community planning network that brings together settlement agencies and immigrant-serving organizations to foster a welcoming and inclusive environment for newcomers in Richmond. Since 2025, the Richmond LIP has been co-chaired by S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and Chimo Community Services and includes members such as ISSofBC and the Richmond School District. Through coordinated action and shared leadership, the LIP strengthens local capacity and collaboration to address the evolving needs of newcomers and aims to be a source of expertise on immigration issues and trends for settlement agencies, social service organizations and government bodies in Richmond.
- The City's Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee (RIAC), comprised of Council-appointed citizens and organizational representatives, offers an intercultural perspective to City engagement and planning processes, ensuring that diverse voices are reflected in municipal initiatives. RIAC provides input on the implementation of the Cultural Harmony Plan as well as feedback on other City strategies including the Signature and Community Events Plan in 2024 and the Tourism Master Plan in 2025. In 2025, Chimo Community Services was added as an organizational representative to the RIAC due to their work with newcomers, including the delivery of the BC Services and Assistance for Humanitarian and Vulnerable Newcomers (SAFE HAVEN) Program in Richmond. This addition helps the Committee stay informed on the experiences of refugee claimants and asylum seekers, strengthening the City's capacity to plan and respond to the needs of all residents.

- The City provides funding to non-profit community organizations to deliver newcomer and immigrant supports through the Health, Social and Safety Grant Program. In addition, the City provides funding to not-for-profit faith-based groups, Parent Advisory Committees and Student Councils to host free public events that facilitate intercultural interaction and promote intercultural understanding through its Community Celebration Grant Program. By offering funding support, the City builds the capacity of community partners to deliver programs that meet local needs and enhance the well-being and inclusion of residents across Richmond.



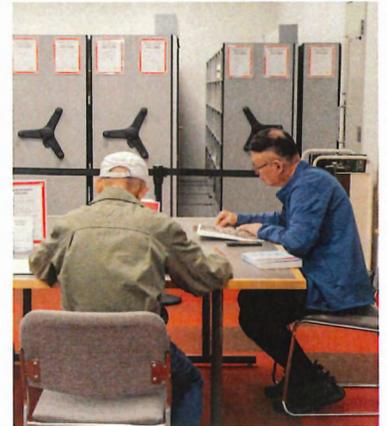
## 3

## Strategic Direction #3: Targeted Training and Professional Development

Building the knowledge and capacity of staff and community partners is essential to designing inclusive programs and services. As Richmond's population and community needs evolve, the City invests in ongoing professional development for its workforce focused on diversity, equity and inclusion principles. At the same time, initiatives that recognize and develop the skills and experiences of newcomers, including mentorship and employment-focused programs, help residents participate meaningfully in the labour market. By staying attuned to community needs and equipping staff with relevant knowledge and skills, the City ensures its services remain responsive and relevant, while enabling all residents to fully contribute to Richmond's social and economic life.

### Highlighted Achievements

- In 2025, the City partnered with the Immigrant Employment Council of BC to launch the Immigrant Mentorship Program, aimed at promoting professional growth and building workplace connections for newcomers. The program paired 20 City staff from a wide range of departments and roles with newcomer mentees, creating opportunities for knowledge exchange, career exploration and leadership development. By fostering professional relationships and skill development, the initiative helped newcomers navigate the Canadian employment landscape and integrate into Richmond's economic life.
- In 2024, the City and Richmond Public Library, in partnership with community partners, launched *Employment Connections*, a low-barrier, drop-in program designed to help jobseekers explore employment-related services available in Richmond. Two events were held between 2024 and 2025, drawing a total of 206 participants, including newcomers and people with disabilities. The program provided a welcoming space for participants to connect directly with community agencies and take part in mock interviews and resume clinics. By reducing barriers to employment resources, the initiative helped participants build skills, access opportunities and engage meaningfully with Richmond's employment service providers.
- Community Services Pop Ups, originally launched by the City in partnership with Richmond Public Library, connects residents with a wide range of resources and services. Now led by the Library, the event continues to assist residents in navigating government benefits, employment and volunteer supports, and settlement services. In 2024 and 2025, 22 pop ups were hosted at the Brighthouse library, offering residents access to vital community and government services through organizations such as Chimo Community Services and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. In recognition of the program's success and impact, the City received an Honourable Mention at the 2024 Union of British Columbia Municipalities Community Excellence Awards – Excellence in Service Delivery, and the Library was awarded the 2025 British Columbia Library Association's Building Better Communities Award.



- The Richmond Public Library plays a vital role in supporting newcomers as they navigate life in the city and pursue employment opportunities. Through strong partnerships with social service providers, the Library helps newcomers build practical skills, expand professional networks and gain the knowledge needed to successfully integrate into the Richmond community. Key initiatives in 2024 and 2025 include:
  - In collaboration with groups like the Richmond School District's Settlement Workers in Schools team, Richmond Multicultural Community Services and WorkBC, the Library delivered 261 programs for newcomers in 2024 and 2025. Programs covered a wide range of topics, including local community resources, healthcare access, employment and career development, financial literacy, personal safety, taxes and government benefits, and reached 5,060 participants, marking a 38% increase over the previous two years.
  - To expand access to pre-employment learning opportunities, the Library partnered with S.U.C.C.E.S.S. to host monthly drop-in Resume Clinics at Brighthouse Library. Between 2024 and 2025, 21 clinics were held, providing one-on-one resume support to 58 participants.
  - English language learning programs, including librarian-led conversation circles, book clubs and improv classes in partnership with the Improv Theatre Society, offered newcomers a welcoming environment to build language skills and social connections. In 2024 and 2025, the Library hosted 213 conversation circle sessions attended by 2,125 adults and teens and held 50 book club sessions with 314 English-language learners.
- In 2024, the City celebrated the 10th anniversary of the Diversity Symposium with its first in-person gathering since 2020. Over the past two years, more than 250 participants, speakers and volunteers from Richmond and across the Lower Mainland have engaged in meaningful discussions on topics including anti-oppressive writing, inclusive program design, belonging and public health, and engaging newcomers in Truth and Reconciliation. The symposium continues to deepen understanding of diversity, equity and inclusion principles among staff and community partners, enhancing their capacity to deliver inclusive programs and services through shared learning and collective impact.



## 4 Strategic Direction #4: Communication and Community Engagement

Effective communication and engagement are essential to ensuring all residents can access information, share their perspectives and participate meaningfully in civic life. With nearly 70% of Richmond’s newcomer residents speaking a language other than English at home, the City reduces barriers to participation by providing translation and interpretation services for engagement opportunities and offering programs in languages other than English. These efforts ensure that residents from diverse backgrounds feel informed, represented and empowered to contribute to Richmond’s shared future.

### Highlighted Achievements

- In 2024, the City created a temporary staff position, Communications Coordinator (Chinese Media), to enhance engagement with Richmond’s Chinese-speaking community. This role has led to proactive outreach, partnerships with local Chinese media and expanded translation of City communications, fostering increased awareness of City initiatives and strengthening relationships with residents. By fostering trust through improved language accessibility, the City ensures that Chinese-speaking residents can fully participate in civic life and access information in their preferred language.
- The City and its partners continued to respond to Richmond’s language diversity by offering multilingual programs and engagements that help enhance cultural understanding and reduce barriers for non-English-speaking residents. Key highlights in 2024 and 2025 include:
  - To promote accessible health education for seniors, the Minoru Seniors Society partnered with groups such as the Alzheimer Society of British Columbia and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. to deliver wellness workshops in both English, Cantonese, Mandarin and Punjabi. A workshop with Dr. Roger Wong, a national leader in dementia and Alzheimer research, drew over 200 participants.
  - The Richmond RCMP collaborated with S.U.C.C.E.S.S. to offer outreach services and tours of the Richmond RCMP Detachment, helping newcomers build positive relationships and learn more about the role of police in Canada.
- In 2025, the City upgraded its *Let’s Talk Richmond* online engagement platform to improve language accessibility and user experience. The platform now features one-click translation into Richmond’s 11 most widely spoken languages, along with customizable on-screen options such as adjustable text size, contrast and readability tools to better serve residents with varying accessibility needs. These improvements reduce language and technological barriers, making it easier for residents of all backgrounds to share their perspectives and actively participate in shaping City initiatives.



## 5 Strategic Direction #5: Programs and Services



Culturally appropriate programs and services are vital to fostering community, representation and a sense of belonging in Richmond. The City actively engages with cultural, ethnic and faith groups to understand community needs, ensuring that programs are relevant, inclusive and reflective of the city's rich cultural diversity. In addition, by partnering with cultural organizations and immigrant-serving agencies to identify and address barriers to participation such as cost, language or accessibility, the City provides opportunities for residents to participate meaningfully in social, recreational and cultural activities that strengthen intercultural connections and enhance community well-being.

### Highlighted Achievements

- In 2024, the City partnered with S.U.C.C.E.S.S. and the Buddha Light International Association (BLIA) to host two community tree planting events in Richmond, including the creation of a Miyawaki mini forest and a planting at Terra Nova Rural Park. Over 500 trees and shrubs were planted with the help of more than 45 volunteers representing a wide range of ages and cultural backgrounds. These initiatives promoted biodiversity and climate resilience while offering newcomers and first-time volunteers inclusive opportunities to connect with nature, participate in community building and contribute to collective environmental stewardship.
- In 2025, the City partnered with the Richmond School District's Indigenous Success Program to offer a two-part leatherwork workshop led by knowledge keepers Bruce Baptiste and Mae Postel. Students learned to create medicine pouches using traditional techniques, engaging in hands-on cultural learning that deepened their appreciation for Indigenous knowledge and practice. The workshop also helped strengthen connections between Indigenous youth and knowledge keepers, fostering mutual respect and understanding.
- In 2025, the City partnered with Minoru Seniors Society to host a Public Art Bus Tour conducted in Mandarin, inviting seniors aged 55+ to explore Richmond's public art through a guided bus ride and walking tour in Steveston. Developed in response to previous English-only tours that were not accessible to all residents, this free program removed language barriers and enabled Mandarin-speaking seniors to meaningfully engage with and appreciate Richmond's arts and culture. Participants appreciated having the tour in Mandarin, underscoring the importance of delivering inclusive and language-accessible programs that reflect and serve community needs.
- Through its outreach and programs, Richmond Public Library (RPL) ensures all community members can access resources, participate in activities and engage in culturally meaningful ways. The Library offered a range of opportunities to celebrate heritage and promote intercultural learning in 2024 and 2025, including:

- In partnership with organizations such as KidsPlay Foundation and S.U.C.C.E.S.S., early literacy programs supported newcomer parents and children in developing language and learning skills. These included targeted initiatives for Arabic-speaking refugee families, helping build confidence, strengthen social connections and support children's success in school and the broader community.
- Culturally responsive outreach and programming strengthened connections with Jewish seniors and families. Sixteen visits to The Kehila Society's Seniors Program reached 245 participants, while support from the Ben and Esther Dayson Charitable Foundation enabled the expansion of the Library's Dayson Collection on Jewish culture, along with author visits and family programs celebrating Jewish holidays. These efforts improved access to library services for seniors and celebrated Jewish heritage and traditions in Richmond.
- The mobile *RPL To Go Van* service successfully launched in 2025, expanding access to resources, library collections, services and programs for Richmond residents. This mobile outreach initiative brings the library directly into many new locations across the community, removing barriers to access and increasing engagement with residents of all ages, including underserved and hard-to-reach populations. Each visit is thoughtfully planned with curated collections and tailored programs designed to meet the unique needs of each location and demographic. Since its launch, the *RPL To Go Van* has completed 19 outreach visits, engaging with more than 1,130 individuals across Richmond.





## CONCLUSION

With four years remaining in the Cultural Harmony Plan, the City has made significant progress while continuing to respond to emerging needs and opportunities to foster cultural harmony. The achievements of 2024 and 2025 demonstrate the City and its partners' shared commitment to advancing intercultural connections, diversity and inclusion, newcomer support and reconciliation – collective efforts that are shaping a vibrant and connected Richmond community.

Looking ahead, the City will prioritize initiatives that deepen community engagement and foster intercultural understanding, ensuring that programs and services are inclusive and reflective of Richmond's diverse cultural groups. Upcoming efforts include a public awareness campaign to highlight the benefits of an inclusive community, reducing stereotypes and building empathy across different cultures, ethnicities and faiths. The City will also continue to pursue programs and funding opportunities from senior levels of government to sustain cultural harmony initiatives, particularly in light of evolving immigration trends and recent settlement funding cuts. Strong partnerships with immigrant-serving agencies will remain essential to this work.

Progress and outcomes will continue to be monitored, enabling the City to adjust actions and respond to evolving community needs while sustaining a welcoming, inclusive Richmond where all residents, regardless of their backgrounds and length of time in Canada, can thrive.



## City of Richmond

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## 2019–2029 Cultural Harmony Plan Status of Actions

### Timeline

- Ongoing
- *Short-term* refers to 0-3 years.
- *Medium-term* refers to 4–6 years.
- *Long-term* refers to 7–10 years.

### Status

- *Complete*: Identified work towards this Action is complete.
- *Ongoing*: Work to support this Action is ongoing. Due to the changing community context, some Short-term, Medium term or Long-term Actions are better suited as Ongoing as reflected in the Status.
- *In Progress*: There has been some progress towards addressing this Action, however more work remains.

Strategic Direction	Recommended Actions	Timeline	Status
<b>#1 Intercultural Connections</b>	1. Continue to recognize and celebrate Richmond’s diverse cultures and unique heritage through intercultural celebrations and events.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	2. Develop and implement a neighbourhood approach to facilitating positive intercultural exchange and understanding between Richmond’s diverse cultural communities, such as community-based dialogues, storytelling, and sharing of art, food and music.	Short term	Ongoing
	3. Review the calls to action from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission’s (TRC) report and explore opportunities for Richmond to respond.	Short term	Ongoing
	4. Identify and recognize community champions who improve awareness, acceptance and positive relations among people of different cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and between long-time residents and recent immigrants.	Medium term	Ongoing
	5. Incorporate criteria into the City Grant program that supports programs and events that facilitate intercultural interaction and promotes intercultural understanding.	Medium term	Completed
<b>#2 Collaboration and Partnerships</b>	6. Continue to work with Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee (RIAC) members to implement the RIAC Intercultural Strategic Plan and Work Program.	Ongoing	Ongoing

Strategic Direction	Recommended Actions	Timeline	Status
<b>#2 Collaboration and Partnerships (continued)</b>	7. Continue to support the capacity building of community service organizations that serve the needs of Richmond’s diverse population.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	8. Pursue opportunities to participate in joint planning and networking with community service organizations in order to share information and identify gaps in program and service delivery.	Short term	Ongoing
	9. Participate in community initiatives that seek to develop mechanisms for responsive action against incidents of racism.	Short term	Ongoing
	10. Pursue programs and funding opportunities provided by senior levels of government regarding cultural harmony initiatives.	Short term	Ongoing
	11. Explore participation in networks that work towards building inclusive societies.	Medium term	Ongoing
<b>#3 Targeted Training and Professional Development</b>	12. Continue to learn and share best practices in diversity and inclusion with staff and volunteers from the City, Community Associations and Societies and community service organizations, through the City of Richmond Diversity Symposium and other training opportunities.	Ongoing	Ongoing
	13. Develop and implement a diversity and inclusion training program for City and Community Associations and Societies staff and volunteers to better serve Richmond’s diverse population.	Short term	Ongoing
	14. Work with immigrant-serving agencies to identify and reduce barriers faced by immigrants in accessing volunteer and employment opportunities with the City of Richmond.	Short term	Ongoing
	15. Explore and implement mentorship and internship opportunities targeted to recent immigrants within the City.	Medium term	Completed
	16. Recruit and retain City and Community Associations and Societies staff and volunteers that reflect Richmond’s diversity.	Long term	Ongoing

<b>Strategic Direction</b>	<b>Recommended Actions</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>#4 Communication and Community Engagement</b>	17. Review and pursue viable options of providing City-related information for newcomers, immigrants and refugees that would assist them in accessing services in the community (i.e. City website).	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
	18. Develop City-wide translation and interpretation guidelines to expand the engagement of multilingual communities.	<b>Short term</b>	<b>In Progress</b>
	19. Explore and implement the use of different communication methods, such as multilingual translation services on the City website and interpretive tools for frontline customer service staff, to engage different cultural segments of the population.	<b>Short term</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
	20. Explore the creation of a corporate community engagement policy with input from under-represented and hard-to-reach communities.	<b>Long term</b>	<b>In progress</b>
	21. Develop and implement an awareness campaign about the benefits of an inclusive community and recognize the contributions long-time residents and recent immigrants have made to Richmond's vibrant community.	<b>Long term</b>	<b>In progress</b>
<b>#5 Programs and Services</b>	22. Undertake a comprehensive review of City and Community Associations and Societies programs and services from a diversity and inclusion perspective, identifying gaps and improvements, and implementing any actions that have been identified.	<b>Ongoing</b>	<b>Completed</b>
	23. Review and update the New Canadian Tour program to reflect the needs of the newcomer communities in Richmond.	<b>Short term</b>	<b>Completed</b>
	24. Develop and implement City and Community Associations and Societies programs and services that enhance positive social and intercultural connections, as appropriate, within and among Richmond's diverse cultural, ethnic and religious populations.	<b>Short term</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
	25. Strengthen relationships with various cultural and ethnic communities in order to integrate their arts, cultural and heritage practices into the City's programs and events.	<b>Short term</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>

Strategic Direction	Recommended Actions	Timeline	Status
<b>#5 Programs and Services (continued)</b>	26. Work with immigrant-serving agencies and Community Associations and Societies to reduce barriers for new immigrants to participate in programs and services at City facilities.	<b>Short term</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>
	27. Consult and seek opportunities for collaboration with the diverse cultural, ethnic and faith organizations in Richmond to gain a better understanding of the needs of Richmond's population and ensure there are a variety of services available in the community.	<b>Medium term</b>	<b>Ongoing</b>