

Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee 2018 Annual Report

Introduction

The Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee (RIAC) was established by City Council in February 2002 to assist the City of Richmond in advancing its vision to be the “most appealing, liveable, and well-managed community in Canada”. The mandate of the RIAC, as outlined in its Terms of Reference, is to “act as a resource and provide advice to City Council in support of enhancing and strengthening intercultural harmony and co-operation in Richmond”. The RIAC achieves this mandate by providing information and recommendations regarding intercultural issues and opportunities referred to the RIAC by Council.

In 2018, the RIAC was comprised of 16 Council appointed members with representatives from Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee, Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee, RCMP, School District 38, Vancouver Coastal Health, Richmond Centre for Disability, and individual citizen appointees.

RIAC’s 2019 Work Program is intended to complement the prioritized actions of the City of Richmond’s Council Term Goals and Social Development Strategy.

The RIAC 2017-2022 Intercultural Strategic Plan outlines four strategic directions to help guide RIAC’s work program:

- Address language, information and cultural barriers;
- Address the perception and reality of racism;
- Explore areas of alignment between RIAC’s intercultural vision and governmental and stakeholder systems; and
- Support the development and integration of Richmond’s immigrants.

The 2018 RIAC Annual Report is prepared for City Council in accordance with the Terms of Reference. This document serves as a summary of RIAC’s activities during the 2018 calendar year and is based on input from the RIAC members with support from the Staff Liaison.

Major Projects for 2018

Newcomer’s Guide

The Newcomer’s Guide was developed by RIAC in 2011 and is available in English, Chinese, Tagalog, Punjabi and Russian to serve the City’s diverse population. The print edition is distributed by the City of Richmond and the online edition is available on the City website. The Newcomer’s Guide has become a valuable resource for new residents in Richmond thanks to the numerous hours of work RIAC members have put into its development. In 2018, the Guide underwent ongoing review by City staff with input from RIAC.

City of Richmond Diversity Symposium

The Diversity Symposium is a free one-day conference focused on sharing best and emerging practices in creating diverse, equitable, and inclusive communities. The theme for 2018 was

Moving from Diversity to Inclusion: Exploring Pathways to Inclusion for Diverse Communities. RIAC members helped plan and provide strategic direction to City staff, and provided invaluable on-site support on the day of the event. The 2018 City of Richmond Diversity Symposium was held on November 2, 2018 at Richmond City Hall. Over 160 delegates were in attendance, participating in keynote and closing presentations, and 9 workshops offered throughout the day. In addition, 18 community agencies, including the RIAC, were represented at community resource tables which facilitated networking and dialogue.

Cultural Harmony Plan

The RIAC has been an important contributor in the development of the Cultural Harmony Plan and continues to provide an intercultural lens in the review and implementation of City policies and programs. The Plan is being conducted in three phases, the first two of which have been completed. The first phase looked at best and emerging practices from other municipalities and the second phase reviewed existing City of Richmond programs and practices. The third and final phase in 2019 will include recommendations to enhance intercultural harmony in Richmond.

Hi Neighbour

In 2018, RIAC members planned and delivered the Hi Neighbour project in cooperation with the Richmond School District. Several elementary school classes were given a project to design and draw pictures that best represented what “Hi Neighbour” meant to them. Over 100 children participated in the project, delivering the Hi Neighbour messaging through their school and family networks.

Resilient Streets Program

In 2018, the City of Richmond received a grant to promote neighbourhood building activities in the East and West Cambie neighbourhoods. The initiative involved the provision of micro-grants to residents of between \$50 and \$200 to facilitate neighbourhood bonding activities, such as potlucks, block parties, and BBQs, and to promote localized connections among immediate neighbours. The RIAC members participated in the Resilient Streets Steering Committee and provided guidance and support for the rollout of the project.

Activities for 2018

Guest Speakers and Organizational Presenters

Throughout 2018, the RIAC invited guest speakers and organizational representatives to present on current initiatives that support the integration of Richmond’s residents. In addition, the RIAC members also provided feedback and suggestions on various initiatives that fall within the RIAC’s mandate.

March

- Liesl Jauk, Manager of Arts Services with the City of Richmond, presented on the City’s new Richmond Arts Strategy, which will guide the future work of the City’s Arts Services section.

- Ashok Rattan, Coordinator of Settlement, Counselling and Support Services with Richmond Multicultural Community Services (RMCS), presented an overview of RMCS programs and services.

April

- Carli Williams, Manager of Community Bylaws and Licensing with the City of Richmond, provided an overview of the upcoming federal legalization of non-medical cannabis and its impact on Richmond.
- Ella Huang, Executive Director of the Richmond Centre for Disability (RCD), talked about the organization's inclusive approach to ensuring that services are available to meet the needs of individuals with diverse abilities.

May

- Ellen Demlow, Epidemiologist with the Vancouver Coastal Health Surveillance Unit, presented on the *My Health My Community Social Connection and Health Report* and discussed the health benefits of strong social connections.

June

- David Weber, Chief Elections Officer with the City of Richmond, presented on the upcoming Richmond Election.
- Debbie Hertha, Seniors Coordinator with the City of Richmond, provided an overview of the City's Seniors Services and its Dementia-Friendly Community Action Plan.
- Shams Jilani, organizational representative of the Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee to the RIAC, shared his personal experience of settling into a new country and offered insights on how to successfully integrate into the host country.

September

- Rebeca Avendano, Supervisor of the Settlement Workers in Schools (SWIS) program, discussed the Richmond School District's role in facilitating newcomer settlement and integration through the work of its settlement workers, cultural interpreters, and the Newcomer Youth program.
- Zavi Swain, Community Development Coordinator at City Centre Community Centre, reported that the Resilient Streets project engaged 70 individuals in three community events and disbursed a total of \$700 in micro-grants to residents in the Cambie neighbourhood.

October

- Dr. Meena Dawar, Richmond Medical Health Officer, gave an update on the Opioid overdose emergency and response in Richmond.

November

- Ted Townsend, Director of Communications and Marketing with the City of Richmond, discussed the City's participation in the Government of Canada's Smart Cities Challenge.

- Phyllis Chan and Adam Hall of the BC Responsible and Problem Gambling Program discuss the prevention and clinical services they offer.

Members of the 2018 Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee

Citizen Appointees

1. Rod Belleza
2. Nick Chopra
3. Mohinder Grewal
4. Andy Hobbs
5. James Hsieh
6. Joan Page
7. Kanwarjit Sandhu
8. Linda Sum

Organizational Representatives

1. Phyllis Chan, Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee (BC Responsible and Problem Gambling Program)
2. Dr. Meena Dawar, Vancouver Coastal Health
3. Michaela Fengstad, Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee (Back in Motion Rehabilitation Inc.) (June to December)
4. Shams Jilani, Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee
5. Hieu Pham-Fraser, Richmond School District
6. Nigel Pronger, RCMP
7. Ashok Rattan, Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee (Richmond Multicultural Community Services)
8. Diane Sugars, Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee (Chimo Community Services) (January to May)
9. Viet Vu, Richmond Centre for Disability

Council Liaison

Councillor Derek Dang (January to October)

Councillor Linda McPhail (November to December)

Staff Liaison

Donna Lee, Inclusion Coordinator (January to June)

Dorothy Jo, Inclusion Coordinator (July to December)

Financial Summary

As a voluntary Advisory Committee to City Council, the RIAC's activities are fully supported by the City's operating budget coordinated by the Staff Liaison.

Revenue	
City funding	\$2,500.00
Expenses	
<i>Meeting Refreshments</i>	\$2,100.00
<i>Printing</i>	\$200.00
Total Expenses	\$2,300.00
Balance	\$200.00

Conclusion and Acknowledgements

As an advisory body to City Council, the RIAC has created an effective forum for meaningful interaction among citizens and organizations regarding intercultural issues in the community, as well as providing an intercultural lens to City strategies and initiatives.

Through various presentations on intercultural issues from City staff, organizational representatives and partners, as well as discussions and information sharing among members during the meetings, the RIAC members are well-informed on intercultural issues in the city and are well-equipped in disseminating useful information to our respective networks in the community.

The RIAC held a total of nine monthly meetings in 2018 as scheduled in its work plan and all of the meetings were well attended. We acknowledge the significant commitment and contributions of outgoing members in 2018, namely Mohinder Grewal (citizen), Andy Hobbs (citizen), Dr. Meena Dawar (Vancouver Coastal Health), Hieu Pham-Fraser (Richmond School District), Viet Vu (Richmond Centre for Disability), Diane Sugars (Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee) and Shams Jilani (Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee). We would also like to take this opportunity to thank Councillors Derek Dang and Linda McPhail for their support of the RIAC; their Council Update has been a highlight at every meeting. We are delighted to announce that we have received multiple applications from youth to the Intercultural Advisory Committee in 2019 and we look forward to mentoring and working with the successful youth representative in the new year.

We would like to express our appreciation to Donna Lee, Staff Liaison from January to June 2018, who is currently on maternity leave, and Dorothy Jo, who assumed the Staff Liaison role since September 2018, for their extensive work and support of RIAC. We appreciate their hard work and meticulous preparation; all RIAC meetings were well-planned and supported.

Respectfully submitted by:

James Hsieh
Chair, Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee

RICHMOND INTERCULTURAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE 2019 WORK PROGRAM

The Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee (RIAC) 2019 Work Program will focus on the RIAC's role as an Advisory Committee to City Council. The Work Plan supports the following Social Development Strategy (2013-2022) Strategic Direction:

Strategic Direction 5: Build on Richmond's Cultural Diversity.

"To facilitate a socially healthy and inclusive community, it is important for the City to be able to appropriately respond to all its residents – refugees, other immigrants and Canadian born households alike".

Strategy/Initiative	RIAC Actions/Steps	Expected Outcome of RIAC Actions	Timeframe
1. Address language, information and cultural barriers			
1.1 Provide recommendations on improving the access of information to newcomers in Richmond.	1.1.1 Explore options for providing information to new residents in Richmond.	Newcomers are able to access current information on how to get involved in civic and community life in Richmond.	February to November 2019
	1.1.2 Provide input to City staff on the review of the Newcomer's Guide.		
1.2 Build on and improve RIAC members' knowledge of intercultural issues through information sharing, guest speakers, and educational opportunities.	1.2.1 Invite guest speakers to present on intercultural issues facing the community and share relevant information and educational opportunities.	A summary of key findings from the various speakers that are specifically related to newcomer integration and/or intercultural bridging in Richmond is compiled.	February to November 2019
	1.2.2 Encourage the RIAC members to present on specific intercultural initiatives from their respective organizations and/or affiliated groups that can inform the City's policies or practices.	Best and emerging practices being undertaken by its members help to inform City strategies and initiatives.	February to November 2019
2. Address racism and misconceptions			

Strategy/Initiative	RIAC Actions/Steps	Expected Outcome of RIAC Actions	Timeframe
2.1 Support and promote initiatives that address the perception and reality of racism and discrimination in the community.	2.1.1 Seek opportunities to participate in initiatives that address racism and discrimination in the community.	The RIAC members identify and participate in initiatives and relay relevant information back to the RIAC.	Ongoing
	2.1.2 The RIAC to liaise with advisory groups from other municipalities and participate in and/or promote their activities.	The RIAC members provide information and recommendations (if any) to the RIAC of best practices from other municipalities that could promote intercultural understanding in Richmond.	Ongoing
2.2 Assist City staff with the planning and implementation of the 2019 City of Richmond Diversity Symposium.	2.2.1 Provide RIAC representatives to sit on the 2019 Diversity Symposium Advisory Committee to develop ideas for themes and topics, options for keynote speakers and presenters, and to select final presenters for the workshop sessions.	The RIAC members actively participate in the planning of the 2019 Diversity Symposium program.	March to September 2019
	2.2.2 Provide event support at the 2019 Diversity Symposium, including promoting the event to Richmond-based community organizations, speaker introduction, networking, and hosting a community resource table.	The RIAC members play an active role during the 2019 Diversity Symposium.	October to November 2019
3. Ensure that City & other governmental and stakeholder systems, policies and planning processes are aligned with RIAC's intercultural vision.			
3.1 Further actions within the RIAC's Intercultural Strategic Plan are reflected in City events and strategies.	3.1.1 Provide an intercultural lens to City events and initiatives as opportunities arise, such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • World Festival • Doors Open • Culture Days • Arts Strategy • Wellness Strategy • Cultural Harmony Plan 	The RIAC provides an intercultural lens in the planning of City events and/or strategies.	As needed through 2019
	3.1.2 Provide a summary of key activities and learnings from 2019 to City Council via the RIAC Annual Report.	The RIAC submits a summary of the year's key activities to City staff which is included in the 2019 RIAC Annual Report that is submitted to City Council.	October to November 2019

Strategy/Initiative	RIAC Actions/Steps	Expected Outcome of RIAC Actions	Timeframe
3.2 Provide input on the development of the Cultural Harmony Plan (CHP).	3.2.1 Participate in CHP community engagement sessions, such as surveys, open houses, and focus groups; and 3.2.2 Provide input on the draft recommendations for the Cultural Harmony Plan.	The RIAC members are involved in the development of the Cultural Harmony Plan.	2019
4. To support the development and integration of Richmond's immigrants while doing this in a way that respects family and cultural traditions			
4.1 Assist the City in engaging the community in building 'cultural bridges' and learning opportunities that allow sharing and understanding of cultural traditions.	4.1.1 Serve as a resource and provide advice on intercultural integration and inclusion on new City initiatives or events, as opportunities arise.	The RIAC provides advice or recommendations on cultural bridging.	Ongoing
5. Committee development and housekeeping			
5.1 Participate in an orientation of the Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee.	5.1.1 Members receive an orientation to the RIAC and the City of Richmond and learn about the roles and responsibilities of advisory committee members, meeting process, and the RIAC Terms of Reference.	Members receive information on the role of the Intercultural Advisory Committee and learn about the RIAC's Intercultural Strategic Plan, Terms of Reference, Social Development Strategy and Council Term Goals.	January 2019