



Maggie Pi, OCP Youth Art Contest, winner

## 1.0 A More Complete, Inclusive and Sustainable Community

The foundation of the Official Community Plan (OCP) is the City of Richmond's vision to become the "**most appealing, livable and well-managed community in Canada**".

### Overview

The Official Community Plan (OCP) describes a long-term vision for the community and guides decision-making concerning growth and change. While the 2041 OCP (adopted in 2012) remains relevant, issues related to community completeness, housing, equity, climate and the environment have become more urgent and complex, and legislation enacted by the Province of British Columbia in 2023 and 2024 has changed the planning tools available to the City.

The 2050 OCP addresses these challenges with a targeted two-step update that focuses on housing affordability and choice first, followed by community equity, climate response, and environmental protection and enhancement. Other considerations including, but not limited to, parks and recreation, employment, transportation, utilities, City infrastructure, and arts and culture, will be the subject of future planning and public engagement.

Future OCP updates will occur every five years to ensure that Richmond stays on track and the OCP continues to support the City's effective and timely response to emerging issues, trends, opportunities and community needs.



## Milestones for other plans, strategies and events that shape Richmond

### 2001

- » Urban Forest Strategy

### 2007

- » Affordable Housing Strategy
- » Facilities Strategic Plan

### 2009

- » Flood Management Strategy
- » Wellness Strategy
- » Canada Line Opens
- » Richmond Hosts the 2010 Olympic Winter Games



### 2013

- » Building Our Social Future 2013-2022

### 2017

- » 2017-2027 Affordable Housing Strategy

### 2019

- » Public Tree Management Strategy 2045

### 2020

- » Industrial Lands Intensification Initiative (ILII)

### 2022

- » Community Energy and Emissions Plan (CEEP)

### 2023

- » Richmond Circular City Strategy
- » Richmond Accessibility Plan 2023-2033

### 2024

- » Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) zoning
- » Transit-Oriented Area (TOA) Bylaw
- » Interim Housing Needs Report (2024 IHNR)

### Future/2028

- » Housing Needs Report

## OCP Milestones

Richmond's first Official Community Plan was adopted in 1987. Since then, each Plan has been a living document that guides change and responds to emerging issues and opportunities with topical amendments, companion plans and strategies.

### 2007 OCP

*Township of Richmond Bylaw 4700 (Adopted 1987)*

### 2021 OCP

*City of Richmond Bylaw 7100 (Adopted 1999)*

- » (2003) Richmond Agricultural Viability Strategy
- » (2004) OCP Aircraft Noise Sensitive Development Policy
- » (2006) West Cambie Area Plan
- » (2009) City Centre Area Plan
- » (2009) Steveston Village Heritage Conservation Strategy

### 2041 OCP

**Moving Towards a Sustainable Community**

*City of Richmond Bylaw 9000 (Adopted 2012)*

- » (2014) Hamilton Area Plan
- » (2014) Cannabis Production and Research
- » (2014) Resilient Economy Strategy
- » (2015) Steveston Secondary School Redevelopment Plan
- » (2016) Arterial Road Land Use Policy (Expanded policy area)
- » (2018) Market Rental Housing Policy
- » (2018) Updated Road, Transit and Bike Networks
- » (2018) Richmond Centre Shopping Centre Redevelopment Plan
- » (2021) Farming First Strategy
- » (2022) Climate Change, Green Buildings and Sustainable Infrastructure
- » (2023) Lansdowne Shopping Centre Redevelopment Plan

### 2050 OCP

**A More Complete, Inclusive and Sustainable Community**

### 2055 OCP

Plans will be adopted in 2030 and every five years after that.



## 1.1 Themes Shaping Richmond

Special places and spaces shaped by nature, communities, cultures, values and aspirations make Richmond unique and inform an “uniquely Richmond” approach to planning and development.

### Island City



Jane Apilado

Richmond’s location, where the Fraser River meets the Pacific Ocean, shapes our landscape, economy, culture and identity. Protecting and enjoying our environmentally sensitive shoreline is a priority, including 49 kilometers of perimeter dikes that provide recreational trails and keep our low-lying islands safe from flooding and projected sea level rise.

### Cultivating Food Security



Mok

With nearly 39% of Richmond’s land base within the Agricultural Land Reserve (ALR), The City prioritizes protection of its fertile soils and promotes local food security and production including cranberries, which account for nearly 30% of the province’s total cranberry acreage.

### United by Arts and Culture



Becky Lee

Richmond is among the most multi-cultural communities in the country with more than 65% of residents identifying as racialized. This vibrant and rich diversity of people and culture is embraced and celebrated through our world-renown food scene, festivals, architecture, business and arts.

### Honoring Our Past, Celebrating Our Present and Shaping Our Future



Georgianna Lee

Heritage buildings, museums and places like Steveston Village and the Gulf of Georgia Cannery National Heritage Site preserve our collective memory of a culturally diverse history. Our heritage fosters community pride, supports tourism, and provides important lessons for our future.





### Striving for a Sustainable Future



Heather McEachern

Richmond is striving to achieve net zero emissions by 2050. Our district energy utility reduces greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions with smart, low-carbon approaches to heat and cool buildings. Proactive adoption of the BC Energy Step Code makes us leaders in energy efficiency compliance paths. Expanding our urban forest and protecting ecological assets contributes to a healthy, resilient, sustainable future. Richmond is also championing a circular city approach that aims to minimize waste by keeping products, components, and materials in use for as long as possible.

### Connections Shape the City



Allie Grenier

In 2024, the Vancouver International Airport (YVR) served 26.2 million passengers - the airport's second-best annual total ever. As home to YVR, port operations – including Canada's largest small-craft commercial fishing port – and Canada Line, Richmond serves as an international and regional hub moving people and products, connecting our city to local, regional, and international markets, and creating jobs and vibrant economy.

### Unique Places to Discover and Experiences to Embrace



Johnson Cheung

Richmond offers residents and visitors from near and far a wide array of experiences and things to enjoy. Visit a working fishing village, go whale watching or check out the birds following the Pacific Flyway, experience the thrill of high-performance sports at the Olympic Oval, or indulge in world-class cuisine and North America's largest night market, just to name a few.

### Building a Healthy Community



Timothy Cheung

With over 870 hectares (2,150 acres) of parks, including 136 kilometers of trails, 87 kilometers of cycling routes, and a wide range of community and recreation facilities, Richmond's public spaces embody a commitment to physical and mental well-being. This commitment is evident in Richmond's consistently high life expectancy and its recognition by the ParticipACTION Community Challenge as the most active community in BC (2022, 2024) and Canada (2025).



Photographs of Themes Shaping Richmond were contributed through the **OCP Get Snapping** community engagement event. Thank you to everyone who participated!



While the City is required to update its OCP to provide for greater housing capacity and more multi-family development, this is not enough to make development happen or ensure a good “fit” with the local community.

To help address this, the 2050 OCP includes land use strategies to:

- Direct growth where people want to live and away from lands needed for agriculture, jobs and nature;
- Promote compact, transit-oriented development; and
- Optimize community benefits.

## 1.2 Provincial Housing Legislation

Changes to provincial housing legislation aimed at advancing the Province's Homes for People Action Plan have had a transformative impact on land use planning across British Columbia and are reflected in the 2050 OCP. In Richmond, the provincial housing legislation increased the city's capacity for new housing by approximately 95,000 dwelling units, requiring the City to initiate the following in June 2024:

- Rezone approximately 27,000 single-family and duplex-zoned lots for Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH), permitting up to three, four or six dwelling units per lot depending on lot size and proximity to frequent transit service; and
- Designate those portions of City Centre situated within 800 m of the Capstan, Lansdowne and Brighthouse Canada Line stations as Transit-Oriented Areas (TOA), permitting high density, residential and mixed-use development subject to minimum specific densities (i.e., 5.0, 4.0 and 3.0 floor area ratio) and heights (i.e., 15, 12 and eight storeys) according to proximity to a station.

In addition, Richmond is required to demonstrate that it can accommodate its projected housing needs to 2041, as determined through its 2024 Interim Housing Needs Report (IHNR). The Report, which was prepared in compliance with provincial requirements, estimates that Richmond will need to build 52,000 new homes between 2021 and 2041. Achieving this target will require an average of 2,600 new dwellings annually to meet the needs of new and existing residents, which is 31% faster than the last 10 years (i.e., 1,980 units annually.)

As a result of the Province's Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) and Transit-Oriented Areas (TOA) legislation, Richmond's 2050 OCP Land Use Map includes capacity for more than twice the city's estimated 2021-2041 housing needs.







With the aim of building better housing, not just more housing, Richmond's 2050 OCP encourages measures to support increased affordability and build the right housing in the right place for more residents.





## 1.3 Today's Planning Challenges

In addition to the challenges posed by recent provincial legislation, the 2050 OCP must address other important planning challenges.

Planning Challenges	
 <b>HOUSING AFFORDABILITY</b>	<p>Housing costs have risen faster than incomes. Between 2006 and 2021, median before tax income for homeowners increased by 22%, while the cost to buy a home rose 116%. For the same period, renter income increased by 41%, while rents rose 77%. (Canada Census)</p> <p>The challenge is greatest for lower income households and made worse by inadequate senior government investment in affordable housing.</p>
 <b>CHANGING DEMOGRAPHICS</b>	<p>Richmond's fastest growing demographics are seniors 55+ years and adults aged 25-40 years. The diverse needs of these groups, together with persons with disabilities and other residents, can be well supported by compact, walkable community development that provides diverse housing options in proximity to transit, shops, services, jobs, child care and other amenities.</p>
 <b>UNBALANCED GROWTH</b>	<p>Since 2013, almost 70% of new housing has gone into the downtown, most of it in concrete high-rises. Provincial Transit-Oriented Areas (TOA) legislation will further intensify downtown growth, while suburban areas remain largely unchanged. This situation can make it hard to find the right housing in the right place at the right price – particularly as residents age or household needs change.</p>
 <b>DEVELOPMENT PRESSURES</b>	<p>Rapid growth increases development pressures on natural areas, existing housing stock and lands needed for jobs and agriculture. The outcomes are broad and include escalating housing costs, loss of older rental housing, increased invasive species and fragmentation of ecological networks, and displacement of non-profit organizations that support equity-deserving groups.</p>
 <b>CAR DEPENDENCY</b>	<p>Outside City Centre, only 28% of residents live within a 5- to 10-minute walk (400+ m) of frequent transit. Continued car dependency contributes to environmental and ecological degradation, more greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, reduced physical activity and human health, and less equity, inclusiveness and social connections arising from dispersed land uses that can make it difficult and expensive for people to access the services, jobs and other things they need.</p>
 <b>CLIMATE CHANGE</b>	<p>As the frequency and intensity of weather events, flooding and heat increase, municipalities like Richmond are increasingly at the forefront of complex climate-related and future-proofing decision-making, including environmental protection, advocating for high-performance standards for new and retrofit construction, and building climate-resilient transit-oriented communities.</p>



**38,000+**  
people  
reached

## 1.4 Participation by the Numbers

Between June 2024 and July 2025, Richmond undertook public engagement across three interconnected planning initiatives, including provincial legislation concerning Small-Scale Multi-Unit Housing (SSMUH) and Transit-Oriented Areas (TOA) and the City's targeted update of Richmond's OCP. Through this process, the City connected with thousands of residents and interest groups. We thank everyone who participated for helping to shape the future of Richmond.

**24** open houses  
and pop-ups



**3,740+** attendees and interactions via  
the open houses and pop-ups

**3** online  
surveys



**550+**

pieces of feedback from  
survey responses, emails  
and online submissions



**23**

meetings and workshops  
with committees and  
community groups



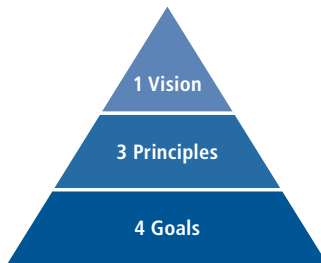
Outreach and promotion took place through various channels such as news releases, City-e newsletters, Richmond Sentinel online newspaper ads, social media posts, posters at civic centres, bus shelter ads and emails to interest groups.





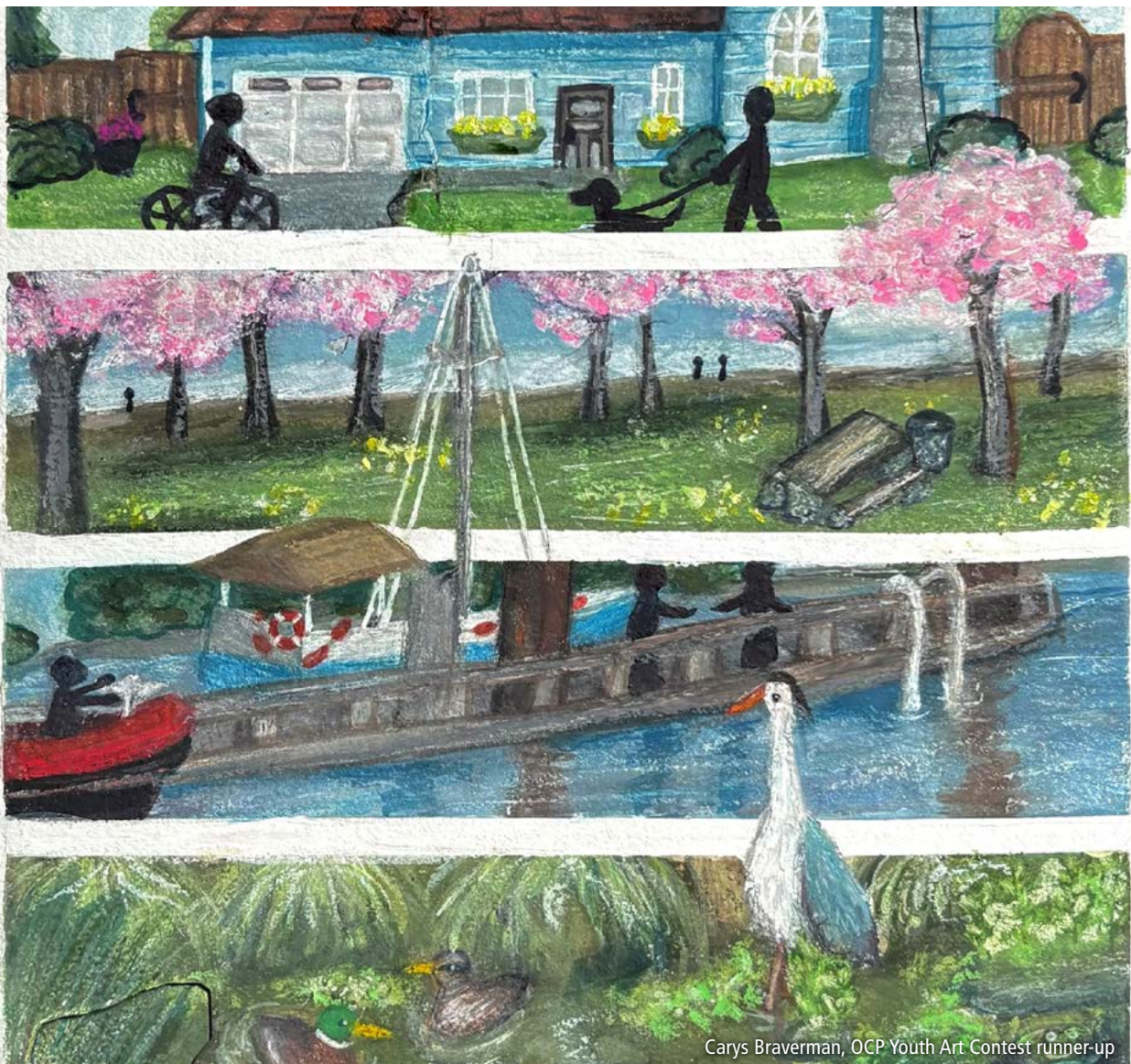
## 1.5 Moving Towards 2050

The 2041 OCP (adopted in 2012) established a broad vision with an emphasis on vibrant neighbourhoods, a resilient economy, enhanced recreation and social development, environmental protection, and promoting arts, culture and heritage. That vision continues to ring true today and guides the 2050 OCP update.



### Growth Management Framework

To address today's challenges and support the OCP vision, the 2050 OCP includes a growth management framework guided by three planning principles and four goals.

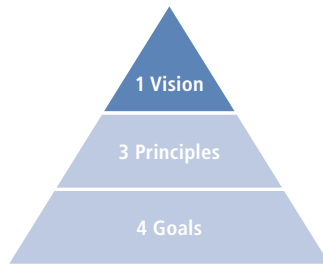


Carys Braverman, OCP Youth Art Contest runner-up





## Richmond's 2050 OCP Vision



*A sustainable and healthy island city that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. It is a place where people live, work, and prosper in a welcoming, connected, accessible and vibrant community. In Richmond, the health of the people and the health of the eco-system are sustained through community participation and long-term economic, social and environmental well-being.*

## Planning Principles



- 1. Optimize planning outcomes** by maximizing transparency and leveraging development to increase community buy-in, reduce land speculation, and deliver community needs.
- 2. Rebalance growth between inside and outside City Centre** to support downtown vibrancy and viability, while encouraging suburban areas to transition to become more walkable and complete, transit-oriented communities.
- 3. Build a connected network of complete communities** that enable at least 90% of residents to live within a 20-minute walk or roll (1.6 km or less) of a mixed-use, transit-oriented village that meets their daily needs, contributes to less car use and reduces development pressures on lands needed for ecological health, agriculture and long-term economic viability.

## OCP Goals



- 1. Build better housing:** Make Richmond a place where housing development delivers innovative, purpose-driven solutions that contribute to housing affordability and diversity, and equitable, resilient neighbourhoods.
- 2. Build a more equitable community:** Advance equity and foster social inclusion and belonging by ensuring equitable access to resources and services, creating an accessible and inclusive built environment, and enhancing opportunities for all residents to participate in community decision-making.
- 3. Strengthen Richmond's climate response:** Mitigate climate change and advance sustainable land use objectives by building compact, complete and connected communities that have the capacity and resources to respond and be resilient to the impact of a changing climate
- 4. Enhance Richmond's island ecology:** Protect and enhance the ecological health and resiliency of Richmond's natural environment by restoring disturbed ecosystems, connecting fragmented natural assets and working to create a more biodiverse ecological landscape.



The growth management framework balances objectives for increased housing supply and provincial housing legislation with objectives for greater housing affordability and choice, livability and sustainability for residents today and future generations.

## The Right Growth in the Right Place

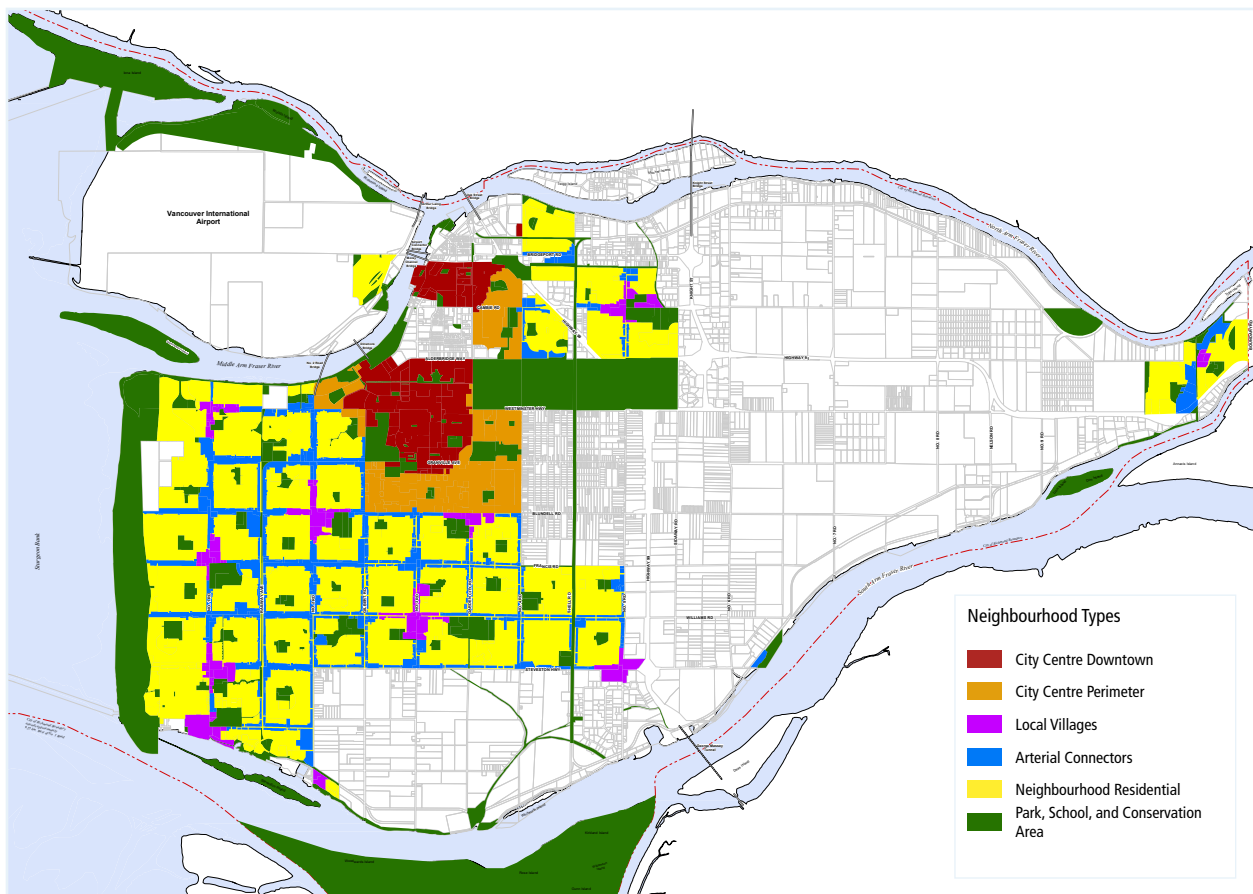
To protect and enhance the characteristics that make Richmond an attractive place to live, work, learn and play, the 2050 OCP includes a growth management framework that focuses on opportunities to increase housing supply, choices and associated affordability in locations where residential growth can best contribute towards a more complete, transit-oriented community.

Key elements of the framework include:

- Application of a compact, transit-oriented village planning approach;
- New mixed-use neighbourhood types;
- A form-based development approach to provide transparency and incentivize improved community outcomes;
- Greater housing options to meet the needs of diverse households; and
- Actionable Richmond-specific policies to address today's challenges.

## Defining New Neighbourhood Types

The 2050 OCP encourages a variety of walkable neighbourhood types supportive of diverse households and housing options.





### City Centre Downtown



**Where:** Inside City Centre within a 10-minute walk or roll (800 m) of the Capstan, Lansdowne and Brighthouse Canada Line stations (subject to Transit Oriented Areas, TOA, legislation)

**What:** High density, mid- and high-rise, mixed-use development with diverse housing options (including rental)

**Why:** To support a vibrant downtown and the City Centre's role as a regional urban centre balancing population, jobs and quality of life

### City Centre Perimeter



**Where:** Inside City Centre (excluding designated Transit-Oriented Areas, TOA)

**What:** Walkable, transit-oriented, predominantly low-rise, mixed-use villages (e.g., Oval, Alexandra), special amenities (e.g., Richmond Olympic Oval), jobs and diverse housing options (including rental)

**Why:** To provide a diversity of medium-density villages and housing options as a transition between the high-density City Centre Downtown and lower density suburbs

### Local Villages



**Where:** Outside City Centre (along arterial roads) within a 5-minute walk or roll (400 m) of existing shopping areas

**What:** Walkable, transit-oriented, mixed-use areas with low-rise apartments and townhouses (including rental housing), shops, healthy food stores, amenities and jobs

**Why:** To establish community hubs supporting more compact, inclusive, transit-oriented suburban neighbourhoods, more housing choices and reduced car dependency

### Arterial Connectors



**Where:** Outside City Centre (along arterial roads) more than a 5-minute walk or roll (400 m) from an existing shopping area

**What:** Transit-oriented townhouses, row houses and low-rise apartments (including rental housing), together with local-serving amenities and commercial uses (e.g., corner stores)

**Why:** To support family-friendly housing near transit and amenities with more affordable home ownership options and mortgage-helpers

### Neighbourhood Residential



**Where:** Outside City Centre (NOT along arterial roads)

**What:** Walkable, ground-oriented neighbourhoods with house-scale single, multiple and infill dwellings, pockets of townhouses and low-rise apartments (including rental housing) and local-serving amenities

**Why:** To support the gentle densification of traditional single-family neighbourhoods with housing that respects local character, increases choice, and helps reduce car dependency





## Making It Happen

The growth management framework looks ahead to how the City can accommodate growth, while staying true to its goal of becoming more sustainable, inclusive and complete. Jurisdictions with demonstrated success, especially in the context of an expensive or volatile housing market, generally rely on clear development parameters (e.g., use, density, location, built form) that help reduce risk, increase public support and streamline development. The growth management framework identifies three levers to encourage the right growth in right place, encourage investment, and optimize positive community outcomes.



Leverage  
Private Development



Leverage  
City Resources



Leverage  
Partnerships

**Facilitate** private developers and others to deliver more housing and complete, resilient, equitable communities where new and existing residents need them most via land use policies that **set clear expectations and reduce risk, time, cost and speculation.**

**Incentivize** private developers and others to deliver better affordability, equity, accessibility, resiliency and ecological function via land use policies that **encourage higher development standards and improved outcomes.**

**Remove barriers** to government, non-profit and other investment in those people, places and spaces that are most in need via land use policies that **prioritize enhanced affordability, equity and sustainability outcomes.**

1

**What is success?**

**We build MORE:**

- Housing supply and options
- Walkable, transit-oriented villages
- Appealing ways to move without a car
- Green buildings and infrastructure

2

**What is success?**

**We build BETTER:**

- Housing that meets diverse needs that more people can afford
- Communities with housing, healthy food, jobs, amenities and transit for everyone
- Public and private places and spaces that are low-carbon, climate-resilient, connected, and biodiverse

3

**What is success?**

**We build BEST with:**

- More government and non-profit investment in housing for low-income households
- Engaged residents and others, including diverse and seldom-heard voices
- A culture of climate resiliency and environmental stewardship



## 1.6 Projected Growth to 2050

Since the last OCP was adopted in 2012, Richmond has grown significantly and this growth is expected to continue through 2050 and beyond. The updated OCP responds to recent trends and projections for population, housing, and employment.

Below is a snapshot of key trends and projections. Sources include Statistics Canada, Census, Metro Vancouver, and the National Household Survey (NHS).

### 1. Richmond's Population

FIGURE 1.A POPULATION GROWTH

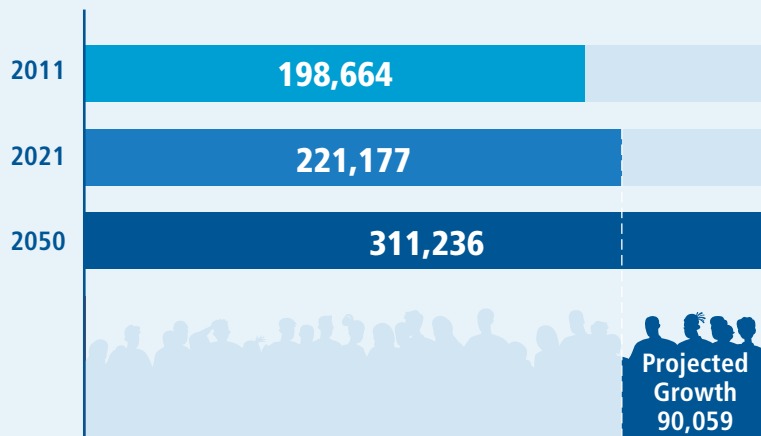


FIGURE 1.B AGE CHANGES

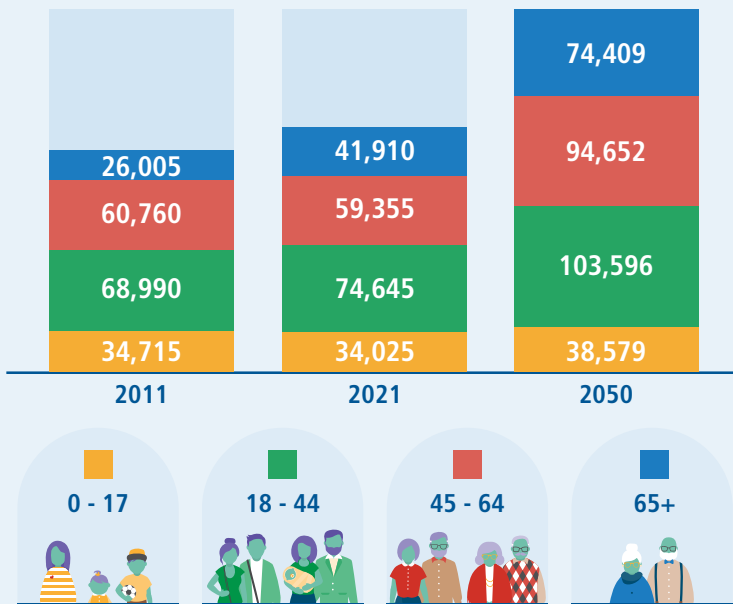
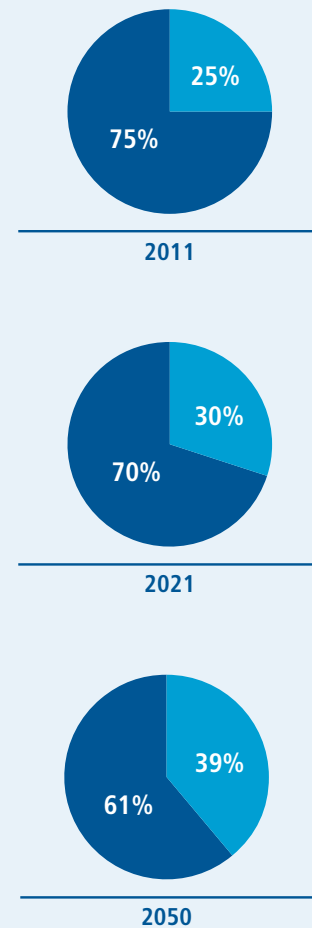


FIGURE 1.C PROPORTION OF POPULATION IN CITY CENTRE



■ Outside City Centre  
■ Inside City Centre



## 2. Richmond's Housing

FIGURE 2.A DWELLING UNIT GROWTH

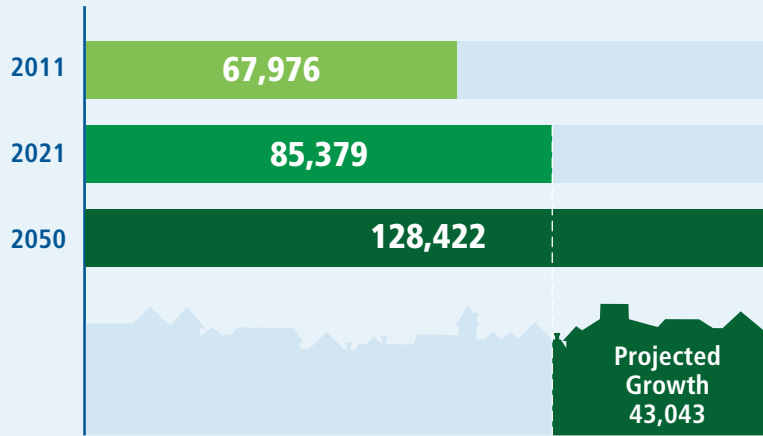


FIGURE 2.B AVERAGE HOUSEHOLD SIZE

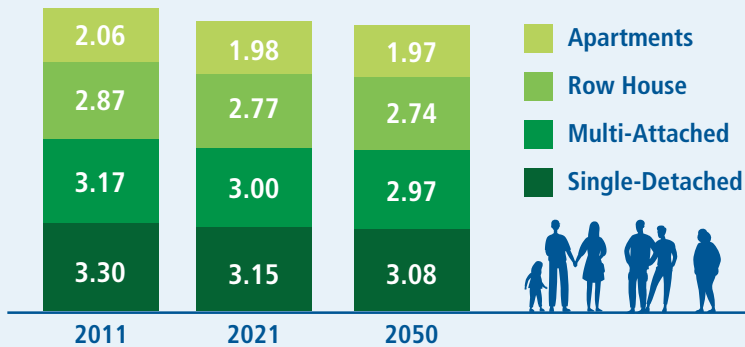


FIGURE 2.C PROPORTION OF DWELLING UNITS BY STRUCTURE TYPE

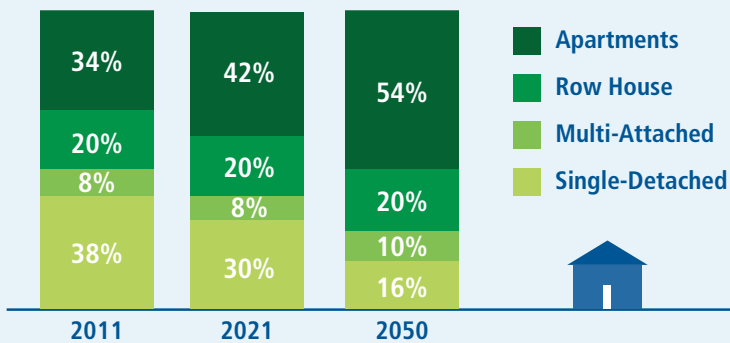


FIGURE 2.D PROPORTION OF DWELLING UNITS IN CITY CENTRE

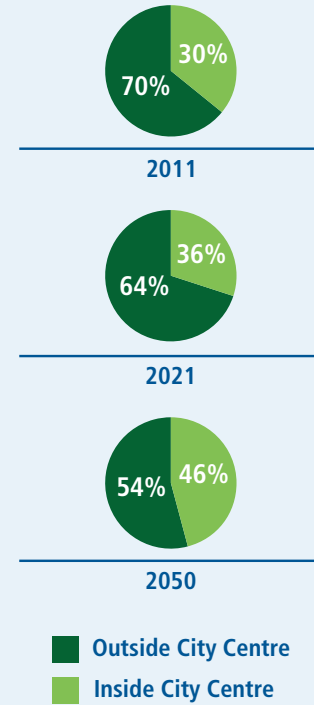
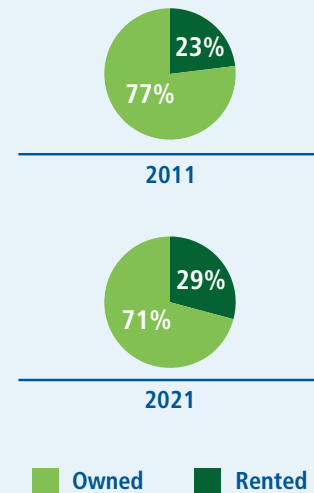


FIGURE 2.E PROPORTION OF HOUSEHOLDS THAT OWN THEIR HOME







### 3. Richmond's Employment

FIGURE 3.A NUMBER OF JOBS IN RICHMOND (2021 CENSUS)

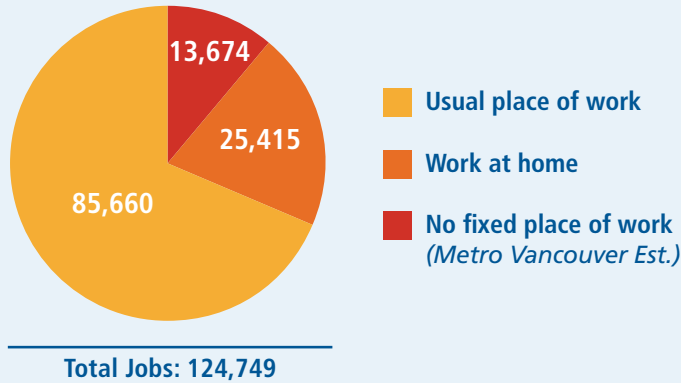
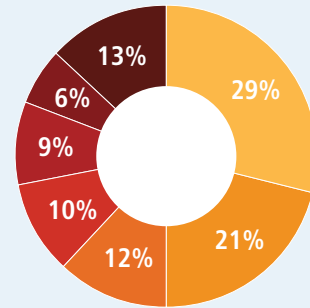


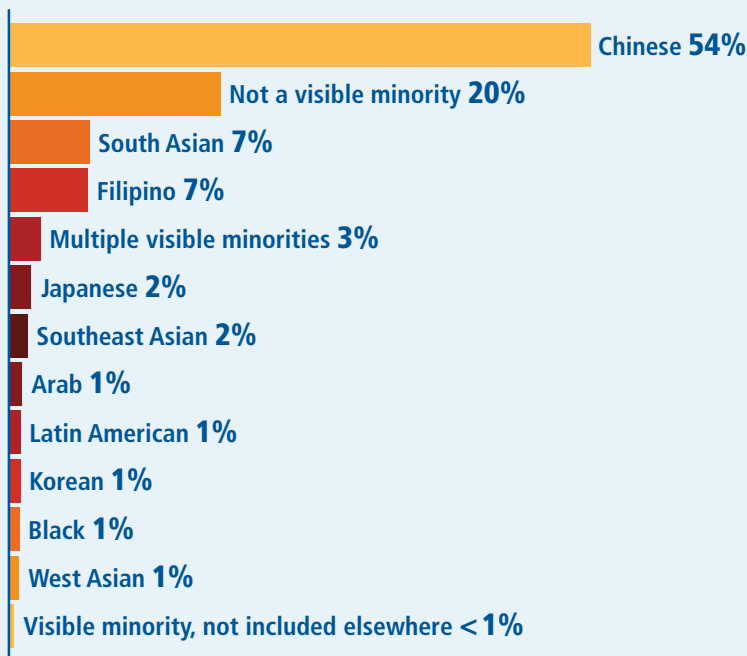
FIGURE 3.B JOBS BY SECTOR (2021)



- Sales and Service
- Business, Finance and Admin
- Trades and Transport
- Education, Law, and Social, Community and Government Services
- Natural and Applied Sciences
- Health
- Other

### 4. Richmond's Diversity

FIGURE 4.A VISIBLE MINORITIES (2021)



Sources: Statistics Canada, Census, Metro Vancouver, NHS

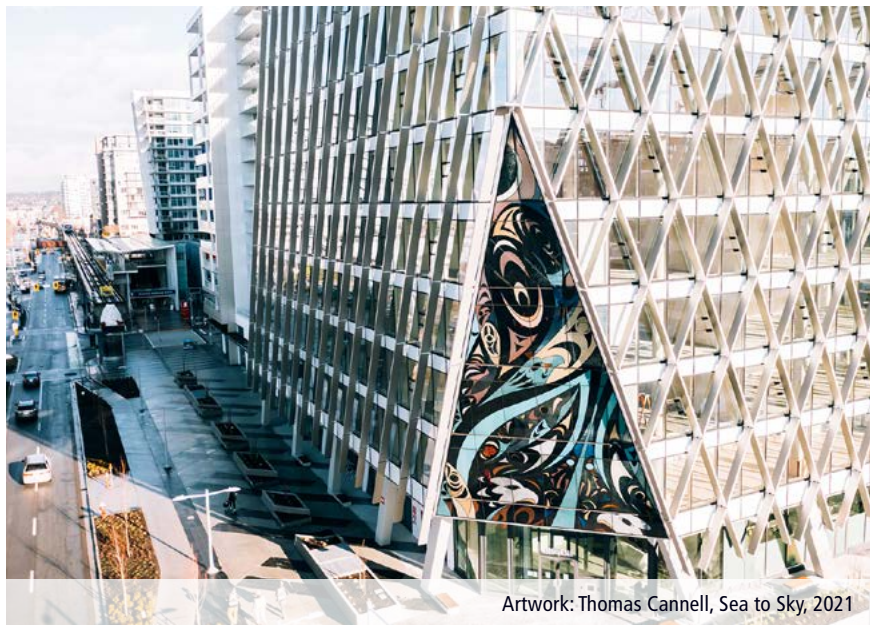




## 1.7 Reconciliation in Richmond

Reconciliation is essential to build respectful relationships and collaborative partnerships with local First Nations and urban Indigenous communities in and around Richmond. The City recognizes that the process of reconciliation requires a long-term commitment to renew and develop relationships with Indigenous Peoples.

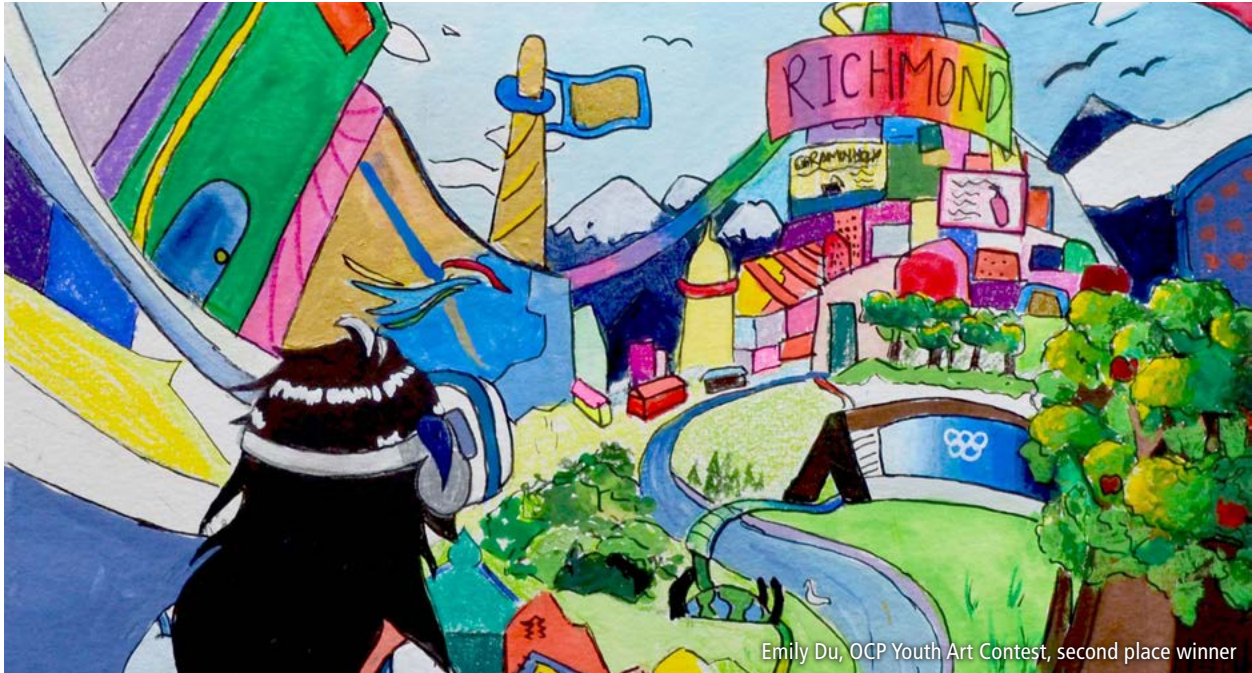
The City of Richmond is committed to building and maintaining positive and respectful relationships with individual First Nations to advance reconciliation between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people.



Artwork: Thomas Cannell, Sea to Sky, 2021



Artwork: James Harry, Seven Generations, 2019



Emily Du, OCP Youth Art Contest, second place winner

## 1.8 Emerging Trends and Technologies

Richmond's long-term growth and development will be shaped by global, national and regional trends, and technological innovations that influence how people live, work, move and play. Shifts in trade, demographics, climate and technology are impacting land use, infrastructure, and community needs. The City must recognize these trends and anticipate how they may affect Richmond if planning is to remain relevant and proactive.

Today's notable trends can be organized into three groups:

### **Protect and future-proof Richmond's land base**

As Richmond grows, land use decision-making needs to protect the community's limited land base and ensure it remains flexible and adaptable to future social, economic, and environmental needs.

### **Intensify City-owned lands**

Apply a holistic approach to the management of City land, roads and parks so that these assets serve a variety of community needs and contribute to a more efficient and resilient urban environment.

### **Promote compact, transit-oriented growth**

Foster connected, resilient and inclusive communities where people want to live, work, play and belong.





Emerging Trends and Technologies		
	What's happening?	What should Richmond do?
 <b>GEOPOLITICAL</b>	<b>Shifting global trade patterns</b> and policies are impacting supply chains, labour markets, and the location of commerce and industry.	Protect a <b>strategic land supply</b> that can be adapted to meet the changing needs of commerce and industry.
	<b>Unpredictable immigration rates</b> are hampering population and employment projections.	<b>Be prepared to adapt</b> to fluctuating demands for housing, infrastructure and services.
 <b>ECONOMIC</b>	<b>Growth of e-commerce</b> is driving the expansion of logistics and delivery services, and impacting traditional retail.	<b>Integrate goods movement</b> into road and curb management. <b>Support valued retail areas</b> with more customers and foot traffic.
	<b>Evolving technologies and markets</b> are driving new industries, services and high-paying jobs (e.g., clean tech, circular economy).	Maintain a diverse <b>land supply for business and industry</b> , including transit-oriented, amenity-rich locations appealing to tech.
 <b>SOCIAL</b>	<b>Aging population and growing number of people with disabilities</b> are driving demand for accessible housing and access to a range of services.	<b>Promote age-friendly and accessible</b> housing and neighbourhoods in proximity to daily needs, including health and social services.
	<b>Changing demographics and cost</b> are driving demand for a wider variety of housing including smaller and adaptable dwellings (e.g., multi-generational housing).	<b>Increase housing options</b> across the city, particularly including smaller, adaptable and less expensive units.
 <b>ENVIRONMENTAL</b>	<b>Climate change mitigation</b> demands continued reductions in community greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and more circular, efficient use of materials.	Promote <b>compact, transit-oriented growth</b> , active mobility and high-performance buildings using circular design and low-carbon materials.
	<b>Climate adaptation</b> is becoming urgent, driven by sea-level rise and increased extreme weather events.	Integrate <b>enhanced resilient design</b> standards into all new and retrofit construction.
 <b>TECHNOLOGICAL</b>	<b>Artificial intelligence (AI)</b> is rapidly transforming data systems, operations and management across all industries.	Apply AI to support data-driven decision making, increase City capacity and <b>streamline development</b> processes.
	<b>Autonomous vehicles</b> (personal and commercial) will change mobility patterns, including parking demands and curbside management.	Pursue opportunities to <b>free up space within the public realm</b> to support active mobility and enhance pedestrian activities.