



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

To: General Purposes Committee
From: Grant Fengstad
 Director, Information Technology
Re: Digital Strategy Update - 2022




Date: March 10, 2022
File: 04-1300-01/2022-Vol
 011.

Staff Recommendation

That the report titled, "Digital Strategy Update - 2022" from the Director of Information Technology be received for information.

Grant Fengstad
 Director, Information Technology
 (604-276-4096)

Att. 1

| REPORT CONCURRENCE | | |
|-----------------------------------|--|--|
| ROUTED TO: | CONCURRENCE | CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER |
| Economic Development | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> |  Acting GM, F&CS |
| Finance Department | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Development Applications | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Business Licensing | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Building Approvals | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Recreation Services | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Roads & Construction | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Sewerage & Drainage | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Water Services | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Emergency Programs | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| Transportation | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> | |
| SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW | INITIALS:  | APPROVED BY CAO  |

Staff Report

Origin

The Digital Strategy originated from the Chief Administrative Officer as a means to ensure that the City of Richmond would be a leader in how technology was leveraged in providing services and capabilities to staff and customers. The strategy was approved by Council on October 13, 2015 and is a framework, which guides the focus on providing products and channels to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of our employees and better serve our residents and the business community. Annually, the City has made significant efforts and achievements in propelling Richmond to be at the forefront of technology, in how we serve our community and support our employees.

The vision of the Digital Strategy is:

- To optimize and integrate business processes which leverage technology innovation to deliver exceptional services.

The goal of the Digital Strategy is:

- To facilitate strategic thinking and better coordination around the innovation and enabling concepts of “Smart City”, with the ultimate goal of embedding digital technology into the City’s operations, information dissemination and communication with the residents and business community.

This report supports Council’s Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #1 A Safe and Resilient City:

Enhance and protect the safety and well-being of Richmond.

1.1 Enhance safety services and strategies to meet community needs.

1.2 Future-proof and maintain city infrastructure to keep the community safe.

1.3 Ensure Richmond is prepared for emergencies, both human-made and natural disasters.

1.4 Foster a safe, caring and resilient environment.

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.

3.2 Enhance arts and cultural programs and activities.

This report 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.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #5 Sound Financial Management:

Accountable, transparent, and responsible financial management that supports the needs of the community into the future.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2018-2022 Strategy #7 A Supported Economic Sector:

Facilitate diversified economic growth through innovative and sustainable policies, practices and partnerships.

7.3 Attract businesses to locate in Richmond and support employment and training opportunities in Richmond as we grow.

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

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

8.1 Increased opportunities for public engagement.

8.2 Ensure citizens are well-informed with timely, accurate and easily accessible communication using a variety of methods and tools.

Analysis

The Digital Strategy identified opportunities with the greatest potential to enhance the City's service delivery and engage meaningfully with Richmond's residents and business community, while creating a framework of principles and objectives to guide technology decisions going forward. Major milestones such as the single profile for customers, digital nervous ecosystem (middleware) and the MyRichmond customer portal, have transformed how the City provides services that not only leverage digital technologies but also promote efficiencies and transparency to our customer.

We provide a theme-based approach that is intuitive and easily identifiable by customers based on:

- My Home (a combined view of home-related information including property tax accounts, utility accounts, garbage and recycling schedules, dog licensing and renewals)
- My Community (access to the program registration and facility booking system for browsing and registering for community services courses as well as searchable access to special events)
- My Business (NEW — this soon to be released function will transform the whole process, creating an easy way for business owners to apply for or renew a business licence and submit materials as part of the application process. Business operators can easily obtain their business licenses by downloading a PDF version that can be easily printed)
- My Permits (in development – digital permitting services to facilitate all gas and plumbing to full building and development applications integrated through MyRichmond and made available through redesigned processes. Staff are currently working on streamlining the application, review and approval processes in an user friendly, optimized digital format to be delivered starting in late 2022)
- My Voice (a tracking system for requesting a service, reporting a problem or submitting feedback online)

While, significant focus has been placed on enhancing the customer experience, we have also enabled the ability for staff who support various business processes to be much more efficient and resilient. Through key foundational technologies implemented through the digital strategy, employees have secure access to systems regardless of their workplace or location. Further enhancement to supporting mobility for employees was implemented using new capabilities such as the Building Inspector Mobile App, the IPS Mobile App for Public Works and of course, remote access services for all employees and applications. Despite the impact of COVID-19, the City found itself to be in an admirable position, as staff were able to easily pivot and continue providing services while in the safety of their home. This seamless transition allowed the delivery of programs and services without interruption, while also realizing cost savings. Enabling remote and hybrid work will also allow the City to maintain its advantageous position in a highly competitive labour market.

Ultimately, all projects within the Digital Strategy focus on the five key strategic directions:

- 1 Extending the Reach of City Online Services
- 2 Expanding the City Connected Architecture
- 3 Extending Mobility for Staff
- 4 Integrating and Connecting City Infrastructure
- 5 Promoting Open and Transparent Government

The “2022 Digital Strategy Status Update” (Attachment 1) contains full detail on the progress of the Richmond Digital Strategy.

Financial Impact

None

Conclusion

The City of Richmond's Digital Strategy continues with excellent progress toward achieving its goals. The focus in 2022 will be on leveraging the foundational work completed through the integration of data from various systems into our data analytics platform. This platform will enable staff to enhance their operational capability while enhancing efficiencies.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Grant Fengstad', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Grant Fengstad
Director, Information Technology
(604-276-4096)

GF:gf

Att. 1: Digital Strategy Report - 2022



CITY OF RICHMOND

Digital Strategy

2022 UPDATE





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Executive Summary

Since its inception in 2015, Richmond's Digital Strategy has unfolded and evolved, positively transforming service delivery to the public and staff while providing a host of options for people to access City services that could only be dreamed about when the strategy was originally unveiled.

Richmond's Digital Strategy originated from George Duncan, the Chief Administrative Officer. He envisioned that Richmond would be a national leader and be at the forefront of technology to benefit the City's citizens, businesses and staff. With the support of Council, the focus of the strategy has brought about a host of changes that have been welcomed by residents and businesses eager for flexible, convenient methods of interacting with the City.

The strategy developed as a result of considerable research and exploration and produced a roadmap that has guided the City's technology development for the last six years. Since Council endorsed the strategy and roadmap, the City has built a technologically resilient organization. This has proven especially invaluable over the past two years as the City was able to pivot relatively easily and continued delivering services to taxpayers during the COVID-19 pandemic due to the foresight of implementing key capabilities through the strategy and the focused direction it offered.

This resilience shown during a particularly challenging time has helped Richmond staff carry out their responsibilities seamlessly, enabling them to maintain service levels expected by the community, wherever they happened to be doing their work from at the time.

Similar to the planting of a tree to provide shade for future generations, it's only through the foundational work of projects like the Digital Nervous System, Single Customer Profile, and MyRichmond that the City is able to take advantage of today's opportunities, such as the promise of Data Analytics. The many milestones and achievements described in this report have directly supported the City's vision of being "the most appealing, livable and well-managed community in Canada."

MyRichmond

The backbone of Richmond's public digital presence is MyRichmond, an online portal that was launched in 2018. It provides a single point of access for the community to access programs and services offered by the City. With a 66% increase in the number of user profiles since the pandemic began, there are now more than 101,000 user accounts registered on the portal as of the end of February 2022. The platform provides a range of options from registering for recreation programs or renewing a dog licence to accessing tax accounts.



PILLAR 1: Extending the reach of City online services

Much of the City's focus on extending the reach of its services has centred on making it easier and more convenient for users to access what they need. With members of the community becoming more familiar with relying on MyRichmond to access City services, the City has continued to ensure the safety and security of the digital infrastructure, protecting the privacy and confidentiality of all users. In addition, City staff continue to develop new options for accessing city services, including the implementation of a customer relationship management system that helps staff better support residents and enables business owners to apply and pay for a business license online through a new MyBusiness function.

PILLAR 2: Expanding the Connected City Architecture

The pandemic reinforced the advantages offered from the digital strategy as Richmond residents had the ability to stay digitally connected and this was further enhanced with offerings like free Wi-Fi at 33 public city facilities connected through a private fibre optic network. Over the past two years, all facility networks have been upgraded to continue to meet the accessibility and security needs of our customers. Additional systems have been integrated to enhance Richmond's ability to support staff, including a new recruitment system that supports the City's efforts to attract and recruit the best and brightest.

PILLAR 3: Extending mobility for staff and Council

The early implementation of secure online platforms for staff and Council to remotely access their payroll and other systems, allowed for the seamless transitioning to remote work for some Richmond staff when the pandemic occurred. Webex and then Zoom were integrated into the City's digital infrastructure to support remote access for staff and continues to offer many advantages in comparison to face to face meetings. Real-time communication and access to information for staff working in the field has become essential for providing timely services to residents and businesses. This has been enhanced through system upgrades to existing mobile access points and by expanding the reach of mobile access so these staff essentially have a mobile office with them at all times. The ability to provide flexible work for some staff has resulted in operational savings to the City and could result in future savings through reduction in securing additional real estate for office space, reduction in building maintenance costs through lower occupation rates and greenhouse gas reductions as consumption is reduced for both heating and vehicle trips. Enabling remote and flexible work will also allow the City to maintain its advantageous position in a highly competitive labour market.

PILLAR 4: Integrating and interconnecting City infrastructure

As the City has successfully utilized advanced integration of all of its digital systems, further work has been done to ensure real time information flow between systems. This enhances information continuity and staff's ability to access data like account code validation and up-to-date work order costing information efficiently. As work related to data analytics and business intelligence moves forward, staff will have vital information readily available and will be able to make data-driven decisions to better support the city and residents.

PILLAR 5: Promoting open and transparent government

Prior to the pandemic, Richmond had already implemented the Richmond Elections mobile app to provide voters with important information. Expanding on this digital effort, the LetsTalkRichmond public engagement service was integrated into MyRichmond and Council meetings began being streamed online. Council meetings are also available on the City of Richmond's YouTube channel, so throughout the pandemic residents and businesses still had access and visibility to Council business and decisions in real time. In addition, access to Council is enhanced through an online search engine for Minutes.



PILLAR 1

Extending the reach of City online services

Overview

With an ever-increasing expectation among Richmond residents and businesses to access City online services at any time and from any location, the strategy has provided a wide range of benefits to users including increased availability and access to streamlined processes.

Integrated Payment Approval (IPA) delivers a clear window into the payment process

Juggling the thousands of invoices that come into the City on a monthly basis while ensuring they get paid on time can be a challenging feat for the Finance team. Prior to implementing the Digital Strategy, processes were paper-based and took significant time and effort to ensure all transactions were properly captured, coded and ultimately, paid.

One of the ways this team chose to help orchestrate the regular flow of funds was by partnering with IT on a two-phase Integrated Payment Approval (IPA) system, using the system to help increase the tracking, monitoring and payment of invoices, and providing increased transparency into the process for all leaders who manage a City budget.

The first phase introduced digital approvals for procuring services and issuing purchase orders. This was introduced to staff prior to the impacts of COVID-19 and started the change management process of introducing the new system. During the early stages of the pandemic, the second phase was introduced which focused on invoice approvals which enabled payments to be scheduled.

The new system integrates with the HR system to ensure authorization requests for payment are directed to the appropriate signing authority, and that the proper financial controls are in place prior to a payment being made.

From more timely payments to improved ability to monitor budget progress to improved communication with vendors, the benefits of adopting the IPA system have been clear to all involved.



“Registration is now open”

Parents across the Lower Mainland know well the pressure of snaring registration for the exact program their child wants to attend. In Richmond, one of THE hottest spots in town is in “Mr. Tony’s” (Tony Bowden) art class for kids, and moms and dads have been known to line up for hours to land a coveted spot.

Fortunately, the City’s new PerfectMind booking system ensures fair access to this, and other programs, including ensuring the right progression for young swimmers interested in moving on to their next level in always-popular swimming lessons.

With the introduction of MyRichmond and the introduction of a single sign-on, it was essential that PerfectMind be fully aligned with that vision. The fact that customers only have to keep track of one login which provides them access to so many City services ensures a positive customer experience.

PerfectMind offers a variety of features not previously available that staff have implemented to improve customer service. With the requirement to pre-register for all activities through the pandemic, customers were able to use their memberships to register for visits online. Continuous memberships have been introduced, allowing customers to automatically pay monthly. Importantly, our Recreation Fee Subsidy clients are now able to self-register for programs. These developments assure convenience, accessibility and equitable access to our community.

Attracting quality bids for City service requirements

Operating an open, transparent and fair competitive procurement process is important for providing the best value for taxpayer dollars, while minimizing risk to the City and its citizens.

Supporting the Procurement team in their work has taken a phased approach over the last few years, with online bidding coming into effect in 2020. This step has dramatically increased the ability of the team to centralize and evaluate all of its bidding opportunities, speed up the process of awarding contracts and increase the number of completed, and compliant bids received.

From a staff perspective, the Contract Lifecycle Management system is fully integrated with the City’s single sign-on service that has been implemented for many internal business systems. This ensures that staff are easily and securely authenticated and provided access to the bid opportunities that facilitate the review process.

Coming phases for the Contract Lifecycle Management project include developing a standardized system for documenting supplier performance as well as documenting contract-related communications with each vendor. This improved process will also increase transparency of the bidding and contract process, helping vendors as well as City staff ensure that contracted services are delivered as agreed to. Integrating the contract lifecycle management system with the PeopleSoft financial system also holds promise.

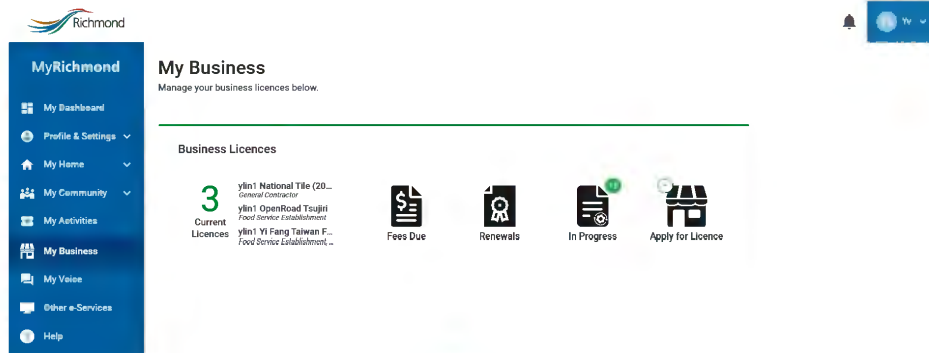
MyBusiness offers new flexibility and convenience

The MyBusiness platform that will soon be launched, offers business owners a comprehensive dashboard of information and available services at a glance.

One key aspect of the new MyBusiness platform will be the ability of business owners to not only apply for a business license but also to follow that application through the revamped process to receive approval for, and pay, for that license. Business operators will then be able to print it directly from the system, all without having to leave the comfort of their home or business office.

This streamlined workflow is a step forward from the current paper-based system that offers customers limited visibility into the processing of licenses and relies heavily on Canada Post delivery. The new process has been designed based on testing and development, with users being offered a multimedia training approach to learning the new system.

The updated workflow is clearer than the current one, with the whole process being articulated and driven by the system to allow customers greater insight into the status of their licenses, abilities that businesses have requested in the past. The new system also offers improved control over issuing business licenses, and an expectation of reduced processing times, something that will benefit both businesses and City staff.



Streamlining the permitting process for timeliness and ease of use

The activities involved in reviewing, processing and approving the thousands of permits submitted to the City each year can be a time-consuming and, at times, cumbersome process, with a significant amount of paper making its way through the system along the way.

In a bid to modernize the processes and use technology to reduce the administrative burden, a cross-functional team of City staff have begun an end-to-end assessment of the process, looking for ways to streamline the steps required for someone wanting to get one of the numerous types of permits offered: from building, electrical or plumbing to a number of other items such as business or event licenses.

Their intended final state? A streamlined system where the whole permitting transaction can occur in real time and after hours if that meet the needs of the requestor. The phased approach will eventually cover all permits the City offers, consolidate all communications around the process inside the system and speed up the authorization process.

By the numbers

14,626 Average number of business licenses purchased annually over the last four years.

89,721 Registrations for Parks & Recreation activities and events in 2021

93 projects issued for Bids and Tenders by the Procurement team in 2021



PILLAR 2

Expanding the Connected City architecture

Overview

Expectations around connectivity in public spaces continues to grow, as both younger and older generations increase their reliance on web-based applications and services for day-to-day transactions. The City is working hard to meet those expectations through its ongoing expansion of Wi-Fi-enabled facilities and enhanced City architecture.

MyRichmond—Transforming the City’s relationship with residents and businesses

Less than four years after the introduction of MyRichmond in May 2018, the popularity and usage of this portal continues to grow, with the number of user profiles increasing by 66 per cent in the two years of the COVID-19 pandemic. With the large growth in usage during this time, MyRichmond has become a reliable, established pathway that a large number of users find central to how they interact with the City.

Ensuring the privacy and safety of the resident and business data on MyRichmond is a vital principle of the platform. The data is stored within the City’s own secure data centres, giving peace of mind to users with strong multi-layered access controls in place such as two-factor authentication.

By the end of February 2022, more than 101,000 residents were taking advantage of the secure, real-time access to all of the City’s online services and personalized information including:

- **MyHome**—a combined view of home-related information including property tax accounts, utility accounts, garbage and recycling schedules and dog licensing and renewals.
- **MyVoice**—a tracking system for requesting a service, reporting a problem or submitting feedback online.
- **MyCommunity**—access to the program registration and facility booking system for browsing and registering for community services courses as well as searchable access to special events.
- **MyBusiness**—NEW—this soon to be released function will transform the whole process, creating an easy way for business owners to apply for or renew a business licence, submit materials, pay for and submit the application, before getting a PDF copy of the licence. The opportunity in the near future for businesses to apply for a business license and/or renew their business license online offers a huge step forward in convenience and customer service for commercial users.
- **MyPermits**—In Building Permits and Development Applications—permitting services from gas and plumbing to full building and development applications will be integrated through MyRichmond and made available through a redesigned process. Staff are currently working on streamlining the application, review and approval processes and will be delivering these new, optimized processes starting in late 2022.





Supporting businesses through informed policy development

At less than 1% vacancy, demand for industrial space continues to outpace supply and available land in Metro Vancouver is anticipated to be absorbed between 2035 and 2047.

Protecting and encouraging more intense and optimized utilization of existing industrial land is imperative to help ensure the medium and long term economic development, diversification and resilience in Richmond and the region. In 2021 following two years of research and stakeholder engagement the City adopted a series of policy and bylaw amendments to do just that. The changes include increasing the maximum building height and site coverage, reducing parking requirements for industrial uses, and removing barriers to future multi-level industrial developments.

Through the use of data analytics software and measurement of a number of key economic activities and land utilization characteristics of the City's industrial sites, the City is developing a model that will help Economic Development and Policy Planning departments gauge the effects of these policy changes over time.

This project is one of five test projects being conducted to evaluate the effectiveness and potential for improvements through in-house analytics capabilities.

Promoting safety and emergency preparedness across the region

Richmond is committed to ensuring residents and businesses have access to critical information as quickly and transparently as possible during an emergency. The City implemented the Richmond BC Alert emergency notification system in May 2021 to support this goal, replacing the previous system that was more limited in scope.

The new emergency notification system works in concert with other regional public alert systems to ensure people across the City are aware of potential danger from any imminent emergencies or disasters that may impact them in Richmond such as an earthquake, dyke breach or tsunami.

Registering for the system is easy for residents to do through their MyRichmond online account. Subscribers are encouraged to enroll everyone in their household on Richmond BC Alert so they can be notified as quickly as possible through their preferred combination of phone numbers, email addresses, SMS (text) numbers or Text Telephone (TTY) number on their account.



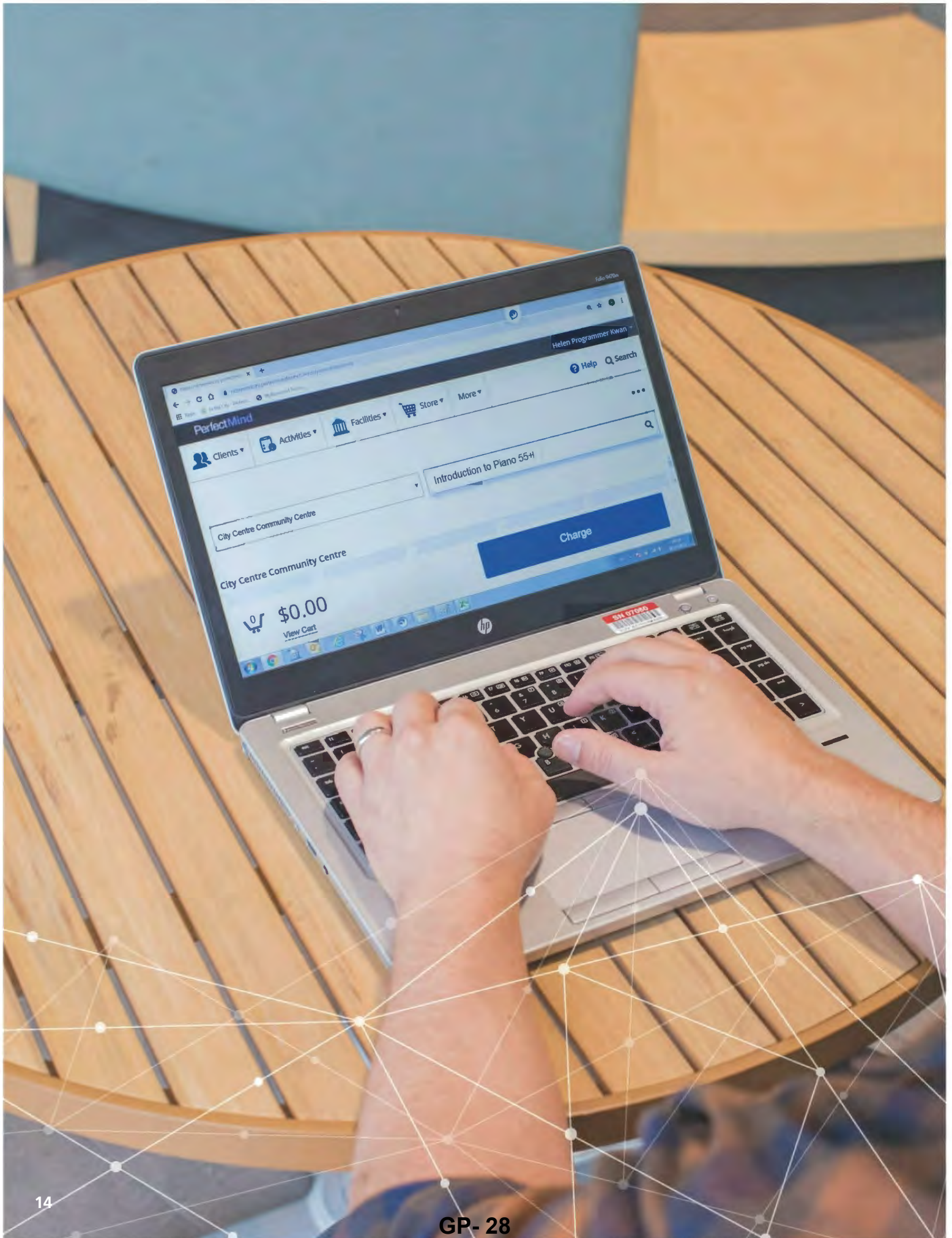
By the numbers

3,491 Households/
Residents registered for
Richmond BC Alert

101,245
MyRichmond profiles as
of Feb. 25, 2022.

**At least once
per year** City staff
conduct emergency
communications
simulations to ensure
they are able to deliver
critical information to
allow residents to ready
for any emergency or
disaster.

44,000 jobs located
on industrial lands in the
City of Richmond.



PILLAR 3

Extending mobility for staff

Overview

Enabling front-line City staff to deliver improved customer service to Richmond's residents and businesses is one of the primary aims of the Digital Strategy. Having effective tools at their disposal was essential to minimizing disruption amid the COVID-19 pandemic, with previous projects such as the Digital Nervous Ecosystem (DNE) and past middleware serving as the essential foundation for a wide range of interconnected applications.

Building a bridge to a mobile desktop saves time

As one of the City's foundational technologies, the Infor Public Sector System (IPS) has long been a productivity-boosting tool for staff with access to the asset management system in the office.

By reconfiguring a simple iPad tablet, staff from various departments including Public Works and Parks & Recreation are now able to access the IPS system while outside of the office, streamlining several business processes that have historically been very manual and producing a number of improvements in customer service to both internal and external customers for the City.

Enabling staff to access or update documents instantly while out in the field has allowed others to use the information more rapidly, resulting in quicker turnaround time for customer inquiries as well as reduced reliance on paper maps and work orders.

The ability to operate out in the field—including access to mapping and other services—has been well received by both staff and the residents and businesses who make service requests. It has also reduced the amount of time and emissions generated from having to commute to and from an office to get paperwork. In one case, a Parks supervisor was able to almost double the number of work site visits made in a typical week.

Leveraging new capabilities to enhance productivity

The implementation of a new digital identity system enabled capabilities that enhanced the user experience and provided new opportunities. The system integrated to other services enabling easy access to new tools such as Webex video meetings and DocuSign digital signatures. The ability to use a digital signing platform brought significant improvements to internal processes as documents were electronically routed to signing authorities and completed in record time. Staff had an easy way to clearly see where the document was currently at in the approval process with overall improvements in productivity.

Internet-based phone system worth its weight in gold

A new Cisco phone system installed in 2018 turned out to be a gift of smart planning and good timing when the COVID-19 pandemic hit in 2020.

When recreation centres were once again allowed to open after the initial lockdown, pent-up demand from the community was managed with far less stress than might have previously been the case.

During July of 2020, a typical Monday morning brought in 800 calls to a call centre that was originally staffed with two employees (and is now up to 12 at peak call times). Despite the fact staff were working from home, they were able to help manage the skyrocketing volumes using a computer-based, real-time screen showing the queue status and call tree to help direct callers more quickly.

In another unanticipated pandemic benefit, the City was obliged to outline the COVID-related risks for all who signed up for a program. Discovering they could include this as part of a recorded “hold” message saved at least a minute per call, reducing stress on everyone.



Increasing productivity through remote access

We all dream of being able to increase the number of things we're able to cross off our to-do lists in a day. For hundreds of staff in Public Works, Engineering, Building Inspections, Parks & Recreation, Corporate Communications and Bylaw Enforcement, the IT team has been able to make that dream a reality. By equipping this group of mobile workers with a customized combination of portable tools such as laptops, mobile printers and tablets to enable them to do their job effectively from just about anywhere.

By using a Virtual Private Network (VPN) to ensure secure access and switching to web-based versions of several key systems, staff are now able to use these systems—such as Tempest, a tax and billing system, and Amanda, a property management solution—anywhere in the region, just as if they were sitting at their desk.

The result is less travel time, less down time and increased timeliness of information in these systems for any other staff who are working on related items. This shift began in 2019, and was instrumental in helping City staff minimize disruption when the pandemic was declared the following year.

Enabling remote and flexible work also, means the City can embrace 'future of work' trends and remain competitive in a rapidly changing economy where talent is scarce and highly skilled employees have ample choices.



By the numbers

197 mobile devices deployed to divisional staff dedicated to working in the field across the City to enable them to serve customers regardless of where they're physically located.

2,321,512 calls completed using the City VOIP phone system in 2021.

123 iPads configured to enable remote access to IPS for City staff.



PILLAR 4

Integrating & Interconnecting City Infrastructure

Overview

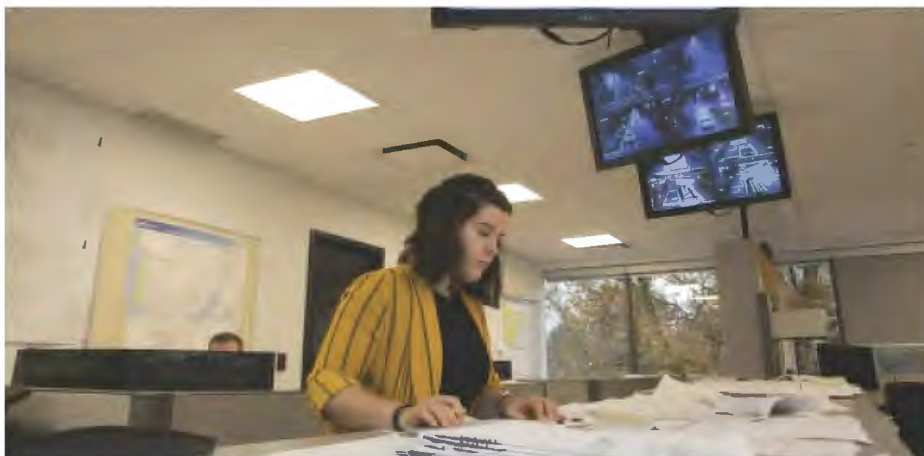
A key area for improving the power and connectedness of the City's stable of independent systems is by integrating and connecting these stand-alone applications into a network of systems that work together whenever possible. By joining these disparate systems into a network of interconnected and shared data, City staff are also extending the life of some of these systems.

Safety improvements at the heart of available video footage

To help manage traffic congestion and improve public safety, traffic cameras have been installed at key intersections throughout the city over the last few years. There are several benefits to having these in place including: encouraging safe driving habits, providing vital evidence for traffic crash investigations and providing 24/7 monitoring that enables police to focus on other duties.

As well, cameras at 119 of the intersections have low-resolution video recording capabilities that enable residents to view real-time images by going to www.richmond.ca/services/ttp/trafficcameremap and choosing the desired intersection from the list.

Since May 2021, members of the public—as well as safety-related organizations such as police and ICBC—can purchase traffic camera footage for accident investigations and insurance purposes. To obtain footage, residents can log in to their MyRichmond account to put in a request and pay a fee to cover the cost of staff time and resources to find and process the requested video clip.





Serving a legion of Wi-Fi users at a growing number of facilities

Usage of the free public Wi-Fi in more than two dozen City facilities has grown steadily since the City introduced this option for residents in 2014. The secure, high-speed fibre optic network has been upgraded since its original introduction and has bolstered the ability of residents and business owners to seamlessly conduct social and business-related online activities while they're doing everything from waiting for their tennis lesson to dropping off their child at a birthday party. The service—that uses anonymous user profiles—is a shining example of a valued community service that offers high-quality, equitable access to all users.



Resilience built on the back of the Data Network Centre

While a Data Network Centre is not something many of us might consider glitzy, the City's ongoing investment in this important facility is at the core of its ability to provide all of the services currently offered as well as develop new ones.

Without initial capital at the beginning of the Digital Strategy, functions like remote access through a Virtual Private Network—crucial to City staff being so resilient and functioning so admirably in the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic—wouldn't have been in place.

A refresh of the secure data servers, switches and network infrastructure continues to enhance the City's ability to provide our secure network services and allow the IT team to roll out upgrades at all facilities quickly and easily as new systems or software are deployed.

Approaching security with a progressive philosophy

Ever since the City offered remote Virtual Private Network (VPN) access to its staff, the IT team has tracked and focused on ensuring security standards were upheld without compromise. This focus was one of the keys to moving to a single sign-on system that uses two-factor authentication, an approach that insurance underwriters now require as a condition for ongoing protection.

IT staff have continued to evolve this approach, as they deliver the two-factor approach to residents and businesses signing in to MyRichmond, to give them the confidence their personal data is adequately protected.

The IT team is also exploring using a system known as federated identity that will enable Richmond residents and businesses to piggyback off of their BC Services Mobile Card to access MyRichmond, an approach similar to what Canada Revenue Agency has taken in conjunction with Canadian financial institutions.

The success of the single sign-on approach for staff—where they can access the City’s Human Resource, Payroll system and Finance systems without having to log-in to each individual system—saves users valuable time and frustration while still maintaining a secure operating environment.

By the numbers

145 Number of requests for camera footage from May (date of project launch) to December 2021

20 Number of days back that camera footage is available

Approximately **4,000** daily average number of Wi-Fi users at City facilities in 2021.





PILLAR 5

Promoting Open & Transparent Government

Overview

Global events over the past year have only served to underscore the importance of open and transparent government, highlighting the work done by both Council and City staff to continue expanding the information available on City activities. In Richmond's case, much of this work has focused on ease of access and efforts to engage residents and local businesses in ways that weren't available before.

Playing a role in ensuring fair and equal election access

With a Fall 2022 municipal election on the horizon, City staff will be doing their best to ensure it's an election that offers fair and equal access to voters for all candidates. One way they'll be doing this is by rolling out the Richmond Election App; a platform that will provide residents with important information such as:

- Their voter registration status
- Where local voting locations can be found and which ones are closest to them (searchable via map or postal code)
- A full listing of all municipal candidates, complete with photos and other background information supplied by the candidate
- Advance voting locations and times

On Election Day, the app will also provide real-time updates to users about running vote tallies, voter turnout numbers and final results. If a critical change were to occur leading up to (or on) Election Day, City staff will be able to advise app users of this change through a push notification messaging system.



By the numbers

189 Council and Committee Meetings whose proceedings are available on YouTube Live.

3,800 downloads of the Richmond Election App since its first released in 2015.

13,690 entries published on the open Council Decisions Database for public to search online.

Bringing governance of the people under scrutiny of the people

Transparency and accountability are two key tenets of municipal governance that all taxpayers appreciate and expect. The ability of residents and business owners to see and hear their elected politicians in action is something that became much more difficult when the COVID-19 pandemic hit the Lower Mainland in early 2020.

Without Council meetings occurring in chamber from March 2020 onwards, offering visibility into the City's workings could have been extremely challenging. As a result of the foresight of Council recognizing the need to be an early leader in digitization, and with much of the required infrastructure in place as a result of implementing the Digital Strategy over the last six years, City staff were able to begin broadcasting livestream feeds of Council meetings via Zoom and then YouTube fairly quickly.

Not only has this continued throughout the past two years, residents are now able to view all committee proceedings as well. While it's hard to know what the future holds, being able to offer hybrid access—both online and in person—to proceedings can be supported through the technology already in place.







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