



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

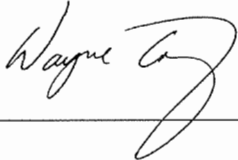

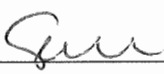
To: Planning Committee **Date:** August 11, 2025
From: Kim Somerville **File:** 08-4055-01/2025-Vol 01
Director, Community Social Development
Re: Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning: 2024 Program Updates

Staff Recommendation

That the staff report titled “Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning: 2024 Program Updates”, dated August 11, 2025, from the Director, Community Social Development be received for information.

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

Att. 3

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO:	CONCURRENCE	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER
Communications	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Housing Office	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Parks Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Recreation & Sport Services	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
PRC, Planning & Strategic Initiatives	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Public Works Operations	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Community Bylaws and Licencing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
Transportation	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO 

Staff Report

Origin

As Richmond's population continues to age, there is a need to plan and design communities that support seniors in staying active, connected and independent.

Age-friendly communities support seniors to age in place and live active, socially engaged and independent lives. These communities are designed to reduce barriers and enhance the quality of life for seniors by promoting accessibility, inclusion and connection. The City was formally recognized as an Age-Friendly BC community in 2015. This recognition reflects the City's long-standing commitment to supporting the well-being of seniors through planning, policies and programs.

This report supports the Council's Strategic Plan 2022–2026 Focus Area #1 Proactive in Stakeholder and Civic Engagement:

Proactive stakeholder and civic engagement to foster understanding and involvement and advance Richmond's interests.

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

Vibrant, resilient and active communities supported by a wide variety of opportunities to get involved, build relationships and access resources.

This report also supports City of Richmond Seniors Strategy (2022–2032) Action 1.1:

Expand on the development of age-friendly neighbourhoods in Richmond by implementing the framework created from the 2019 Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning project in all neighbourhoods.

Analysis

Building on Richmond's Age-Friendly BC Community Recognition and ongoing age-friendly efforts, the City launched the Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning project to implement age-friendly principles at the neighbourhood level and ensure seniors have a meaningful opportunity to help shape their communities. The Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning project framework consists of developing Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups that bring together diverse seniors to explore age-friendly planning at the neighbourhood level. Through a series of facilitated meetings, presentations, group discussions and neighbourhood walking, rolling and/or bus tours, participants identify community strengths and barriers to aging in place, using the World Health Organization's (WHO) eight domains for Age-Friendly Cities as a guiding framework. Participants share their lived experiences, and learn about programs and services available in the community for seniors, while also fostering social connection and community belonging.

2024 Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups

In 2024, the City facilitated three Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups, in the Broadmoor, Cambie/East Richmond and Hamilton neighbourhoods. The Broadmoor Neighbourhood Group (Attachment 1) was facilitated in spring 2024, partially funded by a BC Healthy Communities Age-Friendly Communities grant. The Cambie/East Richmond (Attachment 2) and Hamilton (Attachment 3) Neighbourhood Groups were facilitated in fall 2024, partially funded by a federal New Horizons for Seniors Program grant.

A total of 59 seniors were engaged in the three Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Group conversations. Thirty-five participants attended Neighbourhood Group meetings at local community centres and 24 additional Hamilton seniors living in long-term care and independent living residences in the Hamilton neighbourhood attended a dedicated session designed to receive their feedback. The Neighbourhood Groups reflected a diversity of age, gender, ability, cultural background and lived experience.

Each Neighbourhood Group met four to six times at local community centres for two and a half hour sessions that included social activities, informational presentations, group discussions and dialogue. Guided by the WHO's eight domains of Age-Friendly Cities, participants explored local strengths and challenges related to aging in place. The eight domains include social participation, outdoor spaces and buildings, housing, transportation, respect and social inclusion, communication and information, community support and health services, and civic participation and employment. A neighbourhood walking and/or bus tour further supported discussion of age-friendly features in the built environment.

Neighbourhood Group Outcomes

The Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups facilitated in the Broadmoor, Cambie/East Richmond and Hamilton neighbourhoods provided an opportunity to hear directly from seniors about their experiences and identified strengths and potential barriers to aging in place in their neighbourhoods. Following the sessions, staff met with representatives from relevant City departments and partner organizations to share participant feedback and discuss opportunities to make age-friendly improvements through short- and longer-term planning. As a result, several initiatives are being piloted or are in early planning phases, such as the introduction of new or expanded programming at community centres, audits of outdoor spaces and planning for enhanced features, such as seating, in neighbourhood parks. Participant feedback has also been included in the City's Official Community Plan (OCP) targeted update. Where there was an opportunity to take immediate action, such as repairing cracked sidewalks that posed accessibility barriers, this feedback was reported and addressed through the City's Public Works Service Centre.

Following participation in the Neighbourhood Groups, participants reported an increased awareness of age-friendly concepts, and of the programs and services available to seniors in their neighbourhood and throughout the city. Many expressed a stronger sense of belonging in their neighbourhoods, with some highlighting that the process gave them greater confidence to advocate for positive change. The sessions were described as welcoming, well-facilitated and informative with many noting that they felt more empowered, connected and engaged in their community as a result of their participation.

Next Steps

Summary reports outlining participant feedback and experiences from each of the three Neighbourhood Groups facilitated in 2024 will be shared with Neighbourhood Group participants and published on the City website. Building on the learning from the completed Neighbourhood Groups, the City will continue to expand Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning projects to additional neighbourhoods. To date, the City has completed Engaging Seniors in Age-Friendly Planning projects in five neighbourhoods: Seafair (2019), Broadmoor (2024), Cambie/East Richmond (2024), Hamilton (2024) and Blundell (2025). A final report from the Blundell Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Group will be completed later this fall.

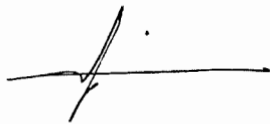
Planning is currently underway for a new Neighbourhood Group, partially funded by a New Horizons for Seniors Program grant, which will focus on the Gilmore and Shellmont neighbourhoods in fall 2025. Additional Neighbourhood Groups will be planned for 2026 as funding becomes available.

Financial Impact

None.

Conclusion

The Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups in the Broadmoor, Cambie/East Richmond and Hamilton neighbourhoods have provided valuable input to help inform the City's neighbourhood level planning that reflects the lived experiences and priorities of Richmond seniors. By reducing barriers and promoting accessibility, inclusion and connection, seniors have a greater ability to age in place and live active, socially engaged and independent lives.



Niloofar Hedayati
Planner 1 (Seniors)
(604-276-4175)

- Att. 1: Age Friendly Broadmoor Neighbourhood Group Final Report
2: Age Friendly Cambie/East Richmond Neighbourhood Group Final Report
3: Age Friendly Hamilton Neighbourhood Group Final Report

Age-Friendly Broadmoor Neighbourhood Group Final Report

Community Social Development





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INTRODUCTION

The City of Richmond is committed to placing priority on age-friendly initiatives, as outlined in the *City of Richmond Seniors Strategy (2022–2032)*. The vision for this collaborative strategy is “that seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities.” The Strategy identifies five strategic directions which clarify areas of focus and includes actions that build on previous and ongoing work to achieve the desired outcomes.

Strategic Direction 1, “Age-friendly neighbourhoods that support seniors to age in place,” recognizes the important role that age-friendly neighbourhoods play in building community, keeping people healthy, well-connected and able to participate in their neighbourhoods throughout their aging journey. The Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Group project is designed to achieve this by engaging seniors in age-friendly planning at the neighbourhood level and applying the World Health Organization’s eight domains of an Age-Friendly City¹ to identify areas of strength and areas for potential improvement. In

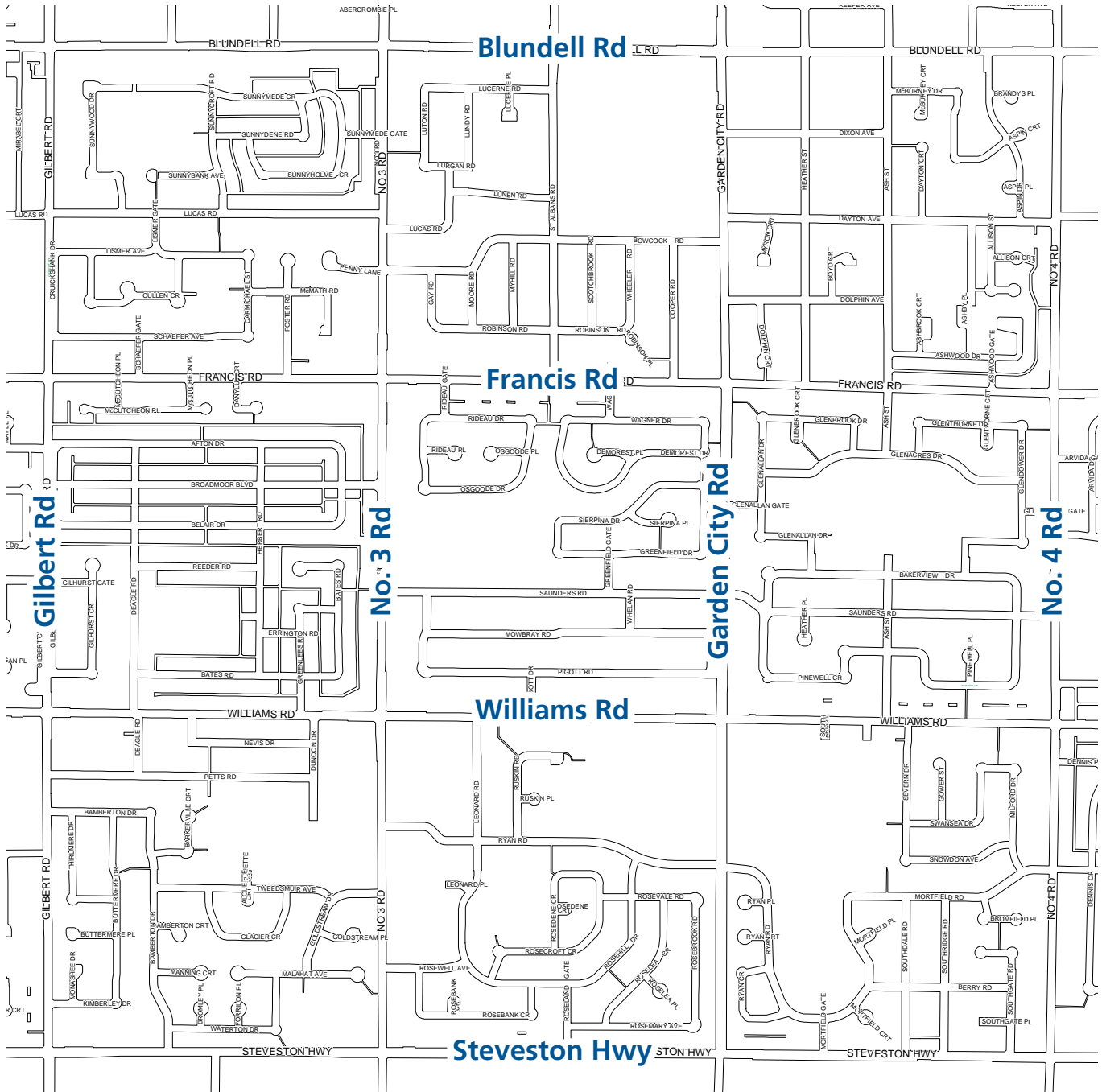
addition, participants learn about existing programs and services available to support seniors and connect socially with other seniors in their community. The City’s aim is to facilitate a Neighbourhood Group in each neighbourhood in Richmond.

In fall 2023, the City received a BC Healthy Communities Age-Friendly Communities grant to facilitate an Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Group in the Broadmoor neighbourhood in spring 2024. This was the second Neighbourhood Group to take place, with the first group facilitated in the Seafair neighbourhood in 2019.

The intent of this report is to share the outcomes of the Age-Friendly Broadmoor Neighbourhood Group project, its implementation process, outcomes and suggested next steps.

¹ [Age-friendly domains](#) include outdoor spaces and buildings; transportation, including traffic safety; social well-being and participation; respect, social inclusion and cultural safety; community engagement and employment; communications and information; community support, and health and wellness services.

Broadmoor Neighbourhood





NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP PROCESS

The Age-Friendly Broadmoor Neighbourhood Group was comprised of 13 seniors aged 55+ living in the Broadmoor neighbourhood. Where possible, efforts were made to ensure there was diversity amongst participants related to age, gender, culture, socio-economic status and ability. Approximately two-thirds of participants identified as female and the remainder identified as male. Ages ranged from 55 to 75 years or older.

The mandate of the Neighbourhood Group was to engage in collaborative dialogue to explore and identify age-friendly elements (or potential areas for age-friendly improvements) in the Broadmoor neighbourhood, raise awareness of available age-friendly resources and services in the area, and foster connections among seniors. The Neighbourhood Group met five times at South Arm Community

Centre from April to June 2024. Meetings were two and a half hours in length. The format for each meeting was organized around a social activity/icebreaker, educational opportunity, discussion period and an opportunity for informal conversation over refreshments.

A facilitated walking and bus tour of the Broadmoor neighbourhood provided an opportunity to further explore and discuss age-friendly elements in the neighbourhood. Guest speakers were invited to present on age-friendly topics related to the group's interests and included representatives from Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives (RCRG); South Arm Community Association; and the City of Richmond's Transportation Department. Participants also received a tour of the Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living.



WHAT WE HEARD

Participants discussed the eight domains of an Age-Friendly City in relation to identified features and services available in the Broadmoor neighbourhood. This included outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social well-being and participation, respect and social inclusion, community engagement and employment, communication and information, and community support and health services. While all eight domains of an Age-Friendly City were discussed, the depth of conversation varied based on participants' interests and lived experiences in the Broadmoor neighbourhood. The group engaged most extensively with topics related to outdoor spaces and public buildings, as well as social well-being and participation. An overview of each domain of Age-Friendly Cities and participant feedback in relation to their experiences in the Broadmoor neighbourhood is summarized below. The domains are presented in an order that reflects the depth of discussion during the Neighbourhood Group sessions.

Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings

Age-friendly outdoor spaces and buildings refer to spaces that are safe, accessible and positively impact seniors' mobility, independence, quality of life and ability to age in place. Examples include design and maintenance of sidewalks and curbs, street intersections and crosswalks, green spaces, street lighting, regulation of traffic flow, accessibility and safety of buildings, pedestrian walkways and sidewalks.

Neighbourhood Group participants identified several strengths related to outdoor spaces and public buildings in the Broadmoor neighbourhood. South Arm Park serves as a popular space for recreational and social activities for residents of all ages. Features like benches and greenery throughout the neighbourhood promote accessibility and beautification, while recent upgrades around the neighbourhood have improved pedestrian walkability and community connectivity. Multi-use pathways further support accessible and safe co-existence

of pedestrians and bicycles, with cyclist calming measures, such as speed-reduction signage, pavement markings and separated paths near South Arm Dog Park, improving safety for cyclists, pedestrians and pets.

Participants also noted areas for improvement in the neighbourhood, including some uneven surfaces on existing multi-use pathways and gaps in the cycling network, resulting in cyclists moving onto sidewalks. This was highlighted as a barrier to safe and accessible cycling and walking, for pedestrians on the sidewalks.

Regarding pedestrian infrastructure, participants raised concerns in certain areas of the neighbourhood related to crosswalk accessibility, uneven pathways, narrow sidewalks and some curb designs in relation to mobility aids for walking. The group was informed that maintenance-related concerns can be reported to the City to be addressed.

Feedback related to pedestrian infrastructure, cycling safety and crosswalk accessibility in the Broadmoor neighbourhood was shared with relevant City departments. In response to concerns about uneven pathways, the City's Public Works Service Centre has addressed specific maintenance issues that were identified.

Concerns related to crosswalk accessibility, narrow sidewalks and curb design were referred to the City's Transportation Department. This feedback has been acknowledged and will be assessed. Staff noted that design standards have evolved over time and noted that the City's current engineering design specifications for new infrastructure include wider sidewalks and enhanced accessibility features. While all new sidewalks are constructed to meet these updated standards, opportunities to upgrade older infrastructure are pursued through capital programs and maintenance and redevelopment processes. The group received a presentation from the City's Transportation Department, which provided an

overview of the City's transportation network, including information on walking, cycling, and transit, as well as accessibility features that support safe and inclusive mobility for all users. This commitment is reflected in the City of Richmond Official Community Plan (OCP), which outlines objectives, policies and a phased strategy for developing a comprehensive cycling network, including planned improvements in the Broadmoor neighbourhood.

Social Well-being and Participation

Age-friendly social well-being and participation opportunities are affordable and accessible to allow seniors to avoid isolation, connect to their community, and enjoy good health and longevity. Examples include inclusive programs and services, affordability of services, convenience of location and times of programs and services, and a variety of programs and services offered.

Neighbourhood Group participants highlighted several strengths in the Broadmoor neighbourhood, including the accessibility and variety of programs offered at South Arm Community Centre, Minoru Centre for Active Living, and other community facilities in Richmond. South Arm Community Centre's central location enhances access for Broadmoor residents and city-wide services provided by Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives were noted as comprehensive in supporting seniors to age in place. Additionally, the Richmond Fee Subsidy Program was acknowledged for helping low-income seniors to access recreation programs. The pickleball courts at South Arm Community Centre were also identified as an asset that is well-used by seniors in the neighbourhood.

While the City's program registration system works well for many, a few of the participants noted that seniors find the evening timing and online system difficult to navigate and prefer to register for programs in-person. Some participants also expressed interest in receiving a senior's discount in registered programs

advertised as for ages 18+, which do not qualify for a senior's discount as programs advertised for ages 55+ do, indicating that costs can be a barrier for some seniors.

Feedback about the barriers to online program registration was shared with relevant City departments, who were aware of these concerns and already implementing various pilot solutions. This includes enhancing Call Centre support during registration periods and providing technology education and support specific to program registration to enhance seniors' comfort with using their technology and the online registration system. Feedback related to registered program pricing for individuals aged 55+ participating in programs open to participants aged 18+ was shared with relevant City departments for future consideration.

Transportation

Age-friendly transportation planning aims to create inclusive, safe, well-designed transportation networks in proximity to support services and social connections. Examples include visibility of street signs and numbers, lighting at intersections, accessible parking, safety and frequency of public transportation, accessible parking spots and permits, and drop-off and pick-up areas.

Neighbourhood Group participants identified positive aspects of transportation, including accessible public

transit with frequent bus service that encourages the use of public transit within the Broadmoor neighbourhood.

However, participants mentioned some challenges in private property areas in the neighbourhood, such as car congestion and limited pedestrian visibility in a shopping mall parking lot. These conditions impacted pedestrian perceptions of safety and comfort, especially in drop-off and pick-up zones at private medical facilities. Additionally, public transit options provided by TransLink for east-west travel through Broadmoor and Richmond were mentioned as limited and impacting the convenience and likelihood of using public transit. The group further expressed a desire for more sheltered waiting areas at bus stops to enhance safety and comfort while waiting, particularly during inclement weather.

Participant feedback related to sheltered waiting areas at bus stops was acknowledged by staff in the City's Transportation Department and the Neighbourhood Group was informed of the City's ongoing program aimed at enhancing bus stops and implementing transit amenities to improve service and accessibility. Feedback related to limited east-west public transit options was also recorded and will inform ongoing discussions with TransLink. Participant concerns related to private property will be shared with the property owner for their awareness and consideration.



Respect Inclusion and Cultural Safety

Age-friendly communities promote respect, social inclusion and cultural safety of seniors, which positively impacts well-being. This helps reduce ageism and stereotypes, fosters positive attitudes towards the aging population and encourages respectful social connections between all ages in the community. Examples include consulting seniors about their needs and interests, recognizing their past and present contributions, integrating seniors from diverse backgrounds and including them in community events and intergenerational activities.

In the Broadmoor neighbourhood, many Neighbourhood Group participants reported feeling safe, respected and socially connected. However, some participants noted a lack of personal experience of social connection between diverse cultural groups and expressed a desire for stronger social ties within the community. Participants expressed a desire to bridge cultural differences, promote inclusivity and foster neighbourhood connections through shared activities, cultural celebrations and targeted events that encourage interaction and relationship-building.

Participant feedback about the desire for more culturally inclusive programs was shared with relevant City departments to help inform future program and event planning. While a range of cultural programs and events already take place in the Broadmoor neighbourhood and throughout the city, participants' input reinforces the importance of continuing to expand on and enhance inclusive opportunities that foster intercultural connection and community belonging.

Community Engagement and Employment

Age-friendly community engagement and employment allows seniors to maintain social connections, develop new skills and contribute to their communities in a meaningful way. This positively impacts their health and reduces age-

related stigma, which in turn leads to seniors that are respected and engaged in their communities. Examples include opportunities to volunteer in the community, participate in local government meetings, find paid work suited to their skills, and access clear information about available opportunities.

In the Broadmoor neighbourhood, several Neighbourhood Group participants reported enjoying volunteering in varying capacities, both within the neighbourhood and beyond. For others, participating in the Neighbourhood Group marked their first volunteer experience since retiring or moving to the area.

Participants identified a desire for more diverse and accessible volunteer opportunities for seniors as well as better awareness and promotion of existing opportunities. While many volunteer opportunities exist for Richmond residents of all ages through the City's I Can Help platform and at local community centres, there was a sense that seniors' diverse skills and experiences are not fully utilized. Participants suggested that it would be helpful to have access to a volunteer registration system for community-based volunteer opportunities, allowing seniors to be matched with roles such as dog walking and yard care.

Feedback regarding participants' desire for more volunteer opportunities tailored to seniors' skills was shared with relevant City departments and community partners including RCRG. This will help inform future efforts to expand meaningful, accessible and well-promoted volunteer opportunities for seniors in the Broadmoor neighbourhood and throughout the city.

Communication and Information

Age-friendly communication and information about programs and services is accessible and easy to understand by all seniors with varying needs and abilities, allowing them to stay informed and actively engaged. This includes using clear and varied communication methods, ensuring information is presented in readable formats, improving access to

technology and digital literacy support, and providing a centralized system for accessing information.

Many types of programs and services are available to seniors throughout the city, including in the Broadmoor neighbourhood, through different organizations such as South Arm Community Association; Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH); Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives and S.U.C.C.E.S.S. However, participants expressed challenges in accessing clear and timely information and in knowing where to find programs and services of interest to them. Some participants also noted that print-based program information produced by the City is sometimes published later than online information, making it difficult to take advantage of popular programs that often fill up from online registration. Participants expressed interest in a more centralized and streamlined approach to sharing information to reduce confusion and improve accessibility, while also acknowledging the challenges of coordinating and publishing information across multiple organizations.

Feedback about the timing of print-based program registration information was shared with relevant City departments. In response, steps have been taken to improve access, such as adjusting programming timelines to ensure printed materials are distributed ahead of program registration. The desire for more centralized and timely communication was also noted by City departments and partner organizations. The Seniors Coordinator at South Arm Community Centre will continue to play a key role in supporting seniors by providing assistance and helping ensure they have clear, up-to-date information about programs and services available to Broadmoor seniors.

Community Support and Health and Wellness Services

Age-friendly community support and health and wellness services are accessible and available in a range of options for those with varying health conditions. This allows seniors the opportunity to remain in their communities and maintain their health and independence. Examples include a range of



health services such as home care, nutrition advice, physical activity programs and the availability of adult day programs and residential facilities for people no longer able to live at home.

Neighbourhood Group participants noted that health services in the Broadmoor neighbourhood, including private medical clinics, home care support and wellness programs offered at South Arm Community Centre are available, accessible and play an important role in supporting seniors' health.

Participants identified potential areas for improvement in the neighbourhood, particularly around navigating the healthcare system. Seniors found it difficult to access specialized medical care, such as seeing specialists, which may require travel outside the neighbourhood. They also struggled to find and join support groups that could help them manage their health. Participants also shared difficulties in accessing primary care, reporting long waiting times at urgent care and emergency services. Additionally, medical walk-in clinics were noted to frequently have long waiting times that require seniors to add themselves to an online waiting list to be notified of when they're able to return to see a doctor. Some participants noted challenges for seniors using systems that rely on the use of a smartphone to access care.

Health-related feedback was shared with VCH and Richmond Division of Family Practice, including challenges accessing both primary and specialized medical care, long wait times at walk-in clinics and urgent care centres, and difficulties navigating digital appointment systems that rely on smartphones. These concerns have been acknowledged and will

be considered as part of ongoing service planning to improve access and health equity for seniors in the Broadmoor neighbourhood and beyond.

Housing

Age-friendly housing is considered safe, well-designed and in proximity to support services and social connections. Examples include a continuum of housing options, which provide a range of choices that accommodate changing needs over time by offering different levels of support—from independent living to assisted living and long-term care—allowing seniors to transition as their mobility, health or care needs evolve. Other key factors include accessibility and affordability of housing and proximity of housing to services to ensure seniors can maintain their independence and quality of life.

Most of the Neighbourhood Group participants indicated that they lived in the Broadmoor neighbourhood for many years and were satisfied and secure with their current housing situation. Participants recognized how affordability pressures and the cost of housing impacts seniors, not only in Broadmoor but across the city and region. According to group participants, potential areas for improvement include exploring a variety of housing types and tenures and increasing neighbourhood density to facilitate the range of housing options that support seniors to age in place.

Concerns related to the affordability and availability of housing options that support aging in place have been shared with the City's Housing Office and will be considered as part of the ongoing development and refinement of new and existing policies.



PARTICIPANT REFLECTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

To assess the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Group, pre- and post-program surveys were completed by all participants. These surveys provided insights directly from participants, enabling an evaluation of their expectations and experiences before and after the sessions. Participant feedback also helps to inform the City's approach to facilitating future Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups in Richmond. According to the survey results, the primary reasons for participating in the Neighbourhood Group were to contribute to positive changes in the neighbourhood, meet neighbours and learn more about programs and services available to support seniors in the Broadmoor neighbourhood.

Comparing responses between the pre- and post-program surveys highlighted the impact of the Age-Friendly Broadmoor Neighbourhood Group and showcased improvements in participants' awareness of age-friendly concepts, their neighbourhood and available programs and services—including how

to access them. Survey results also reflected an increased sense of belonging and greater confidence in advocating for positive change. Notably, familiarity with the age-friendly concept increased dramatically, from 39 per cent (pre-program survey) to 100 per cent (post-program survey). Similarly, awareness of and ability to access programs and services for seniors rose from 61 per cent to 99 per cent. Participants' sense of belonging in their neighbourhood improved from 53 per cent to 84 per cent, while confidence in advocacy for change in their neighbourhood to make it more age-friendly grew from 77 per cent before the sessions to 92 per cent afterwards. Moreover, all participants agreed that their participation in the Neighbourhood Group helped them meet new neighbours and learn about available programs and services to support seniors, with 92 per cent also indicating a better knowledge of their neighbourhood.

NEXT STEPS

While this report summarizes the Neighbourhood Group's feedback, detailed feedback has been shared with all relevant City departments and partner organizations to inform short- and longer-term planning, including updates to the City's Official Community Plan.

Additionally, these insights, alongside results from the pre- and post-program surveys, will help shape future age-friendly initiatives in Richmond. The City will refine the Neighbourhood Group process by incorporating participant feedback related to Neighbourhood Group recruitment, session structure and ensuring each group is meaningful, inclusive and responsive to the needs of local seniors.

As the City continues to expand Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups across all neighbourhoods in Richmond, emerging trends will be monitored to support the broader implementation of Richmond's Seniors Strategy, particularly Strategic Direction 1: creating age-friendly neighbourhoods that support aging in place. These efforts align with the Seniors Strategy's broader vision of ensuring that "all seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy, and engaged in their communities."

CONCLUSION

The City of Richmond recognizes the important role that age-friendly neighbourhoods play in building community and keeping people healthy, well-connected and able to participate in their neighbourhoods.

The Age-Friendly Broadmoor Neighbourhood Group sessions offered valuable insights into the experiences of seniors living in the Broadmoor neighbourhood. Participants highlighted key strengths, including accessible community spaces, diverse programs and services, and a strong transportation network. They appreciated the welcoming environment at South Arm Community Centre, the availability of wellness programs, and the range of recreation opportunities such as pickleball courts and walking paths in local parks. The group also reported feeling safe, respected and socially connected in the neighbourhood.

Participants identified areas for improvement, including maintenance to pedestrian infrastructure in select locations, housing options, access to healthcare and the desire for more streamlined communication about available services. Discussions also revealed the importance of fostering social connections, increasing volunteer opportunities and ensuring that community programs remain affordable and accessible for seniors.



City of Richmond

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Age-Friendly Cambie/East Richmond Neighbourhood Group Final Report

Community Social Development





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INTRODUCTION

The City of Richmond is committed to prioritizing age-friendly initiatives, as outlined in the City of Richmond Seniors Strategy (2022–2032). The vision for this collaborative strategy is “that seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities.” It identifies five strategic directions to clarify areas of focus and includes actions that build on previous and ongoing work to achieve the desired outcomes.

Strategic Direction 1, “Age-friendly neighbourhoods that support seniors to age in place,” recognizes the important role age-friendly neighbourhoods play in building community, keeping people healthy, well-connected and able to participate in their neighbourhoods throughout their aging journey.

The Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Group project is designed to achieve this by engaging seniors in planning at the neighbourhood level and applying the World Health Organization’s eight domains of

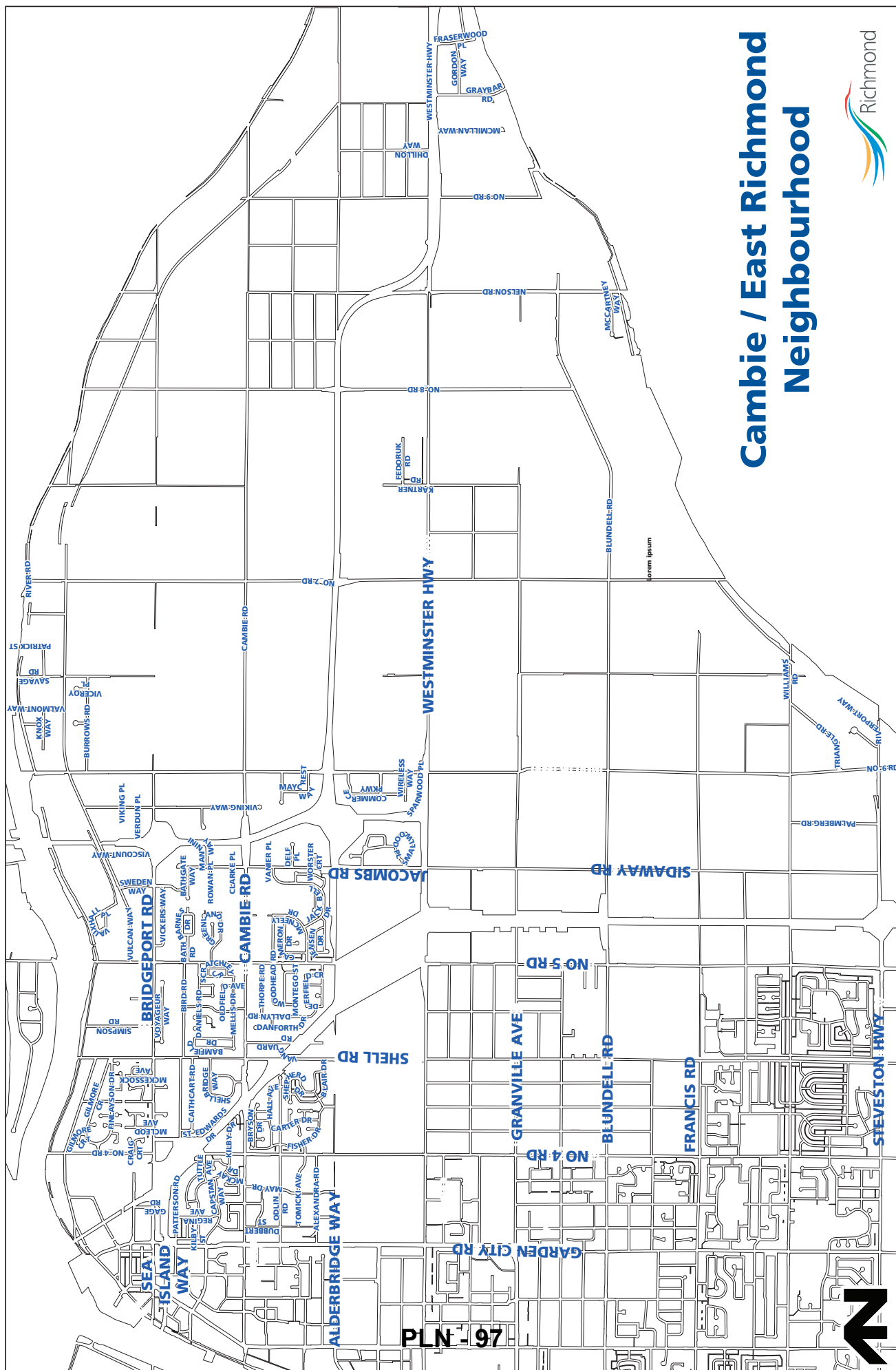
an Age-Friendly City¹ to identify areas of strength and areas for potential improvement. In addition, participants learn about existing programs and services available to support seniors and connect them socially with other seniors in their community. The City’s aim is to facilitate a Neighbourhood Group in each neighbourhood in Richmond.

In 2024, the City received a federal New Horizons for Seniors Program grant, to facilitate two Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups, one of which was initiated in fall 2024 in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood. The intent of this report is to share highlights of the Age-Friendly Cambie/East Richmond Neighbourhood Group project, its implementation process and suggested next steps.

¹ [Age-friendly domains](#) include outdoor spaces and public buildings; transportation, including traffic safety; social well-being and participation; respect, social inclusion and cultural safety; community engagement and employment; communications and information; community support, and health and wellness services.



PLN-97



NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP PROCESS

The Age-Friendly Cambie/East Richmond Neighbourhood Group was comprised of 12 seniors aged 55+ living in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood. Where possible, efforts were made to ensure there was diversity in age, gender, culture, socio-economic status and ability. Over half (60 per cent) of the participants identified as female and the remainder identified as male. Ages ranged from 65 to 84 years. Among the 12 participants, three individuals identified as living with disabilities, including one with a mobility disability and two with sight loss. The group also reflected a diverse mix of ethnic backgrounds.

The mandate of the Neighbourhood Group was to engage in collaborative dialogue to explore and identify age-friendly elements (or potential areas for age-friendly improvements) in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood, raise awareness of available age-friendly resources and services in the area, and foster connections among seniors.

The Neighbourhood Group met six times at East Richmond Community Hall between October to December 2024, with each meeting lasting two and a half hours. The format for each meeting was organized around a social activity/icebreaker, educational opportunity, discussion period and an opportunity for informal conversation over refreshments.

A facilitated walking and bus tour of the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood provided an opportunity to further explore and discuss age-friendly elements in the neighbourhood. Guest speakers were invited to present on age-friendly topics related to the group's interests and included representatives from Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives (RCRG); East Richmond Community Association; and the City of Richmond's Transportation Department and Housing Office. Participants also received a tour of the Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living.



Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings

Age-friendly outdoor spaces and public buildings refer to spaces that are safe, accessible and positively impact seniors' mobility, independence, quality of life and ability to age in place. Examples include design and maintenance of sidewalks and curbs, street intersections and crosswalks, green spaces, street lighting, regulation of traffic flow, accessibility and safety of buildings, pedestrian walkways and sidewalks.

Neighbourhood Group participants identified several strengths related to outdoor spaces and public buildings in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood. Albert Airey Neighbourhood Park serves as a popular space for recreational and social activities for residents of all ages. Enhanced accessibility features such as wheelchair ramps and functional black-top pathways at the park promote accessibility for those requiring assistive devices and using strollers. Residents also appreciated the recently added designated left hand turn lane and curb edges in specific areas in the neighbourhood, as these enhancements improved traffic flow and feelings of safety.

Participants noted areas for improvements related to uneven surfaces and overgrown greenery impacting sidewalk walkability and a lack of sidewalks on some streets. These concerns were highlighted as barriers to pedestrian and cyclist accessibility, particularly for persons living with a disability.

Concerns were also raised about the enforcement of accessible parking regulations, with participants noting that some individuals are using these spaces throughout the neighbourhood without displaying an accessible parking permit. They highlighted the need for more visible and clear signage to ensure that accessible parking spots are properly identified.

With regard to wayfinding, participants noted challenges locating the new Richmond East Urgent and Primary Care Centre (UPCC). Clear signage is essential for guiding individuals and ensuring they can easily locate services in the community. A lack

WHAT WE HEARD

Participants discussed the eight domains of an Age-Friendly City in relation to identified features and services available in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood. This included outdoor spaces and public buildings, transportation, housing, social well-being and participation, respect and social inclusion, community engagement and employment, communication and information, and community support and health services.

While all eight domains of an Age-Friendly City were discussed, the depth of conversation varied based on participants' interest and lived experience in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood. The group engaged most extensively with topics related to outdoor spaces and public buildings, and transportation.

An overview of each domain of Age-Friendly Cities and participant feedback in relation to their experiences in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood is summarized below. The domains are presented in an order that reflects the depth of discussion during the Neighbourhood Group sessions.

of visible signage for the East Richmond Community Hall was also noted, which participants indicated could lead to low awareness among neighbourhood residents about the facility's location, and the services and programs it offers.

The group received a presentation from the City of Richmond Transportation Department and were informed of the City's commitment to transportation and pedestrian safety. The discussion emphasized the importance of education and enforcement of traffic and accessibility considerations. Feedback regarding missing sidewalks was also shared with the Transportation Department. Staff provided information on the process for sidewalk expansion, noting that new sidewalks are typically delivered through redevelopment or through the City's Local Area Services Program (LASP), which enables property owners to initiate and fund local improvements through a cost-sharing arrangement with the City.

Participant feedback related to outdoor spaces and public buildings was shared with the relevant City departments and partner organizations. Concerns about uneven surfaces and overgrown greenery on some streets were forwarded to the City's Public Works Service Centre for assessment and repair. Several comments related to signage and accessibility, including challenges wayfinding to the UPCC and East Richmond Community Hall were shared with relevant partner organizations, including Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH).

Transportation

Age-friendly transportation planning aims to create inclusive, safe and well-designed transportation networks in proximity to support services and social connections. Examples include visibility of street signs and numbers, lighting at intersections, accessible parking, safety and frequency of public transportation, accessible parking spots and permits, drop off and pick up areas.

Neighbourhood Group participants identified several positive aspects of transportation in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood. Participants highlighted recent road and sidewalk improvements, including

the use of textured surfaces to assist visually impaired individuals. The construction of a new blacktop sidewalk has made walking safer and more accessible, particularly for wheelchair users. Additionally, traffic light updates incorporating audible signals and countdown timers were noted as improvements that enhances pedestrian safety.

Public transit options and frequency to key locations within and outside of the neighbourhood were identified as limited. While Cambie Community Centre and East Richmond Community Hall are conveniently located, infrequent bus access to both facilities poses access challenges for neighbourhood residents who live farther away from the facility and do not drive. While Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood has various shops and services, more public transit options, particularly travelling north and south, were noted as desirable to support access to essential services like specialized healthcare and larger grocery stores outside the neighbourhood.

Participants noted that some bus stops in the neighbourhood lack shelter or seating, making them undesirable to use, particularly during inclement weather. The group recognized and appreciated recent pedestrian crossing upgrades, particularly at the No. 5 Road and Cambie Road intersection, while also raising concerns about the need for additional audible traffic signals and adequate crossing times to enhance safety and accessibility.

Feedback regarding limited public transit options, particularly for north and south travel and access to essential services, was shared with the City's Transportation Department to inform ongoing discussions with TransLink. Comments about the desire for additional shelters and seating at some bus stops and for additional audible traffic crossing signals were also noted. As part of the presentation from the City's Transportation Department, participants were informed of the City's programs aimed at enhancing bus stops and implementing transit amenities to improve service and accessibility. It was clarified that bus shelters are available at a majority of stops along Cambie Road and the City continues to deploy new bus shelters annually.



Housing

Age-friendly housing is safe, well-designed and in proximity to support services and social connections. It includes access to a range of options that accommodate changing needs over time by offering different levels of support—from independent living to assisted living and long-term care—allowing seniors to transition as their mobility, health or care needs evolve. Other key factors include accessibility and affordability of housing and the proximity to services to ensure seniors can maintain their independence and quality of life.

Most of the Neighbourhood Group participants indicated that they have lived in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood for many years and are satisfied and secure with their current housing situation. However, participants noted that the current housing options in the neighbourhood do not fully support aging in place. Participants highlighted that the limited availability of affordable and accessible housing options makes it difficult for seniors to remain in their community as their needs evolve. They noted the need for options in the neighbourhood that could accommodate different levels of care, including independent living, assisted living and long-term care. Participants also emphasized the importance of

incorporating design features that provide space for mobility aids and other accessibility considerations.

Additionally, participants noted that while the neighbourhood offers a variety of services and amenities, there is a lack of accessible, informal gathering spaces such as coffee shops or a community hub for social connection. Informal gathering spaces are important for fostering engagement and reducing isolation among seniors. The availability of these spaces near housing developments would support social inclusion and help seniors remain connected to their community as they age. Participants recognized how affordability pressures and the cost of housing impacts seniors, not only in Cambie/East Richmond but across the city and region.

Feedback from the Neighbourhood Group regarding the limited availability of accessible housing options that support aging in place, along with affordability pressures impacting seniors were shared with the City's Housing Office and will be considered as part of ongoing development and refinement of new and existing policies. Additionally, the need for a range of options, such as independent living, assisted living, and long-term care, to support seniors as their needs evolve was shared with VCH.

Feedback related to policy and design, including the need for accessibility features such as more space for mobility aids, and the availability of gathering spaces near housing, was shared with the City's Policy Planning Department. These concerns align with Phase One findings of the Official Community Plan (OCP) update, which identifies expanding housing options for vulnerable populations, including seniors, as a key strategic direction. The OCP includes plans for a neighbourhood village in East Richmond that will bring together services, businesses, and amenities, with a focus on accessibility and community connection. In response to the identified need for informal gathering spaces, the Seniors Coordinator at Cambie Community Centre has connected with participants to explore the potential to host a local seniors' coffee hour.

Social Well-being and Participation

Age-friendly social well-being and participation opportunities are affordable and accessible to allow seniors to avoid isolation, connect to their community and enjoy good health and longevity. Examples include inclusive programs and services, affordability of services, convenience of location and times of programs and services, and a variety of programs and services offered.

Neighbourhood Group participants highlighted several strengths in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood, including the accessibility and variety of programs offered at Cambie Community Centre, East Richmond Community Hall, the Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living, and other community facilities in Richmond. The convenient location of Cambie Community Centre and East Richmond Community Hall was viewed as an advantage for seniors living in the neighbourhood.

The Seniors Facility Pass, offered by East Richmond Community Association, was acknowledged as a benefit to removing barriers for low-income seniors to access recreation programs. It provides individuals aged 55 and older with access to different programs at Cambie Community Centre and East Richmond Community Hall for an annual fee.

While the City's program registration system works well for many, a few participants noted that seniors find the evening timing and online system navigation difficult without in-person assistance. While telephone support is available, those needing in-person support may have to wait until customer service is available the next morning, by which time some popular programs may already be full or have waitlists.

Feedback about the barriers to online program registration was shared with relevant City departments, who were aware of these concerns and already implementing various pilot solutions. This includes enhancing Call Centre support during registration periods and providing technology education and support specific to program registration to enhance seniors' comfort with using their personal devices and the online registration system.

Respect, Social Inclusion and Cultural Safety

Age-friendly communities promote respect, social inclusion and cultural safety of seniors, which positively impacts their well-being. This helps reduce ageism and stereotypes, fosters positive attitudes towards the aging population and encourages respectful social connections between all ages in the community. Examples include consulting seniors about their needs and interests, recognizing past and present contributions of seniors, integration of seniors with diverse backgrounds, inclusion of seniors in community events, and intergenerational activities.

In the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood, many Neighbourhood Group participants reported feeling safe, respected and socially connected. However, some participants expressed a desire for stronger social connections with neighbours, particularly among those from diverse cultures. To further promote inclusivity and foster neighbourhood connections, participants suggested enhancing opportunities for social connection between diverse groups and cultures through events and community-based programs.

Participant feedback about the desire for more culturally inclusive programs was shared with relevant City departments to help inform future program and event planning. While a range of cultural programs and events already take place in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood and throughout the city, participants' input reinforces the importance of continuing to expand on and enhance inclusive opportunities that foster intercultural connection and community belonging.

Community Engagement and Employment

Age-friendly community engagement and employment allows seniors to maintain social connections, develop new skills and contribute to their communities in a meaningful way. This positively impacts their health and reduces age-related stigma, which in turn leads to seniors that are respected

and engaged in their communities. Examples include opportunities to volunteer in the community, participate in local government meetings, find paid work suited to their skills and access clear information about available opportunities.

In the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood, several Neighbourhood Group participants reported enjoying volunteerism in varying capacities, particularly with East Richmond Community Association.

Participants identified the need for greater awareness of available volunteer opportunities which suits seniors' skills. While opportunities exist, there was a sense that seniors' diverse skills and knowledge are not fully utilized, indicating room for expansion in this area, particularly opportunities for persons living with disabilities.

The City's Let's Talk Richmond online platform was mentioned as a useful consultation tool, however, participants suggested broadening consultation approaches to include methods that are not web based. They expressed interest in more direct methods, such as in-person meetings, phone consultations and communication with the Seniors Coordinators who work at local community centres and can support accessibility and connect seniors who may not use digital platforms.

Feedback regarding the need to further promote volunteer opportunities tailored to seniors' skills was shared with relevant City departments and community partners including RCRG. Suggestions to broaden public consultation methods beyond online platforms were also noted, including more accessible approaches such as in-person meetings and phone-based engagement. Strengthening the role of Seniors Coordinators in supporting participation among those less comfortable with digital tools was discussed with City and Community Association and Society staff that work directly with seniors to help inform future engagement strategies.

Communication and Information

Age-friendly communication about programs and services is accessible and easy to understand by all seniors with varying needs and abilities, allowing them to stay informed and actively engaged. This includes using clear and varied communication methods, ensuring information is presented in readable formats, improving access to technology and digital literacy support, and providing a centralized system for accessing information.

In the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood, Neighbourhood Group participants noted that information about seniors' programs and services offered by the East Richmond Community Association is communicated through multiple channels. This includes online content available on the City's website, as well as outreach by the seniors coordinator who regularly inform visitors about upcoming activities and events. East Richmond Community Association also provides a wide range of printed materials onsite to promote and raise awareness of programs and services for seniors, including the seasonally produced 55+ Program Guide, along with brochures, posters, pamphlets, and flyers. However, participants noted the importance of translating information into a variety of languages, such as Chinese and Punjabi and ensuring that communication materials are clear, easy to understand and accessible for individuals with varying literacy levels. Suggestions also included adapting both the content and the formats of materials, such as strategic plans, documents and websites, to better support individuals living with sight loss.

Feedback regarding the importance of multilingual and accessible communication was shared with relevant City departments and partner organizations, and will inform future planning. While the City of Richmond's website includes an embedded translation feature, some materials require translation beyond what is currently provided to better serve non-English speakers. Participant feedback reinforces the need for communication materials that are clear, easy to understand and accessible to individuals with varying literacy levels.

Community Support and Health and Wellness Services

Age-friendly community support and health and wellness services are accessible and available in a range of options for those with varying health conditions. This allows seniors the opportunity to remain in their communities and maintain their health and independence. Examples include a range of health services such as home care, nutrition advice, physical activity programs and the availability of adult day programs and residential facilities for people who are no longer able to live at home.

Most of the Neighbourhood Group participants noted that they had access to a family physician and medical specialists, when required, but commented that they often need to travel outside of Richmond to meet with them. Participants attributed this to a shortage of general practitioners accepting new patients and limited availability of neighbourhood-based medical clinics, making it difficult for seniors to access healthcare services locally as they age. This necessitates longer travel and may not be an option as residents age and travel becomes more difficult.

Feedback regarding the limited availability of local healthcare services, challenges related to traveling outside Richmond for specialist care and the difficulty in accessing general practitioners was shared with and noted by VCH and Richmond Division of Family Practice for consideration in future service planning.



PARTICIPANT REFLECTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

To assess the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Group, pre- and post-program surveys were completed by all participants. These surveys provided insights directly from participants, enabling an evaluation of their expectations and experiences before and after the sessions. Participant feedback helps to inform the City's approach to facilitating future Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups in Richmond.

According to the surveys, the primary reasons for participating in the Neighbourhood Group (in order of frequency) were to contribute to positive changes in the neighbourhood, learn more about programs and services available to support seniors in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood and learn more about age-friendly planning.

Comparing responses between the pre- and post-program surveys highlighted the impact of the Age-Friendly Cambie/East Richmond Neighbourhood Group, showcasing improvements in participants' awareness of age-friendly concepts and available programs and services, and how to access them.

Survey results also reflected an increased sense of belonging and greater confidence in advocating for positive change in the neighbourhood to make it more seniors friendly. The most significant results

were in understanding the age-friendly concept and awareness of programs and services available to seniors in Richmond, which increased from 70 per cent before the program to 100 per cent after. This was followed by a reported increase in the ability to advocate for change in the neighbourhood to make it more age-friendly for seniors, increasing from 80 to 100 per cent. Additionally, participants reported a stronger sense of belonging and feeling of safety in the neighbourhood, which increased from 90 to 100 per cent.

All participants agreed that participation in the Neighbourhood Group provided them with an opportunity to do something different, meet new neighbours and learn about available programs and services to support seniors. Ninety-two per cent of participants indicated that participation in the Neighbourhood Group led to greater knowledge about their neighbourhood.

Participants described their experience with the program as "fruitful, inspiring, informative and encouraging." Many found it "enjoyable, communicative and a good opportunity to connect with others." These results highlight the program's positive impact in enhancing awareness, confidence and community connections among seniors.

NEXT STEPS

While this report summarizes the Neighbourhood Group's feedback, detailed feedback has been shared with all relevant City departments and partner organizations to inform short- and longer-term planning, including updates to the City's Official Community Plan.

Additionally, these insights, alongside results from the pre- and post-program surveys, will help shape future age-friendly initiatives in Richmond, such as further refining the Neighbourhood Group process by incorporating participant feedback related to Neighbourhood Group recruitment, session structure and ensuring each group is meaningful, inclusive and responsive to the needs of local seniors.

As the City continues to expand Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups across all neighbourhoods in Richmond, emerging trends will be monitored to support the broader implementation of Richmond's Council-adopted Seniors Strategy, particularly Strategic Direction 1: creating age-friendly neighbourhoods that support aging in place. These efforts align with the Seniors Strategy's broader vision of ensuring that "all seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy, and engaged in their communities."

CONCLUSION

The City of Richmond recognizes the important role that age-friendly neighbourhoods play in building community and keeping people healthy, well-connected and able to participate in their neighbourhoods.

The Age-Friendly Cambie/East Richmond Neighbourhood Group sessions offered valuable insights into the experiences of seniors living in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood. Participants highlighted key strengths of the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood, including accessible community spaces, diversity of programs and services available, affordability of the Seniors Facility Pass provided by East Richmond Community Association, accessible features at Albert Airey Neighbourhood Park and pedestrian safety improvements such as countdown timers and audible signals at traffic crossings. They also identified areas for improvement, such as specific segments of sidewalks, particularly for persons living with disabilities, more affordable and accessible housing options, and improved access to healthcare by increasing the availability of general practitioners and medical clinics in the Cambie/East Richmond neighbourhood. The need for a variety of communication mechanisms and formats that accommodate disabilities, language barriers and varying literacy levels was also noted. Neighbourhood Group discussions reinforced the importance of fostering social connections among varying cultures and making seniors aware of a variety of existing volunteer opportunities in the community.



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Age-Friendly Hamilton Neighbourhood Group Final Report

Community Social Development





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INTRODUCTION

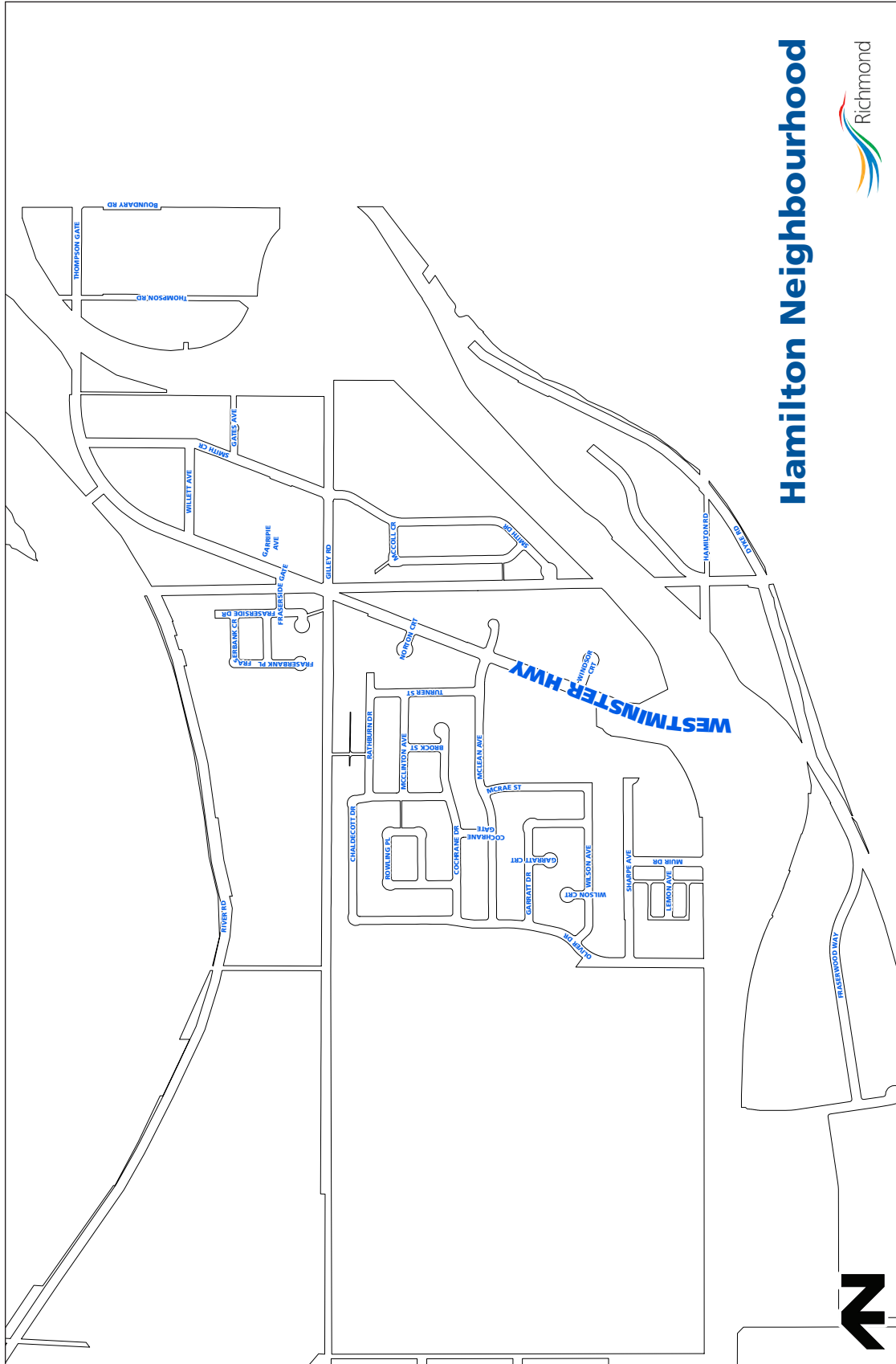
The City of Richmond is committed to prioritizing age-friendly initiatives, as outlined in the City of Richmond Seniors Strategy (2022–2032). The vision for this collaborative strategy is “that seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy and engaged in their communities.” It identifies five strategic directions to clarify areas of focus and includes actions that build on previous and ongoing work to achieve the desired outcomes.

Strategic Direction 1, “Age-friendly neighbourhoods that support seniors to age in place,” recognizes the important role that age-friendly neighbourhoods play in building community, keeping people healthy, well-connected and able to participate in their neighbourhoods throughout their aging journey. The Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Group project is designed to achieve this by engaging seniors in planning at the neighbourhood level and applying the World Health Organization’s eight domains of

an Age-Friendly City¹ to identify areas of strength and areas for potential improvement. In addition, participants learn about existing programs and services available to support and connect seniors socially with other seniors in their community. The City’s aim is to facilitate a Neighbourhood Group in each neighbourhood in Richmond.

In 2024, the City received a federal New Horizons for Seniors Program grant to facilitate two Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups, one of which was initiated in fall 2024 in the Hamilton neighbourhood. The intent of this report is to share highlights of the Age-Friendly Hamilton Neighbourhood Group project, its implementation process and suggested next steps.

¹ [Age-friendly domains](#) include outdoor spaces and public buildings; transportation, including traffic safety; social well-being and participation; respect, social inclusion and cultural safety; community engagement and employment; communications and information; community support, and health and wellness services.



Hamilton Neighbourhood





NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUP PROCESS

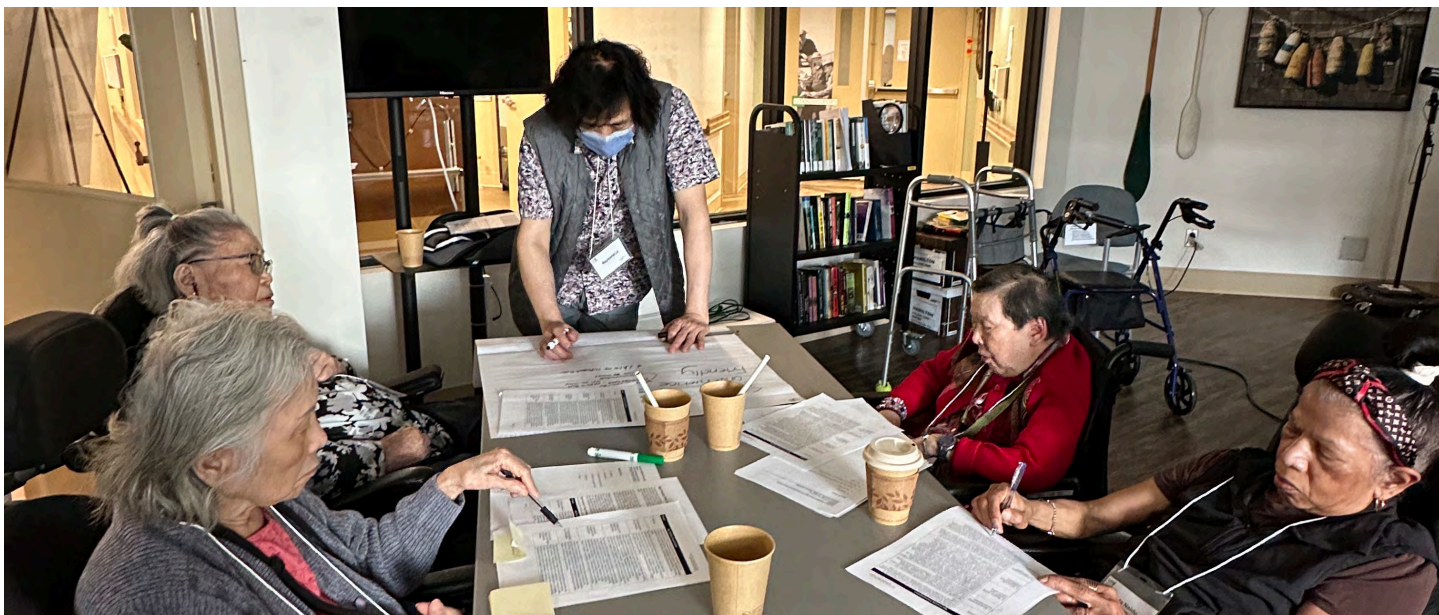
The Age-Friendly Hamilton Neighbourhood Group was comprised of 10 seniors aged 55+ living in the Hamilton neighbourhood. Where possible, efforts were made to ensure there was diversity in age, gender, culture, socio-economic status and ability. The majority (80 per cent) of participants identified as female and the remainder identified as male. The age of participants ranged from 65 to 84 years. To enhance accessibility, interpretation services were provided for three participants who spoke Cantonese or Mandarin, and printed materials were translated into both Simplified and Traditional Chinese.

The mandate of the Neighbourhood Group was to engage in collaborative dialogue to explore and identify age-friendly elements (or potential areas for age-friendly improvements) in the Hamilton neighbourhood, raise awareness of available age-friendly resources and services in the area and foster connections among seniors.

The Neighbourhood Group met four times at Hamilton Community Centre from November to December 2024 and meetings were two and a half hours in length. The format for each meeting was organized around a social activity/icebreaker, educational opportunity, discussion period and an opportunity for informal conversation over refreshments.

A facilitated bus tour of the Hamilton neighbourhood provided an opportunity to further explore and discuss age-friendly elements in the neighbourhood. Guest speakers were invited to present on age-friendly topics related to the group's interests and included representatives from Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives (RCRG) and the City of Richmond Housing Office. Participants also received a tour of the Seniors Centre at Minoru Centre for Active Living.

In addition to the Neighbourhood Group meetings, a two-hour session was held with residents of the Hamilton Village Care Centre and Hamilton High Street Residence to ensure the voices of residents who may face barriers to community participation were included. Recognizing that some residents might not easily access or engage in social activities outside their living facilities, this session provided an opportunity for seniors to share their perspectives on age-friendly community planning in Hamilton. A total of 24 residents participated, including 20 women and four men. Of this group, nine participants used a mobility device (wheelchair or walker) and one participant was experiencing sight loss. Verbal interpretation in Cantonese was provided for two residents.



WHAT WE HEARD

Participants discussed the eight domains of an Age-Friendly City in relation to identified features and services available in the Hamilton neighbourhood. This included outdoor spaces and buildings, transportation, housing, social well-being and participation, respect and social inclusion, community engagement and employment, communication and information, and community support and health services.

While all eight domains of an Age-Friendly City were discussed, the depth of conversation varied based on participants' interests and lived experiences in the Hamilton neighbourhood. The group engaged most extensively with topics related to outdoor spaces and public buildings as well as housing.

An overview of each domain of Age-Friendly Cities and participant feedback in relation to their experiences in the Hamilton neighbourhood is summarized below. The domains are presented in an order that reflects the depth of discussion during the Neighbourhood Group sessions.

Outdoor Spaces and Public Buildings

Age-friendly outdoor spaces and public buildings refers to spaces that are safe, accessible and positively impact seniors' mobility, independence, quality of life and ability to age in place. Examples include design and maintenance of sidewalks and curbs, street intersections and crosswalks, green spaces, street lighting, regulation of traffic flow, accessibility and safety of buildings, pedestrian walkways and sidewalks.

Neighbourhood Group participants identified several strengths related to outdoor spaces and public buildings in the Hamilton neighbourhood, expressing overall satisfaction with their accessibility and usability. Hamilton Community Centre was noted as a facility that provides access to programs and services that are appreciated by seniors in the community.

Participants valued the availability of parks and recreational spaces in the neighbourhood, particularly Hamilton Community Park, which serves as an important gathering place for residents of all ages. The presence of washrooms in parks was noted as a positive feature that enhances usability. While the park is well-used and appreciated, participants mentioned

that additional lighting, more seating options and enhanced bylaw enforcement related to dog waste in the park would improve its accessibility and usability.

While public spaces throughout the Hamilton neighbourhood were positively regarded and well-used, several areas for minor improvements were identified. Overgrown trees in some areas were noted as reducing visibility for pedestrians, making the Hamilton Community Park perceived as less secure. Participants highlighted an appreciation for greenery and recreation spaces and would welcome any opportunities to further enhance the neighbourhood's environment with these spaces.

Some accessibility barriers were mentioned as a concern, particularly for those requiring mobility assistance. Uneven sidewalks and pathways were highlighted as a challenge, with construction activity noted as a contributing factor, causing damage to specific sidewalks. The absence of wheelchair ramps at some private shops and facilities makes travel difficult for seniors and individuals with disabilities. Additionally, some crosswalks in the neighbourhood were described as too long, making it difficult for those using mobility aids to cross safely, particularly when the pedestrian crossing lights change quickly.

Following the Neighbourhood Group meetings, participant feedback was shared with the relevant City departments to help address immediate concerns where possible and to inform future planning and improvements. As a result, the City's Parks Department is planning to assess Hamilton Community Park for visibility improvements, lighting and seating, and the Community Bylaws Department is reviewing options such as signage and education/enforcement measures to address concerns related to dog waste in the park. Feedback about the absence of wheelchair ramps and insufficient pedestrian crossing time at certain locations was noted by the Transportation Department for further assessment. Reports of specific locations with uneven sidewalks and walkways were forwarded to the City's Public Works Service Centre and have since been addressed.

Housing

Age-friendly housing is safe, well-designed and in proximity to support services and social connections. It includes access to a range of options that accommodate changing needs over time by offering different levels of support, from independent living to assisted living and long-term care, allowing seniors to transition as their mobility, health or care needs evolve. Other key factors include accessibility and affordability of housing and the proximity to services to ensure seniors can maintain their independence and quality of life.

Most of the Neighbourhood Group participants indicated that they have lived in the Hamilton neighbourhood for many years, while others had recently moved to the neighbourhood. Overall, participants were satisfied and secure with their current housing situations. The Neighbourhood Group participants all live in single-family dwellings and the participants from the engagement session at the Hamilton Village Care Centre reside in seniors-oriented independent living or long-term care settings. Those living in single-family dwellings noted that, while they value remaining in their homes, maintenance can become increasingly difficult due to mobility limitations, the demands of household tasks and the financial burden associated with upkeep.

Some participants expressed a desire to downsize but reported that smaller units were either difficult to find or too costly. A lack of suitable, affordable options along the housing continuum makes it difficult for seniors to transition into housing that better supports their changing needs while remaining in their community. In addition, the group noted limited awareness of the availability of long-term care services in the neighbourhood and how to access them. Some participants shared that long waitlists and high costs associated with assisted living further limited their options, particularly for those requiring additional care.

Housing-related feedback from the Hamilton Neighbourhood Group was shared with Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH); Richmond Cares, Richmond Gives (RCRG) and the City's Housing Office. The feedback related to long-term care and assisted living was noted by VCH for consideration in ongoing service planning. VCH provided information and resources on accessing long-term care and assisted living options that were subsequently shared with the Neighbourhood Group participants.

RCRG offers a variety of services through the Better at Home program to support aging in place, including light housekeeping, grocery shopping and delivery, and friendly visiting. RCRG also provides assistance with finding and accessing housing supports and resources, completing housing forms and applications, and understanding topics such as tenancy rights and the continuum of housing options in Richmond through the Seniors Housing Information and Navigation Ease (SHINE) program. These services were highlighted during a presentation to the Neighbourhood Group, and related information was shared with participants.

Broader concerns related to the affordability and availability of housing options that support aging in place have been documented by the City's Housing Office and will be considered as part of ongoing development and refinement of new and existing policies. Representatives from the Housing Office also presented to the Neighbourhood Group about the City's housing policy and planning initiatives, how to access housing supports provided by BC Housing and other service providers, and to provide copies of the City's Affordable Housing Guide to participants.

Social Well-being and Participation

Age-friendly social well-being and participation opportunities are affordable and accessible to allow seniors to avoid isolation, connect to their community, and enjoy good health and longevity. Examples include inclusive programs and services, affordability of services, convenience of location and times of programs and services, and a variety of programs and services offered.

Neighbourhood Group participants highlighted several strengths in the Hamilton neighbourhood, including the accessibility and variety of programs offered at Hamilton Community Centre and local churches. Overall, the convenient location of Hamilton Community Centre was viewed as an advantage for seniors living in the neighbourhood as they can access programs and services and feel welcome at the community centre. However, those living in the long-term care facilities mentioned limited mobility and lack of awareness about available programs at the community centre as barriers to participation in community activities and feeling connected to neighbours.

While the City's program registration system works well for many, a few participants noted that seniors find the evening timing and online system navigation difficult without in-person assistance. While telephone support is available, those needing in-person support may have to wait until customer service is available the next morning, by which time some popular programs may already be full or have waitlists.

Feedback about the barriers to online program registration was shared with relevant City departments, who were aware of these concerns and already implementing various pilot solutions. This includes enhancing Call Centre support during registration periods and providing technology education and support specific to program registration to enhance seniors' comfort with using their technology and the online registration system. In addition, feedback about the desire for more information to be distributed to long-term care home residents was shared with staff at Hamilton Community Centre, who will follow up with these facilities directly.



Transportation

Age-friendly transportation planning aims to create inclusive, safe, well-designed transportation networks in proximity to support services and social connections. Examples include visibility of street signs and numbers, lighting at intersections, accessibility and availability of parking, safety and frequency of public transportation, accessible parking spots and permits, and drop-off and pick-up areas.

Many of the participants travel within and outside their neighbourhood by private transportation. Public transit offered by TransLink, while valued, was noted as challenging to navigate. Participants shared that some bus routes become overcrowded, especially during peak hours in the early morning, creating an uncomfortable environment for seniors that may not be able to access a seat.

Those who require mobility aids noted that there are limited public transportation options, such as HandyDART or smaller buses for organized group trips that support travel within and outside their neighbourhood. Participants expressed interest in more outtrips to destinations outside the Hamilton neighbourhood, particularly for recreational and social opportunities. Residents living in care facilities also noted that transit routes they previously relied on had been reduced in recent years, limiting their ability to travel for medical appointments or social activities.

Feedback was shared with the relevant departments in the City. Participants' interest in more outtrips to destinations outside the Hamilton neighbourhood was noted by staff. Broader transportation feedback, including requests to improve TransLink bus frequency, explore local shuttle options for those who need mobility assistance, and enhance public transportation access by TransLink for seniors living in care facilities was documented to help inform ongoing discussions with TransLink.

Respect, Social Inclusion and Cultural Safety

Age-friendly communities promote respect, social inclusion and cultural safety of seniors, which positively impacts their overall well-being. This helps reduce ageism and stereotypes, fosters positive attitudes towards the aging population and encourages respectful social connections between all ages in the community. Examples include consulting seniors about their needs and interests, recognizing past and present contributions of seniors, integration of seniors with diverse backgrounds, and inclusion of seniors in community events and intergenerational activities.

Neighbourhood Group participants generally felt safe, respected and socially connected within the Hamilton neighbourhood. However, some participants expressed a desire for ongoing engagement with residents about their needs and interests. The participants that were relatively new to the neighbourhood shared that

they did not yet feel socially connected, as they were adapting to their surroundings, and noted interest in opportunities to further connect with neighbours.

Participants highlighted that, while Hamilton Community Centre offers a variety of programs, language barriers prevent some seniors from fully participating. Mandarin and Cantonese are commonly spoken in the neighbourhood, which can pose challenges for seniors who do not speak these languages in trying to form connection with neighbours. At the same time, seniors who do speak Mandarin or Cantonese shared that they often face difficulties due to the limited availability of programs and information in their preferred language. Participants emphasized the need for more multilingual programming and communication, particularly in Mandarin, Cantonese, Punjabi and English to reflect the linguistic diversity of the community. Additionally, there was interest in beginner-level English classes tailored to seniors, as some participants found existing options too advanced or fast-paced. Participants also expressed a desire for more intergenerational and intercultural activities, as well as workshops focused on fall prevention.

While many cultural activities and events take place throughout Richmond and in Hamilton each year, the feedback from participants reinforces the value of continuing to support these types of inclusive activities. Feedback regarding culturally inclusive programming, intergenerational activities, opportunities for physical and social engagement, beginner-level English classes for seniors and interest in fall prevention workshops was shared with relevant City departments and partner organizations to inform future program planning.

Community Engagement and Employment

Age-friendly community engagement and employment allows seniors to maintain social connections, develop new skills and contribute to their communities in a meaningful way. This positively impacts their health and reduces age-related stigma, which in turn leads to seniors that are respected and engaged in their communities. Examples include opportunities to volunteer in the community, participate in local government meetings, find paid work suited to their skills and access clear information about available opportunities.

Participants recognized that there are various volunteer opportunities available for seniors in the Hamilton neighbourhood. However, some seniors expressed challenges in accessing these opportunities due to language barriers and a lack of awareness about relevant programs. In addition, some participants expressed a desire for more employment options for seniors who wish to remain active in the workforce, as well as volunteer roles that better align with their skills and interests.

Feedback regarding barriers to volunteering, such as language challenges and limited awareness of available opportunities, as well as the desire for more employment options and skill-aligned volunteer roles, was shared with and noted by relevant City departments and partner organizations, including RCRG, for future planning.

Communication and Information

Age-friendly communication and information about programs and services is accessible and easy to understand by all seniors with varying needs and abilities, allowing them to stay informed and actively engaged. This includes using clear and varied communication methods, ensuring information is presented in readable formats, improving access to technology and digital literacy support, and providing a centralized system for accessing information.

In the Hamilton neighbourhood, information about programs and services is shared through multiple communication channels. This includes online content available on the City's website, as well as outreach by the Recreation Leader at the Hamilton Community Centre, who regularly informs residents visiting the centre about upcoming activities and events. Hamilton Community Centre also provides a wide range of printed materials onsite to promote and raise awareness of programs and services for seniors, including the seasonally produced 55+ Program Guide, along with brochures, posters, pamphlets, and flyers.

Participants noted a strong preference for paper-based communication, as many seniors find online resources less accessible. There was an emphasis on the need for frequent distribution of flyers and mail-based communication to ensure that information reaches all residents. Additionally, participants highlighted the importance of translating materials into a variety of languages such as Chinese and Punjabi and of ensuring communications are available for a variety of accessibility needs (e.g. for those with sight loss).

Feedback regarding communication and information sharing was shared with relevant City departments and partner organizations. While the City's website includes an embedded translation feature, some materials require translation beyond what is currently provided. Feedback about the importance of accessible communications that accommodate a range of needs as well as seniors' preference for printed materials and frequent distribution of flyers and mail-

based communication was acknowledged, alongside the City's ongoing efforts to balance these with sustainability objectives. The City is actively working to enhance accessibility features through the various communication channels.

Community Support and Health and Wellness Services

Age-friendly community support and health and wellness services are accessible and available in a range of options for those with varying health conditions. This allows seniors the opportunity to remain in their communities and maintain their health and independence. Examples include a range of health services such as home care, nutrition advice, physical activity programs and the availability of adult day programs and residential facilities for people who are no longer able to live at home.

Many of the Neighbourhood Group participants had a family doctor and a relationship with a local pharmacist. They highlighted relying on the local health centre to meet their primary health needs and appreciated the accessibility of nearby pharmacy services, including access to flu shots. However, for those whose first language was not English, language was seen as a barrier to communication with health professionals. Some participants shared that although doctors are available at the local health centre, they are not all accepting new patients, making it difficult for seniors without a regular physician to receive timely care. In addition, access to specialists was noted as a challenge, with many seniors sharing that they travel to Vancouver or Burnaby for specialist appointments, which can be inconvenient and difficult for those with limited mobility or transportation options. Those living in the long-term care facilities noted a desire for more frequent physician visits.

All health-related feedback was shared with VCH and Richmond Division of Family Practice, and will be addressed through ongoing service planning.



PARTICIPANT REFLECTIONS AND EXPERIENCES

To assess the effectiveness of the Neighbourhood Group, pre- and post-program surveys were completed by all participants. These surveys provided insights directly from participants, enabling an evaluation of their expectations and experiences before and after the sessions. Participant feedback helps to inform the City's approach to facilitating future Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups in Richmond.

According to the surveys, the reasons for participating in the Neighbourhood Group (in order of frequency) were to contribute to positive changes in the neighbourhood, to learn more about programs and services available to support seniors in the Hamilton neighbourhood and to learn more about age-friendly planning.

Comparing responses between the pre- and post-program surveys highlighted the impact of the Age-Friendly Hamilton Neighbourhood Group on participants and showcased improvements in several areas. The most significant change was observed in participants' familiarity with the age-friendly concept and their awareness of and access to programs and services available for seniors in Richmond, which increased from 70 per cent before the program to

100 per cent afterward. This was followed by an improvement in participants' confidence in advocating for age-friendly changes in their neighbourhood (rising from 80 to 100 per cent) and an increase in feelings of belonging and safety within the community (both increasing from 90 to 100 per cent).

Additionally, 80 per cent of participants agreed that participation in the Neighbourhood Group provided them with an opportunity to learn more about available seniors programs and services in Richmond, learn more about their neighbourhood and engage in new experiences. Meanwhile, 60 per cent indicated that their participation contributed to positive change in their community and built connections with their neighbours.

Participants described their experience with the program as "eye-opening, excellent and resourceful." Many found it "well-organized, very good and variable." These results highlight the program's positive impact in enhancing awareness, confidence and community connections among seniors.

NEXT STEPS

While this report summarizes the Neighbourhood Group's feedback, detailed feedback has been shared with all relevant City departments and partner organizations to inform short- and longer-term planning, including updates to the City's Official Community Plan.

Additionally, these insights, alongside results from the pre- and post-program surveys, will help shape future age-friendly initiatives in Richmond, such as refining the Neighbourhood Group process by incorporating participant feedback related to Neighbourhood Group recruitment, session structure and ensuring each group is meaningful, inclusive and responsive to the needs of local seniors.

As the City continues to expand Age-Friendly Neighbourhood Groups across all neighbourhoods in Richmond, emerging trends will be monitored to support the broader implementation of Richmond's Council-adopted Seniors Strategy, particularly Strategic Direction 1, which focuses on creating age-friendly neighbourhoods that support aging in place. These efforts align with the Seniors Strategy's broader vision of ensuring that "all seniors living in Richmond are safe, respected, healthy, and engaged in their communities."

CONCLUSION

The City of Richmond recognizes the important role that age-friendly neighbourhoods play in building community and keeping people healthy, well-connected and able to participate in their neighbourhoods.

The Age-Friendly Hamilton Neighbourhood Group sessions offered valuable insights into the experiences of seniors living in the Hamilton neighbourhood. Participants highlighted key strengths, including availability of accessible community spaces, parks and recreational areas such as Hamilton Community Park and the variety of accessible programs and services provided at Hamilton Community Centre. They also acknowledged an overall sense of safety and feeling of social connection in the neighbourhood. Identified areas for improvement included specific segments of pedestrian infrastructure, availability of affordable and accessible housing options, additional volunteer opportunities, increased access to health care services and access to multilingual information and resources.



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