



**General Purposes Committee
Electronic Meeting**

**Anderson Room, City Hall
6911 No. 3 Road**

**Monday, November 17, 2025
4:00 p.m.**

Pg. # ITEM

MINUTES

GP-3 *Motion to adopt the **minutes** of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on November 3, 2025.*



PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE DIVISION

1. **CITY SIGNATURE AND COMMUNITY EVENTS PROGRAM 2026**
(File Ref. No. 11-7400-01) (REDMS No. 8181002)

GP-6 **See Page GP-6 for full report**

Designated Speakers: Dee Bowley-Cowan & Marie Fenwick

STAFF RECOMMENDATIONS

- (1) *That the City Signature and Community Events Program 2026, as outlined in Table 1 of the report titled “City Signature and Community Events Program 2026”, dated October 27, 2025, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be approved for the following events and initiatives:*
- (a) *Children's Arts Festival;*
 - (b) *Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival;*

- (c) *Doors Open Richmond;*
 - (d) *Community Celebration Grant Program;*
 - (e) *Neighbourhood Block Party Program;*
 - (f) *Steveston Salmon Festival;*
 - (g) *Richmond Maritime Festival;*
 - (h) *Richmond Farm Fest; and*
 - (i) *Community Event Safety Enhancements;*
- (2) *That the expenditures totaling \$1,113,900 for the City Signature and Community Events Program 2026 with funding of \$1,027,900 from the Rate Stabilization Account, \$41,000 estimated sponsorship and \$45,000 estimated grant revenue be considered in the 2026 budget process; and*
- (3) *That a Community Festive Lights Event at Minoru Lake be investigated, including timing, budget and potential partnerships.*



COUNCILLOR ALEXA LOO

2. MOTION TO SUPPORT AFFECTED LANDOWNERS DURING APPEAL OF COWICHAN LAND CLAIM

(File Ref. No.) (REDMS No.)

GP-24

See Page GP-24 for background materials

MOTION

- (1) *Write a letter to the Prime Minister, the Premier, the Ministers of Finance, the Attorneys General to mitigate the effects of the Cowichan Land ruling on private landowners during the appeal process; and*
- (2) *For staff to work with the Federal and Provincial governments to investigate options to support landowners in the disputed lands in Richmond to mitigate the effects of the Cowichan Land ruling during the appeal process and report back.*



ADJOURNMENT





General Purposes Committee

Date: Monday, November 3, 2025

Place: Anderson Room
Richmond City Hall

Present: Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie, Chair
Councillor Chak Au (by teleconference)
Councillor Carol Day
Councillor Laura Gillanders
Councillor Andy Hobbs
Councillor Alexa Loo
Councillor Bill McNulty
Councillor Michael Wolfe

Absent: Councillor Kash Heed

Call to Order: The Chair called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m.

MINUTES

It was moved and seconded

That the minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee held on October 20, 2025, be adopted as circulated.

CARRIED

FINANCE AND CORPORATE SERVICES DIVISION

1. **ADVANCE PLANNING FOR THE 2026 ELECTION**
(File Ref. No. 12-8125-80-01) (REDMS No. 8164991)

It was moved and seconded

- (1) *That the proposed election program for the 2026 General Local and School Election, as described in the report, "Advance Planning for the 2026 Election," dated October 16, 2025, from the Director, City Clerk's Office, be endorsed; and*

General Purposes Committee

Monday, November 3, 2025

- (2) *That one-time funding of \$1,113,000 to support the planning and implementation of the 2026 Election be submitted for consideration in the 2026 budget process.*

In response to queries from Committee, staff advised that (i) the online mail ballot application process is relatively new, other municipalities have also seen low participation. It may take several election cycles to build voter awareness and familiarity of the mail ballot process as an assessable voting option, (ii) the \$30,000 advertising budget primarily covers the eight legislatively required statutory newspaper print ads and any additional discretionary and supplementary ads in both hardcopy and digital form, and (iii) a comprehensive communication plan including social media, the election website, news and media releases and a detailed voter guide distributed to all households, community centres, libraries and available on line will be used to promote all aspects of the election.

Further discussion ensued with respect to (i) staffing levels and costs, (ii) anticipation of an increased voter turnout, (iii) increasing awareness of the Election Mobile App, and (iv) stipulated deadlines for the mail ballot voting option.

The question on the motion was then called and **CARRIED**.

PARKS, RECREATION AND CULTURE DIVISION

2. CITY OF RICHMOND SOCIAL MEDIA ACCOUNTS

(File Ref. No. 01-0190-01) (REDMS No. 8137876)

It was moved and seconded

That the report titled “City of Richmond Social Media Accounts”, dated October 16, 2025, from the Director, Corporate Communications and Marketing be received for information.

The question on the motion was not called as discussion ensued with respect to (i) challenges establishing a Chinese language social media account or platform, (ii) implementation of WhatsApp as a tool for emergency alerts and outreach to multilingual communities, and (iii) engagement on various City of Richmond social media platforms and accounts.

General Purposes Committee

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In response to queries from Committee, staff advised that (i) staff have established stronger relationships with Chinese media, enabling advertising in their newspapers and engagements through their social media platforms, (ii) press releases are done based on the situation and the audience that will be interested in the specific situation, (iii) the City's Facebook account is in English, analytics show that targeting a specific audience is most effective in English, as user's devices can automatically translate that content to other languages, (iv) staff are actively monitoring Chinese speaking social media groups and platforms and respond promptly through the available channels when appropriate, and (v) staff continue to look at ways to engage with other platforms.

The question on the motion was then called and it was **CARRIED**.

ADJOURNMENT

It was moved and seconded

That the meeting adjourn (4:27 p.m.).

CARRIED

Certified a true and correct copy of the Minutes of the meeting of the General Purposes Committee of the Council of the City of Richmond held on Monday, November 3, 2025.

Mayor Malcolm D. Brodie
Chair

Raman Grewal
Legislative Services Associate



City of Richmond

Report to Committee

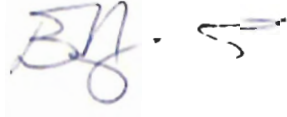
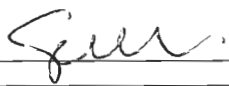
To: General Purposes Committee **Date:** October 27, 2025
From: Marie Fenwick **File:** 11-7400-01/2025-Vol
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services 01
Re: **City Signature and Community Events Program 2026**

Staff Recommendations

1. That the City Signature and Community Events Program 2026, as outlined in Table 1 of the report titled "City Signature and Community Events Program 2026", dated October 27, 2025, from the Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services, be approved for the following events and initiatives:
 - a) Children's Arts Festival;
 - b) Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival;
 - c) Doors Open Richmond;
 - d) Community Celebration Grant Program;
 - e) Neighbourhood Block Party Program;
 - f) Steveston Salmon Festival;
 - g) Richmond Maritime Festival;
 - h) Richmond Farm Fest; and
 - i) Community Event Safety Enhancements;
2. That the expenditures totaling \$1,113,900 for the City Signature and Community Events Program 2026 with funding of \$1,027,900 from the Rate Stabilization Account, \$41,000 estimated sponsorship and \$45,000 estimated grant revenue be considered in the 2026 budget process; and
3. That a Community Festive Lights Event at Minoru Lake be investigated, including timing, budget and potential partnerships.

Marie Fenwick
Director, Arts, Culture and Heritage Services
(604-276-4288)

Att. 1

REPORT CONCURRENCE		
ROUTED TO: Economic Development Finance Department Risk Management Parks Services Recreation & Sport Services	CONCURRENCE ☒ ☒ ☒ ☒ ☒	CONCURRENCE OF GENERAL MANAGER 
SENIOR STAFF REPORT REVIEW	INITIALS: 	APPROVED BY CAO 

Staff Report

Origin

The purpose of this report is to provide Council with an overview of the 2025 City signature and community events program, the proposed program of events and initiatives for 2026, including the community event safety enhancements, and an associated budget for consideration as part of the 2026 budget process.

This report supports Council's Strategic Plan 2022-2026 Focus Area #3 A Safe and Prepared Community:

Community safety and preparedness through effective planning, strategic partnerships and proactive programs.

3.3 Ensure the community is collectively prepared for emergencies and potential disasters.

This report 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.

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

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

6.5 Enhance and preserve arts and heritage assets in the community.

This report also supports a number of Council endorsed strategies including: The City of Richmond Signature and Community Event Plan 2025-2029, The Richmond Arts Strategy 2019–2024, City of Richmond Community Wellness Strategy 2018–2023, Cultural Harmony Plan 2019–2029, City of Richmond Youth Strategy 2022–2032, City of Richmond Seniors Strategy 2022–2032, City of Richmond Accessibility Plan 2023–2033, and the Steveston Heritage Interpretive Framework.

Analysis

Background

Events enrich the lives of residents by providing opportunities for the community to connect, learn, and celebrate together. Events contribute to social and economic wellbeing, provide valuable volunteer opportunities, build a sense of community and enhance quality of life.

On October 21, 2024, Council approved the City of Richmond Signature and Community Events Plan for 2025-2029 (the Plan). The program of events and initiatives proposed for 2026 supports both the Council-endorsed Plan, including the Guiding Principles for City events:

1. Build capacity of local event organizers by prioritizing and investing in community-driven events;
2. Provide opportunities for Richmond residents and community groups to collaborate, contribute and participate;
3. Maximize social connections and foster sense of community pride and belonging for both volunteers and event participants;
4. Celebrate local themes, cultural diversity, and include programming that is uniquely Richmond;
5. Advance the City's environmental sustainability and accessibility goals;
6. Ensure events are safe, well-organized and sustainably funded; and
7. Encourage and support the development of unique events with a regional draw that bring economic and community benefit and raise the profile of Richmond.

Overview of 2025 City Signature and Community Events Program

The 2025 City Signature Events Program was well received by the community and included a full program with the return of the Richmond Farm Fest. An overview of the 2025 events program can be found in Attachment 1.

Proposed 2026 City Event Program

In addition to the Council-approved Kaiwo Maru and Richmond Celebrates FIFA World Cup 26 scheduled for 2026, the proposed 2026 Signature and Community Events Program detailed below supports the delivery of a mix of events, including neighbourhood, community, and city-wide events that align with the Council-approved Plan. Accessibility and community safety will continue to be a priority in the planning of events in 2026. All of the proposed events are in alignment with the Council-approved City of Richmond Signature and Community Events Plan for 2025-2029 and its guiding principles.

Children's Arts Festival 2026

Proposed Program – February 16-20, 2026

Similar to the 2025 program, the proposed 2026 program will include arts education experiences at the Library/Cultural Centre and Annex on Family Day with partnering community centres added through the school days component. All programs will be led by professional artist instructors in a wide variety of arts disciplines, including visual, literary, performance, media arts and more.

The School Days program, with the support of Richmond School District No. 38, will run from February 17 to 20, 2026. School days programming will be offered at community centres throughout Richmond.

The objective of the event is to engage Richmond's children and expand their horizons through a large assortment of culturally and artistically diverse activities such as:

- Participatory art activations;
- Drop-in Art in Action stations;
- Arts and culture workshops; and
- Performances led by local artists and art educators.

The Children's Arts Festival represents a unique opportunity for residents, youth and artists to come together to build community. The Festival strives to instill awareness and youth engagement in the arts to fulfill the goals outlined in the Richmond Arts Strategy.

Proposed 2026 Budget: \$72,800 of City funding plus an estimated \$16,000 in sponsorship for a total of \$ 88,800.

Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival

Proposed Program – April 12, 2026

For 2026, the festival theme will be “*celebration*.” The theme symbolizes a celebration for those who have participated and volunteered since the start of the festival 10 years ago, and for future years to come.

As initially envisioned by the B.C. Wakayama Kenjin Kai, the Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival celebrates the natural and transient beauty of the 255 Akebono cherry trees in bloom at Garry Point Park, while providing festival visitors the opportunity to experience unique Japanese customs and traditions. As in past years, this year's festival will feature performances, demonstrations and hands-on activities provided by local Japanese craftspeople.

Proposed 2026 Budget: \$57,300 of City funding and an estimated \$5,000 in grants for a total of \$62,300.

Doors Open Richmond

Proposed Program – June 6 and 7, 2026

Doors Open Richmond is an annual two-day event featuring free opportunities to explore behind the scenes in Richmond's unique places. The event promotes intercultural understanding by prioritizing its partnerships with cultural, faith-based, civic partner and other sites. Working with these partner sites, Doors Open helps organizations and communities share their cultural practices with the public in their own way and with their voice. It also helps newcomers to Richmond to understand the various community services available.

For its 19th year, the Richmond Museum Society will support the delivery of programming at over 40 sites across the City, offering a shuttle bus program for faith-based organizations along No. 5 Road and various cultural centres, and providing online programming for sites unable to invite public inside a facility. To enable the delivery of these activities, the event will be supported again by a robust volunteer ambassador program.

Any additional funds the Richmond Museum Society secures through grants and/or sponsorship will be used for program enhancements.

Proposed 2026 Budget: \$41,400 of City funding.

Community Celebration Grant Program

Proposed Program June 1 to December 31, 2026

In addition to the proposed Community Celebration Grant Program for 2026, subject to Council approval, the Richmond Celebrates Soccer Community Celebration Grant Program will launch concurrently with this Program. The details of the proposed Richmond Celebrates Soccer Community Celebration Grant Program will be brought forward for Council consideration in December 2025.

This grant will be open to non-profit groups to host an event open to the public. Eligibility and evaluation criteria include:

- Richmond-based non-profit groups, Richmond based-not-for-profit faith-based groups, Parent Advisory Committees, and Student Councils;
- Event must be held in Richmond;
- Event must demonstrate alignment with program objectives including creating events that build community in Richmond;
- Event must take place outside of regular working hours to ensure a diverse range of people are able to attend;
- Event must be free and open to the public;
- If required, applicants must complete the Richmond Event Approval Coordination Team (REACT) application and are subject to REACT approval;
- Applicant must demonstrate capacity to safely host the proposed event outlined in the application and provide a realistic estimate of resources needed and total budget required; and
- Applicant must provide a final report including, copy of receipts and two photos of the event with signed photo waivers.

Events associated with a political party or have funding from another City of Richmond grant program will be ineligible.

The proposed 2026 Community Celebration Grant Program will be launched in Q1 of 2026. Proposed grant recipients will be brought for Council approval in Q2 of 2026 for events to be held June 1 to December 31, 2026.

Proposed 2026 Budget: \$58,000 of City funding.

Neighbourhood Block Party Program

This program offers up to \$500 of funding for neighbourhood groups to connect, create a sense of community, and enhance safety and awareness in neighbourhoods. Block parties can take

place in a variety of spaces, including parks, on local streets or private property. Proposed eligibility and evaluation criteria include:

- Applicants must be two Richmond-based residents living in the same neighbourhood, street or block (two individuals not living in the same household) and/or a strata;
- Block party must be held in Richmond;
- Block party must demonstrate alignment with program objectives including creating events that build community in Richmond;
- Block party must be free to the residents in that neighbourhood, street or block;
- Applicants must demonstrate capacity to safely host the proposed event and provide a realistic estimate of resources needed and total budget required;
- If required, applicants must complete a REACT application and are subject to REACT approval; and
- Applicants must provide a final report, including a copy of receipts and two photos of the event with signed photo waivers.

Block parties associated with a political party will be ineligible.

If approved, the Neighbourhood Block Party Program will be launched in Q1 of 2026, and applicants will be able to apply for up to \$500 of funding for a Neighbourhood Block Party held between May 15 and October 12, 2026. Applications will be reviewed and approved as they are received.

In addition to the proposed Neighbourhood Block Party Program for 2026, subject to Council approval, the Richmond Celebrates Soccer Neighbourhood Block Party Program will launch concurrently with this program. The details of the proposed Richmond Celebrates Soccer Neighbourhood Block Party Program will be brought forward for Council consideration in December 2025.

Proposed 2026 Budget: \$20,000 of City funding.

Steveston Salmon Festival / Canada Day

Proposed Program – July 1, 2026

Working in partnership with the Steveston Community Society, Richmond Agricultural and Industrial Society and the Steveston Salmon Festival Planning Committee, the 2026 event is anticipated to include many of the same elements as the 2025 festival, including the Parade, performance stages and entertainment throughout the site, the Japanese Cultural Show, Art Show, children's activities, Salmon Run Youth area, the traditional Salmon Bake, Chow Mein booth and food trucks. While the footprint of the event will differ due to the construction of the new Community Centre and demolition of the existing Community Centre, the Steveston Salmon Festival Planning Committee is committed to delivering a festival of a similar scope to previous years.

Proposed 2026 Budget: \$359,000 of City funding plus \$25,000 grant funding for a total of \$384,000. For 2026 only, a request for an additional \$50,000 Steveston Salmon Festival contingency is included to be used only to address the cost of the required relocation and tenting of

festival elements as a result of the lack of a community centre building. As planning is still underway, the actual need will be determined in early 2026.

Any additional funds Steveston Community Society/ Richmond Agricultural and Industrial Society secures through grants and/or sponsorship will be used for program enhancements.

Richmond Maritime Festival

Proposed Program – August 22-23, 2026

The Richmond Maritime Festival continues to serve as one of Richmond's signature events, showcasing the diverse cultural and maritime heritage of Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site and Steveston. In 2026, this will be accomplished through visiting boats, cultural activities, performances and heritage displays, inspired by the stories of those who lived and worked along the Fraser River. Should event alterations be required due to construction the events contingency can be used for this purpose.

Proposed 2026 Budget: \$208,300 of City funding plus \$15,000 sponsorship and \$15,000 grant funding for a total of \$238,300.

It is proposed that any additional funds brought forward by Richmond Arts Coalition or Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site Society through grants and sponsorships will be used for program enhancements.

Richmond Farm Fest

Proposed Program – September 13, 2026

Richmond Farm Fest returned to the Garden City Lands in 2025 in partnership with the Kwantlen Polytechnic University. The event celebrates Richmond's rich agricultural heritage and exciting future. This free, family-friendly event brings together the best of farming, food, and community in the heart of the city. Agriculture is a vital part of Richmond's cultural and economic story. With over 200 active farms, thriving restaurants, and a strong connection to land and food, Richmond is a hub for urban agriculture and unique culinary experiences.

In 2026, the festival will once again feature local agriculture, food security, future farmers, a kids area, food trucks, local music, hay wagon rides, the history of agriculture in Richmond and the local farm community.

Proposed 2026 Budget: \$56,100 of City funding plus \$10,000 sponsorship funding for a total of \$66,100.

Community Event Safety Enhancements

Earlier this year, a tragic event at the Lapu Lapu Day Festival in Vancouver prompted the Province of British Columbia (BC) to conduct a province wide review of how municipalities in BC mitigate risk at community events. Additionally, Municipal Insurance Association of British

Columbia (MIABC) produced the Risk Management Guide for Local Government Community Events. The outcome of these initiatives included recommendations related to event safety and security, as well as resources to support municipalities and event organizers with risk assessment and mitigation. The City of Vancouver also put out an internal report outlining their approach to safety and managing risks at community events, specifically the Lapu Lapu Day Festival. Concurrently, the City conducted a thorough review of the REACT process, specifically with regard to safety and security requirements and risk mitigation for community events.

REACT Review Findings

The Richmond Event Approval Coordination Team (REACT) review process is a comprehensive review of event applications that facilitates the delivery of safe outdoor community events held on public property. The REACT approval team consists of internal and external organizations including Richmond RCMP, Richmond Fire Rescue, Vancouver Coastal Health, Bylaws, Transportation, Business Licensing, Environmental Programs, and Community Events departments. This team reviews traffic control, site access and egress, sanitation, security, crowd dynamics, event activities, crowd size, business licenses, applicable permits, insurance and the nature of attendees (i.e. high-profile attendees).

While the internal review found that the City's event approval process is comprehensive and incorporates a robust evaluation of both City and community events, there are opportunities for improvement. These findings, combined with the findings of the province-wide reports, identified a number of steps the City could take to further enhance safety and security for community events as outlined below.

Recommended Changes to support Community Event Organizers

Several actions have been identified to further support community organizers to plan safe events. These include but are not limited to:

- Developing risk assessment and safety plan guidelines and other tools to support event organizers in ensuring the safety of event participants;
- Updating the City's Event Planning Resources webpage to support event organizers in planning community events;
- Purchasing equipment to loan out that will support event organizers with safety and security measures at their events; and
- Staffing to support 2026 events.

Additional resources are required in 2026 to support these community event safety enhancements. Community safety resource requirements will continue to be assessed throughout 2026. Should additional funds be required in 2027 and beyond that will be the subject of future reports to Council and budget processes.

Proposed 2026 City Events Budget: \$55,000 of City funding.

Potential New Event – Community Festive Lights Event at Minoru Lakes

Currently the City installs festive lighting displays across the community at 21 different locations, including the city centre area, City Hall, Steveston Village, Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site and Fire Hall No. 5 in Hamilton. This program features a combination of drive-by and interactive lighting displays. It is supplemented by partner initiatives such as the Rotary Club of Richmond Sunset's Winter Wonderland event held at City Hall and Tourism Richmond's Winter in the Village in Steveston Village.

Council may wish to consider expanding the current lighting program by exploring the addition of a Community Festive Lights Event at Minoru Lakes. It is envisioned this event would be comparable to that of the Lights at Lafarge in Coquitlam, but with a distinct "Made in Richmond" experience. Should Council wish to consider this, staff will consult with potential community partners and sponsors and report back with a detailed program, costing and timelines.

The proposed Event would invite residents to enjoy an illuminated, shared immersive experience walking around Minoru Lakes, showcasing high quality, unique and specialized displays. This locally inspired activation of the City's premier park space will be a vibrant and artistically inspired expression of the many cultural traditions found in Richmond and could serve as the City's signature multi-cultural event.

A Community Festive Lights Event at Minoru Lakes could address many of the comments heard from community stakeholders when developing the Community Signature and Community Events Plan including; promoting social engagement and civic pride, fostering cultural expression and intercultural connections, and providing an opportunity to highlight civic infrastructure.

Financial Impact

Table 1 - Proposed 2026 City Event Budget:

Event	2025 Council Approved Funding	2026 Proposed City Funding	2026 Estimated Sponsorship Revenue	2026 Estimated Grant Revenue	2026 Total Proposed City Event Program Budget
Children's Arts Festival (CAF) (February 16-20)	\$ 71,400	\$ 72,800	\$ 16,000		\$ 88,800
Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival (April 12)	\$ 51,000	\$ 57,300		\$ 5,000	\$ 62,300
Doors Open Richmond (June 6-7)	\$ 40,600	\$ 41,400			\$ 41,400
Community Celebration Grant Program (June – December)	\$ 51,000	\$ 58,000			\$ 58,000

Event	2025 Council Approved Funding	2026 Proposed City Funding	2026 Estimated Sponsorship Revenue	2026 Estimated Grant Revenue	2026 Total Proposed City Event Program Budget
Neighbourhood Block Party Program Fund (May - October)	\$ 25,500	\$ 20,000			\$ 20,000
Steveston Salmon Festival/ Canada Day (July 1)	\$ 351,900	\$ 359,000		\$ 25,000	\$ 384,000
Steveston Salmon Festival Contingency – 1 year only		\$ 50,000			\$ 50,000
Richmond Maritime Festival (August 22-23)	\$ 204,200	\$ 208,300	\$ 15,000	\$ 15,000	\$ 238,300
Richmond Farm Fest (September 13)	\$ 55,000	\$ 56,100	\$ 10,000		\$ 66,100
Supporting Food Security through Community Driven Events*	\$ 30,000				
NEW Community Event Safety Enhancements – 1 year only		\$ 55,000			\$ 55,000
Subtotal	\$ 880,600	\$ 977,900	\$ 41,000	\$ 45,000	\$1,063,900
City Events Contingency	\$ 50,000	\$ 50,000			\$ 50,000
TOTAL	\$ 930,600	\$1,027,900	\$ 41,000	\$ 45,000	\$1,113,900

* In 2026, previous grant recipients will be eligible to apply for a grant related to food access, food security, and urban agriculture through the newly expanded Environmental Enhancement and Food Security Grant Program.

The proposed total budget for the 2026 City Events Program is \$1,113,900 with funding of \$1,027,900 from the Rate Stabilization Account, \$41,000 estimated sponsorship and \$45,000 estimated grant revenue to be considered in the 2026 budget process. Staff will seek sponsorship revenue to offset the event costs commensurate with the size and scales of the events. Staff will continue to pursue grant funding to provide program enhancement for signature events. Grant estimates are based on the 2025 actual grants received.

As in previous years, any grants, sponsorships, other funding and in-kind contributions secured by community partners will be used for program enhancement.

An event contingency of \$50,000 is included to address any challenges that may arise with any individual event. This may include things such as unanticipated production issues related to

weather, unanticipated increased rental costs, additional safety requirements, event alterations due to construction, and/or sponsorships or grant shortfalls.

In order to further support and implement the recommendations to enhance community safety at events, a request for \$55,000 is included in the budget.

Conclusion

Events enrich the lives of residents by providing opportunities for the community to connect, contribute, learn, and celebrate together. They contribute to social and economic well-being, foster community resiliency, build community capacity and a sense of community identity and contribute to a vibrant city with a strong sense of place and distinct identity. The proposed program of events and initiatives for 2026, provides opportunities for the City to work collaboratively with a range of community organizations to safely deliver on a number of priorities identified in the City of Richmond's Signature and Community Event plan (2025-2029) and it is recommended it be approved. Additionally, Council may wish to consider exploring expanding the 2026 event program with additional community event safety enhancements and the exploration of a new Community Festive Lights Event at Minoru Lake.



Dee Bowley-Cowan
Program Manager, Events
(604-276-4320)

Att. 1: Overview of 2025 City Signature and Community Events Program

Overview of 2025 City Signature and Community Events Program

The following is an overview of the Council-approved event program for 2025.

Children's Arts Festival

The annual Children's Arts Festival (CAF) is the City's signature event for children, families, and educators. The festival included two components: a public day on February 17, 2025, and school days on February 18-21, 2025. With the support of the Richmond Public Library, Family Day was celebrated with a diverse series of workshops and performances that engage children in a variety of arts activities. The school days component, with the support of Richmond School District No. 38, saw similar activities take place throughout the city at local community centres.

Participation highlights include:

- Over 7,500 people attended the CAF for a wide range of programming during the Family Day public event on February 17, 2025;
- 1,578 children representing 68 classes from 20 Richmond elementary schools participated in the school days program from February 18 to February 21, 2025, at the Richmond Public Library/Cultural Centre and Annex and community centres (City Centre, Thompson, Sea Island, South Arm, and Steveston);
- 110 volunteers contributed to over 500 volunteer hours to the event;
- 4,291 website visitors;
- Online advertising reached 84,251 unique users, with 224 likes and 79 post shares; and
- Social media content reached 23,412 unique users, with 31,729 impressions, 179 reactions, and 76 likes and shares.

Richmond Cherry Blossom Festival

Celebrating the arrival of spring and the blooming of Garry Point Park's 255 Akebono cherry trees, this annual event is produced in partnership with representatives from the BC Wakayama Kenjin Kai. Held on April 6, 2025, the event featured live performances, demonstrations, food from a local restaurant and food trucks, Japanese cultural displays, and children's crafts and activities. The Sister City Advisory Committee once again displayed chochin (paper) lanterns to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Richmond's Sister City relationship with Wakayama. The 2025 Cherry Blossom Festival theme was 笑顔 (EAGO), meaning smile, to celebrate the joy and connection that blossoms within our community during this special event.

Participation highlights include:

- Over 5,000 visitors attended the festival;
- 24 volunteers contributed 192 hours;
- 6,597 website visitors; and
- Social media content reached 161,361 unique users, with 349,446 impressions and 1,903 likes and shares.

Doors Open Richmond

The 18th edition of Doors Open Richmond was held from June 7 to June 8, 2025, featuring 52 partner sites that offered a diverse range of unique experiences. This event featured the highest number of participating sites since its inception in 2008, including the addition of seven new locations. Notable partnerships were established with local farms, including KPU and the Sharing Farm, as well as with local artists, such as Effat Mirnia and FT Art Studio, whose work is inspired by their cultural heritage. The event also showcased representation from a broad spectrum of communities, such as Musqueam, Muslim, Sikh, Hindu, Catholic, Ukrainian, Buddhist, Japanese, Turkish, Baha'i, and Chinese groups. Additionally, two new videos were produced for the event, highlighting the Gateway Theatre and the Steveston Kendo Club.

Participation highlights include:

- Over 23,900 visits to sites were recorded throughout the weekend;
- 576 participants attended pre-registered programs, including guided tours of Richmond City Hall and guided bus tours featuring two new tours: Discover Doors Open and Sacred Spaces;
- 510 volunteers contributed 2,361 hours to the event; and
- Social media content reached 21,641 unique users, with 29,006 impressions, 481 reactions, and 248 likes or shares.

Community Celebration Grant Program

The 2025 Community Celebration Grant Program was publicly launched on January 13, 2025, through the City's website, social media platforms, direct outreach to past applicants, and postings in community facilities across Richmond. Richmond-based not-for-profit organizations, not-for-profit faith-based groups, Parent Advisory Committees, and School Student Councils were invited to submit creative proposals for free public events aimed at bringing residents together from diverse backgrounds through shared interests, arts and culture. All approved events were to be delivered by December 31, 2025.

In total, 78 applications were received by the February 9, 2025, deadline. 49 projects received funding, totalling \$48,518. Originally, 52 projects received funding (totalling \$52,052), however three applicants returned their grant funding upon making the decision to cancel their event in 2025.

Participation highlights include:

- Activities delivered through the grant included intercultural celebrations, outdoor concerts, art activities in the park, community carnivals, school and sporting events; and
- Event participation ranged from 25 to 500.

Richmond Neighbourhood Block Park Program

This year's Richmond Neighbourhood Block Party Program was launched on April 14, 2025, and was promoted through the City's website, Parks, Recreation and Culture e-News, social

media channels, and targeted outreach to Richmond School District No. 38, Community Associations and Societies, and City-operated Parks, Recreation and Culture facilities.

The program encouraged Richmond residents to strengthen neighbourhood connections and foster a sense of community by hosting block parties in a variety of spaces, including local parks, streets, and private strata properties. Funding was available to pairs of residents – living in the same neighbourhood and/or but in different households/strata – who applied to organize a free block party for their neighbours.

42 applications were received for the 2025 program. Out of the 42 applications, 32 block parties received a combined total of \$15,439.75 and four applications held successful block parties with a neighbourhood road closure.

The first block party took place on June 21, 2025, and the final block party took place on October 4, 2025. The 2025 intake period concluded on October 13, 2025.

Program Highlights:

- Block parties were hosted in more than 11 neighbourhoods across Richmond, with the majority held in the Steveston and Brighthouse area;
- Funding supported expenses such as insurance, table and chair rentals, food, lawn game rentals, bouncy castles, barricade rentals and marketing materials; and
- Activities included barbeques, international potlucks, children's crafts, games, road hockey, and storytelling.

Steveston Salmon Festival / Canada Day

The 78th Annual Steveston Salmon Festival was once again successfully delivered in partnership with the Steveston Community Society and the Richmond Agricultural and Industrial Society. This year's event was in alignment with the same vision theme from 2024, "It's about COMMUNITY" for the 2025 Festival. Visitors appreciated the activation of some traditional Salmon Festival activities, plus the addition of two new zones, Salmon Run and Salmon Row.

The 78th annual Steveston Salmon Festival on July 1, 2025, included:

- The Steveston Salmon Festival Parade, Salmon Bake and Chow Mein Community Food Booth, and market/trade show;
- A welcome ceremony including local, federal and provincial government and First Nations representatives;
- Traditional Steveston Salmon Festival programming, including the Japanese Cultural show and demonstrations, Art Show, and Marketplace;
- Introducing the new Sponsor Row zone for the festival's dedicated community groups and vendors;
- Activities for both youth and children at Sammy's Fun Zone and the new Salmon Run Youth Zone – including performances by young up-and-coming artists at the Salmon Run Zone stage;
- Activation of the Steveston Salmon Festival Sponsors at the new Sponsors Row Zone;
- A variety of artist and performers across the site; and

- A grand finale performance by Ten Souljers at the Spirit of Steveston Zone stage.

Participation highlights include:

- Over 80,000 visitors to the festival site throughout the day;
- 275 community volunteers contributed to over 1,437 hours to deliver the event;
- 86 parade participants;
- Over 40 local performers, including Richmond's own the Buttery Biscuits, Saints of Anastasia, the Showstoppers, MC Gigi, and Imitation Daves, to name a few;
- A combined total of 8,917 website visitors, including ads that garnered 1,057 post reactions and 169 shares; and
- Social media content related to the event reached 98,643 unique users, including 1,078 likes and 311 like and shares.

Richmond Maritime Festival

The 22nd annual Richmond Maritime Festival animated the Britannia Shipyard National Historic Site on August 23-24, 2025. The event program featured 14 wooden and working boats along the dock including local restored heritage boats, maritime-themed décor and installations throughout the site, live music on two stages, roving performers and musicians, popular hands-on activities, multicultural array of food vendors, and community booths.

Participation highlights include:

- Over 40,000 visitors to the site over the two day festival;
- 62 volunteers contributed over 560 hours to deliver the event;
- More than 100 artists, performers, and craftspeople contributed to the festival programming; and
- Social media content reached 251,892 unique users, garnering over 3,500 likes and shares.

Richmond Farm Fest

On September 7, 2025, Richmond Farm Fest, in partnership with the Kwantlen Polytechnic University, returned to Garden City Lands for a free, family-friendly celebration of farming, food and community. The festival featured a farmers and artisans market, cooking demonstrations, food trucks, KPU's Brew Barn, a Little Farmers kids' zone, agricultural and garden displays, farm wagon tours and live local performances. Visitors immersed themselves in the agricultural heart of the city by exploring Richmond's agricultural story, enjoying a plant labyrinth and learning about sustainability.

Participation highlights include:

- Over 2,500 people visited the festival;
- 56 volunteers engaged, contributing 422 volunteer hours; and
- Social media content reached 88,075 unique users, garnering over 1,000 likes and shares.

Supporting Food Security Through Community-Driven Events

The 2025 City Events Program approved by Council on October 21, 2024, provided \$30,000 in funding to allocate to existing farmers markets and community events that support food security through the promotion of local food and food producers. The objectives of this program include promoting local farmers and food producers, supporting and promoting options for Richmond residents to access local food in an outdoor setting, and highlighting opportunities through community events to promote food security/address food insecurity in innovative ways.

In 2026, previous grant recipients will be eligible to apply for a grant related to food access, food security, and urban agriculture through the newly expanded Environmental Enhancement and Food Security Grant Program.

In 2025, this funding was used to support:

- Kwantlen St. Farmer's Market – Funding used to host and promote local farmers at the weekly public farmers market at the Cultural Centre Plaza from May 13 – December 23, 2025;
- Sharing Farm Society – Funding was used to support booths for Richmond farmers and food producers at the Garlic Festival on August 16, 2025, at Terra Nova Rural Park;
- Steveston Farmers and Artisans Market – Funding used to host farmers and artisans at the 10 bi-weekly market in Steveston at the Garry Point Park from June 4 to October 29, 2025; and
- Urban Bounty – Funding used to host 22 Garden Tasting and Talk programs to provide fresh seasonal produce for Richmond residents experiencing food insecurity. These programs utilized Community Supported Agriculture boxes for tasting and education sessions held at Hamilton Community Centre, East Richmond Community Hall, and South Arm Community Centre from June 4 to October 29, 2025.

The City of Richmond Signature and Community Events Plan 2025-2029 Highlights

On October 21, 2024, Council approved the City of Richmond's Signature and Community Events Plan for 2025-2029. In 2025, the City of Richmond's Signature and Community Events continued to support a range of events of varied scope and scale. Events continue to draw visitors to the city, yielding maximum social and economic benefits.

For the first year of the Plan, staff collaborated with City departments and community partners, supported by numerous community event organizers, local businesses, and volunteers, to advance the short-term (1-2 years) actions outlined in the plan.

Highlights and achievements from the Plan for 2025 include:

- Implemented the Inclusive and Accessible Event Checklist at the City's signature events to ensure event sites were accessible to all. This included providing accessibility information such as parking, accessible seating and washroom locations on event websites;
- Conducted public exit surveys at the Steveston Salmon Festival, the Richmond Maritime Festival, and the Richmond Farm Fest to gather feedback to inform planning for future events;
- Successfully brought back a new Richmond Farm Fest to the Garden City Lands in partnership with the Kwantlen Polytechnic University;
- Undertook a review of the Sustainability Event Toolkit;
- Approved approximately 150 Community events through the Richmond Event Approval Coordinator Team (REACT) process; and
- Conducted a safety review with the REACT team to ensure both Community and Signature events are delivered safely.

Motion to Support Affected Landowners During Appeal of Cowichan Land Claim:

- 1. Write a letter to the Prime Minister, the Premier, the Ministers of Finance, the Attorneys General to mitigate the effects of the Cowichan Land ruling on private landowners during the appeal process.**
- 2. For staff to work with the Federal and Provincial governments to investigate options to support landowners in the disputed lands in Richmond to mitigate the effects of the Cowichan Land ruling during the appeal process and report back.**

Rationale:

The Cowichan Land Claim decision has caused unintended effects. The length of time for the appeal process is adding to the uncertainty for residents, businesses, workers and landowners in the area. Many residents are worried about such things as:

the ability to remortgage their properties,
being charged a premium to remortgage due to the uncertainty of being in the “zone”,
the valuations of their properties,
the possibility of losing their properties,
the inability to sell their properties,
the inability to obtain insurance on their properties,

The Land Title Act and the unreliability of title must be solved by the Province.

It is not fair for individuals to lose their homes while the process plays out. The Provincial and Federal Governments must enact measures to protect residents and landowners from the financial effects of the ruling while the issue is in the courts.

Motion submitted by Councillor Alexa Loo