

Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee 2024 Annual Report

Introduction

The Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee (RIAC) was established by Council in February 2002 to act as a resource and provide advice to Council in support of enhancing and strengthening intercultural harmony and cooperation in Richmond.

The 2024 RIAC Annual Report is prepared for Council in accordance with the Terms of Reference. This document serves as a summary of the RIAC's activities during the 2024 calendar year and is based on input from the RIAC members with support from the Staff Liaison.

Highlights of 2024

Cultural Harmony Plan

The RIAC supports the implementation of the recommended actions of the Council-adopted Cultural Harmony Plan by providing an intercultural lens in response to staff requests for input. Throughout the year, the RIAC provided input on various strategies and initiatives across the organization, including the update of the City's *Newcomer's Guide to Richmond* and *Signature and Community Events Plan*.

City of Richmond Diversity Symposium

The RIAC members were involved in the planning and implementation of the 2024 Diversity Symposium, which was the tenth anniversary of the Symposium and the first in-person event since 2019. Under the theme of *Reimagining our Futures*, this year's event brought over 100 participants to City Hall to network, share and reflect on innovative, inclusive best practices that build equitable futures and outcomes. A number of the RIAC members participated on the steering committee and volunteered as moderators during the event. The steering committee included the RIAC members Tahzi Ali, Yun-Jou Chang, Diana Leung, Michael Ma, Rubina Mahal and Ashok Rattan.

Activities for 2024

Guest Speakers and Organizational Presenters

Throughout 2024, guest speakers and organizational representatives consulted the RIAC on strategic plans and discussed opportunities to strengthen intercultural connections and foster cultural harmony in the Richmond community. Highlights include:

January

- Dorothy Jo, Program Manager for Social Planning and Camilla Lade, Planner for Community Social Development at the City of Richmond sought the RIAC's input on current and future opportunities to enhance cultural harmony, as part of the *Cultural Harmony Plan 2022–2023 Update* report.

February

- Susan Walters, Chief Librarian of the Richmond Public Library, provided an overview of the Library's *2024–2028 Strategic Plan* and facilitated a discussion on future library priorities.

April

- Dee Bowley-Cowan, Program Manager for Events and Marie Fenwick, Director of Arts, Culture and Heritage at the City of Richmond presented the Council-endorsed guiding principles for the City's *Signature and Community Events Plan* and asked RIAC to provide input on what multicultural celebrations could look like in Richmond.

June

- RIAC member, Athena Estremadura from the Richmond Poverty Reduction Coalition provided an overview of the coalition's *Improving Pedestrian Safety in Richmond through Vision Zero Strategies* project, which aims to eliminate all traffic fatalities and severe injuries by making communities safer for all modes of transportation and increasing equitable mobility for all.

September

- Shant Goswami, Manager of Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) and Colin Pennier, Manager of Indigenous Relations at the City of Richmond presented highlights and ongoing work of their respective portfolios, which include fostering DEI within the City's workforce and advancing the City's Truth and Reconciliation efforts.

Members of the 2024 Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee

Citizen Appointees

1. Tahzi Ali
2. Yun-Jou Chang
3. Vladimir Choi
4. Michael Ma
5. Rubina Mahal
6. Mikaela Nuval
7. Kanwarjit Sandhu
8. Randy Sandhu

Organizational Representatives

1. Athena Estremadura, Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee
2. Diana Leung, Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee
3. Adena MacLean, Vancouver Coastal Health
4. Dina McInnes, Richmond Centre for Disability
5. Ashok Rattan, Richmond Multicultural Community Services
6. Daniel Remedios, Richmond Community Services Advisory Committee
7. Sissi Su, S.U.C.C.E.S.S.
8. Baren Tsui, Richmond School District
9. Roy Wong, RCMP

Council Liaison

Councillor Bill McNulty

Staff Liaison

Peggy Chen, Planner 2 (Inclusion)

Financial Summary

As an Advisory Committee to Council, the RIAC's activities are fully supported by the City's operating budget. In 2024, the City allocated an operating budget of \$2,500.00 for the RIAC, of which \$1,396.08 was utilized for administrative meeting expenses.

Conclusion and Acknowledgements

The RIAC had a productive year in 2024. The committee achieved a full slate of nine meetings to fulfill its mandate of strengthening intercultural harmony in Richmond and supporting the advancement of the Council-adopted Cultural Harmony Plan, such as assisting in a successful in-person Diversity Symposium and engaging in various City consultation opportunities. Looking ahead, the RIAC remains committed to promoting cultural harmony by actively participating in initiatives and dialogues that amplify diverse community voices. The RIAC also seeks to deepen connections with urban Indigenous communities, as well as enhance representation within the committee.

We acknowledge the significant commitment and contributions of outgoing members in 2024: Rubina Mahal, Michael Ma and Kanwarjit Sandhu, Adena MacLean from Vancouver Coastal Health and Diana Leung from the Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee. We thank Councillor Bill McNulty for his support of the RIAC. We also express our appreciation to Peggy Chen, Staff Liaison and Jennifer Wong and Sarah Kennedy, Recording Secretaries, for their work in supporting the committee's needs. We look forward to furthering our work together in 2025.

Respectfully submitted by:

Yun-Jou Chang

Chair, Richmond Intercultural Advisory Committee