

4.0 Vibrant Cities



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4.1 Arts, Culture and Heritage

OVERVIEW:

Richmond wants to strengthen its sense of place and distinct identity that generate, in residents and visitors alike, clear, unique images, exciting expectations and happy memories. Through its diverse culture, visible heritage, vibrant and pervasive arts, architecture and landscapes, interesting and people friendly streets, excellent cuisine and exciting events and celebrations, Richmond welcomes and encourages creativity and participation among visitors and residents.

Arts and culture include all forms of creative expression, from individual to collective, from grassroots to professional and institutional. These forms of expression frequently draw inspiration from the existing natural and artificial landforms, built environments, belief systems and values which shape who we are—our local, regional, national and global identities. By building on these foundations, arts and culture evolve, develop and enhance our cultural identities and foster a sense of place.

Culture: relates to the set of shared behaviours, goals and attitudes that are manifested in a group. Culture gives people a formula for organizing experiences and to interpret and cope with the world and one another (e.g., relating to each other, creating distinct identities, interacting with the world). Cultural systems shape our development and influence our way of life, spiritual beliefs, class and value systems.



Arts: include disciplinary, multi-disciplinary and inter-disciplinary work in the literary, media, performing and visual arts and new media. Artistic activity involves creation, production, presentation, distribution and dissemination. It includes arts education, arts instruction, art collection, community arts, public art, arts training, arts facilities and venues and arts programs.

Heritage: is a legacy inherited from the past, valued in the present, which it helps interpret and shape the future. Heritage activity includes museums, archives, historic sites, built heritage, cultural heritage landscapes, natural heritage, archaeological resources, educational and interpretive programs and events.

Arts and heritage are the tangible products of culture.

The arts play a pervasive, socially integrating role in fostering community identity, creativity, cohesion, innovation, well-being and vitality. There is increasing awareness that participation in various forms of arts and culture contribute to help self-confidence, personal well-being, community identity, citizenship and pride.

A vibrant cultural sector provides benefits not just to its creators and viewers, but to society as a whole in the form of needed innovation and originality. The presence of innovation and creativity in all citizens provides a way to see and adapt to new situations and develop new solutions.

The City of Richmond has an exciting array of heritage resources, in both public and private ownership, that are unique in Metro Vancouver and has an impressive legacy of heritage conservation.

Culture has long been recognized as a means to community building, encouraging outdoor activity, healthy lifestyles, life-long learning, increasing accessibility to programs for all levels of society and celebrating diversity and cultural differences.

Cultural vitality is essential to a healthy and sustainable society as it expands the way we think about the world around us and how we adapt to changing situations. Richmond citizens' innovation and creativity provide a way to adapt to new situations and develop new solutions to social, economic and environmental challenges.



General

Richmond is one of the most diverse cities in Canada. In 2006, 57.4% of the population were immigrants with 18.8% of that having arrived between 2001 and 2006. Bridging the understanding and appreciation of the arts and heritage across diverse cultures enriches the community.

As the community continues to grow and participation in arts and cultural activities increases, the demand for arts space will continue to be a challenge.

The City lacks a supply of affordable housing and creation spaces suitable to the creative sector. As housing prices escalate in Richmond, many local artists have, and will continue to be forced to move out of the City to other areas in the region that are more affordable. The City may lose the opportunity to build on its artistic talent and creative potential.

Heritage resources must be properly managed and supported for them to fulfil their potential of contributing to the vibrancy of the city and position Richmond as a destination city. Heritage conservation policy and programming require the creative management of heritage assets and the preservation of stories as well as entrepreneurial community partnering and cost sharing.

Historically, the focus has been on tangible heritage (such as buildings, sites, artefacts), rather than intangible heritage (such as storytelling, rituals and events). With the growth in new media, intangible heritage can become more accessible through recording and on-line sharing.



The City plays a multifaceted role in ensuring a healthy and contributing arts, culture and heritage sector including:

- welcoming artists and arts organizations;
- facilitating opportunities for lifelong learning, creating and participating;
- creating supportive sector environments through policies, programming and land use management approaches (e.g., heritage density bonusing).

Many factors contribute to making Richmond a more vibrant, healthy, sustainable and engaged community and the presence of a thriving arts, cultural and heritage sector plays a critical role.

In order to create the environment for the City to be a thriving, resilient, diverse and creative community where people have a strong sense of identity and a clear sense of the attributes that make it unique; where citizens are empowered, engaged and connected; and a vibrant tourist destination, the following concepts will be focused on:

- **Cultural Engagement:** facilitate and create an environment and culture that support the arts and culture and enhance their contribution to vibrancy and community vitality.
- **Lifelong Learning:** foster a joy of reading and a culture of life long learning.
- **Celebrating Heritage:** preserve, promote and celebrate community heritage.
- **Community Revitalization:** encourage and develop a mosaic of appealing, lively and distinctive areas, vibrant public spaces, festivals, events and activities.
- **An Economic Engine:** harness the benefits of and support a creative economy and contribute to the thriving community tourism sector.



Credit: GTFX

OBJECTIVE 1:

Create a culture and climate that supports and enhances the arts and culture sector.

POLICIES:

- a) continue to promote creativity and cultural expression;
- b) improve strategies to attract cultural industries and services;
- c) facilitate improved community engagement and experiences in arts, cultural and heritage activities;
- d) collaborate with the Richmond School Board, community groups, Vancouver Coastal Health and others to promote improved arts opportunities that enable all to experience cultural, art and heritage activities and develop creativity;
- e) continue to request senior governments and partners to support policies, programming and funding to significantly advance the arts, culture and heritage in one of Canada's most culturally diverse cities;
- f) seek grants, partnerships and other sources of funding to assist with facility development and replacement;
- g) innovatively explore and support the provision of cultural, art and heritage space (e.g., city incentives, partnerships, zoning), including the provision of affordable creation spaces (work spaces for visual and performing artists and arts organizations) and affordable housing for artists.



OBJECTIVE 2:

Foster a joy of reading and a culture of life long learning.

POLICIES:

- a) the main city library service is in the City Centre;
- b) continue to respond to the community's informational and recreational library needs by providing collections in a wide variety of print, multimedia and digital formats;
- c) expand free and easy access to high quality and responsible library services within neighbourhoods;
- d) library branches are to provide a welcoming gathering place for all ages and backgrounds with sufficient space, collections and staff to meet public needs;
- e) recognizing that Richmond residents are amongst the heaviest users of library materials in Canada, the Richmond Library system will strive to meet the diverse needs of residents (maintain substantial collections of print, multimedia and digital materials that reflect the interests and needs of our diverse community);
- f) continue to provide up-to-date information technology, equipment and facilities to support public education;
- g) continue to create library programs that are informative, entertaining and reflect the multicultural nature of our community;
- h) the library will work with other community agencies to provide services to better meet community needs.



OBJECTIVE 3:

With a network of unique, historic assets, an excellent archive, vibrant heritage programs and a new destination museum, Richmond will be in a unique position to become the leading museum and heritage destination in the Metro Vancouver region. Celebrate heritage by preserving, promoting and commemorating tangible and intangible elements.

POLICIES:

- a) enhance and update the directions adopted in the 2007 Richmond Museum & Heritage Strategy;
- b) position and brand Richmond as the leading museum and heritage destination in the Metro Vancouver region;
- c) improve the conservation of heritage resources by updating heritage inventories, incorporating special conservation policies for identified heritage areas (e.g., Steveston, City-wide), conserving known archaeological sites in accordance with provincial legislation and offering incentives where appropriate to private owners of heritage resources;
- d) enhance, preserve and celebrate the built, natural and cultural heritage of Richmond and ensure it is visible and accessible;
- e) encourage the preservation and celebration of community heritage;
- f) where possible, encourage the adaptive reuse of heritage buildings to maintain them for the future;
- g) continue to engage the private and volunteer sectors and take advantage of partnership opportunities with senior levels of government to preserve and rehabilitate heritage assets;
- h) integrate a broad interpretation of heritage into festivals and celebrations unique to Richmond.



OBJECTIVE 4:

Encourage and develop a mosaic of appealing, lively and distinctive areas, vibrant public spaces, festivals, events and activities.

POLICIES:

- a) promote animated public spaces and places where people can gather and celebrate through: art friendly public spaces and facilities that connect communities, an animated public realm (including City infrastructure such as pump stations, district energy utilities), and enhance the quality of life;
- b) build on the strengths of the Public Art Program to ensure that it is a key element in shaping, animating and enriching the public realm, civic pride and community identity;
- c) prepare Public Art Plans for specific areas of the City where appropriate such as City Centre and Steveston;
- d) recognize the importance of community festivals in the community's cultural life, and support and encourage their production through community groups and organizations;
- e) work with the community to develop several unique signature festivals and events that become a tourist draw to the City;
- f) create cultural districts within the City such as in City Centre with the Arts and Entertainment District;
- g) create opportunities for people to experience art in everyday life and for artists and communities to participate in the design, look and feel of the City through public art initiatives;
- h) promote opportunities to interpret Richmond's spectacular island foreshore and natural environment through the arts.





OBJECTIVE 5:

Harness the benefits of and support a creative economy and tourism sector that positions Richmond as a cultural destination.

POLICIES:

- a) build on the City's Tourism Strategy and develop programs to strengthen the contribution of the City's arts, heritage and diverse cultures to the thriving tourism sector;
- b) continue to develop and position Richmond as a cultural destination both for residents and visitors through festivals, heritage sites, exhibitions and performances, arts education programming for children and youth and master art classes and workshops for adult artists;
- c) encourage, through policies and working with the private sector, cultural industries (film, publishing, recording, new media) within the City;
- d) study how to better attract and retain cultural (e.g., arts) industries.



4.2 Recreation and Community Wellness

OVERVIEW:

Recreation services, programs and facilities contribute to Richmond being a vibrant city by providing opportunities for residents to be physically active and healthy, nurture a permanent commitment to wellness and feel increasingly connected to their community.

The World Health Organization defines wellness in the following manner: “Wellness is the optimal state of health of individuals and groups. There are two focal concerns: the realization of the fullest potential of an individual physically, psychologically, socially, spiritually, economically, and the fulfillment of one’s role and expectations in the family, community, place of worship, workplace and other settings.”

A current profile of residents in Richmond related to recreation and wellness finds that while Richmond residents are not as overweight as other BC residents, have a longer life expectancy and smoke less, they appear to be less physically active, eat fewer fruits and vegetables, have a lower sense of belonging and, for children and teens, have a low involvement in sport and are spending a high proportion of their time using computers and other similar devices. These factors indicate that Richmond has work to do to achieve true community wellness.

A 2009 community needs assessment shows that residents are generally satisfied with their recreation experiences at City facilities and with the delivery of programs, services and facilities. Residents also found few barriers to accessing services except within some specific cultural or ethnic groups. These results point to the success of City and community partners’ parks and recreation programs and services, although more focus is needed on serving cultural and ethnic communities.

Similar to the trend across North America, Richmond’s population is increasingly becoming more aged. Below-replacement fertility rates will see younger generations grow more slowly, with longer life expectancies resulting in rapid growth for older generations.





Considering these trends, those responsible for planning and delivering recreation and wellness programs and services must focus on the following concepts:

- Collaboration—strategies to deliver services with others;
- Serving a unique population—strategies to ensure that our services meet the needs of diverse populations;
- Connecting and growing—strategies to ensure that residents have opportunities for life-long learning and enjoy a feeling of belonging in the community;
- Living healthy and active lives—strategies to encourage people to make healthy and active lifestyle choices throughout their lives;
- Investing in parks and recreation infrastructure (e.g., the Oval sports facilities)—strategies to ensure that places and spaces support active and healthy living objectives.



OBJECTIVE 1:

Collaborate with others to ensure that there is a coordinated, efficient response to quality of life recreation and community wellness needs (e.g., community associations, local sport organizations, the Richmond Olympic Oval Corporation, Volunteer Richmond Information Services, social agencies, the private sector, Richmond School District, Vancouver Coastal Health).

POLICIES:

- a) continue to deliver recreation services with a variety of community associations and non-profit groups;
- b) build on established working relationships with the Richmond School District, Metro Vancouver, Vancouver Coastal Health and other key agencies to jointly address recreation and community wellness issues;
- c) explore opportunities for collaboration with new groups and the private sector;
- d) coordinate and enhance recreation and wellness services being provided by other agencies where required;
- e) support the co-planning and co-delivery of community sport hosting events;
- f) in consultation with stakeholders and residents, guide the future planning of recreation and wellness programs and services to meet community needs.



OBJECTIVE 2:

Ensure that recreation and wellness services, programs, spaces and places meet diverse community needs.

POLICIES:

- continue to reach-out to 'hard to reach' populations (e.g., new immigrants, socially isolated individuals), people with disabilities, older adults and youth (especially low-asset youth);
- deliver a broad range of programs and opportunities that appeal across all cultures, age groups and to under-served groups;
- address recreation accessibility and affordability issues in collaboration with community agencies through guidance and financial support where appropriate;
- include diverse cultural and ethnic populations in celebrations;
- ensure existing and future demographic flexibility in system and space design.



OBJECTIVE 3:

Provide opportunities to connect with neighbours, feel a sense of belonging, and engage in lifelong learning.

POLICIES:

- ensure that people have opportunities to connect with the physical environment through stewardship and other engagement activities;
- maximize volunteer involvement in the delivery of parks, recreation and wellness programs and services;
- better link the trail system to neighbourhoods, community facilities and nature;
- better facilitate community programs and events to provide residents opportunities to interact;
- provide a range of programs and services that allow for individual development at all levels of ability and expertise.



OBJECTIVE 4:

Encourage people to make healthy, active lifestyle choices throughout their lives.

POLICIES:

- a) ensure that children and youth have an opportunity to build healthy habits through physical activity—both through unstructured play and organized activities and programs;
- b) increase awareness of, and opportunities for children to learn, physical literacy and fundamental movement skills through encouraging recreation and sport service providers to incorporate physical literacy concepts into programs;
- c) reduce barriers to living a physically active life for vulnerable populations;
- d) promote opportunities for active lifestyles for aging populations and programs that allow older adults to ‘age in place’;
- e) develop, support and promote opportunities for people of all ages to be active for life and achieve one’s highest potential.



OBJECTIVE 5:

Invest in parks and recreation infrastructure to support active and healthy living objectives.

POLICIES:

- a) advocate for long-term senior government funding to assist with the replacement of aging municipal recreation infrastructure;
- b) continue to develop the facilities prioritized in the endorsed Parks and Recreation Facilities Strategic Plan;
- c) prioritize co-location with other services in selecting potential sites;
- d) design new spaces to: eliminate physical access barriers, encourage programmed and unstructured activity, ensure flexibility of use and minimize functional obsolescence (e.g., ensuring that the space can be altered at a later date to accommodate changing demands from users).