



## **Richmond: City on the Move**

*Annual Address by Mayor Malcolm Brodie  
February 28, 2019*



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City of Richmond**



## ***Richmond: City on the Move***

Following the civic election last October 20, our new City Council commenced a four-year term. We thanked long-serving Councillors, Derek Dang and Ken Johnston, for their honourable and dedicated service as we welcomed new Councillors, Kelly Greene and Michael Wolfe. All Councillors are committed to making Richmond the best community in Canada in which to live, work, visit and do business.

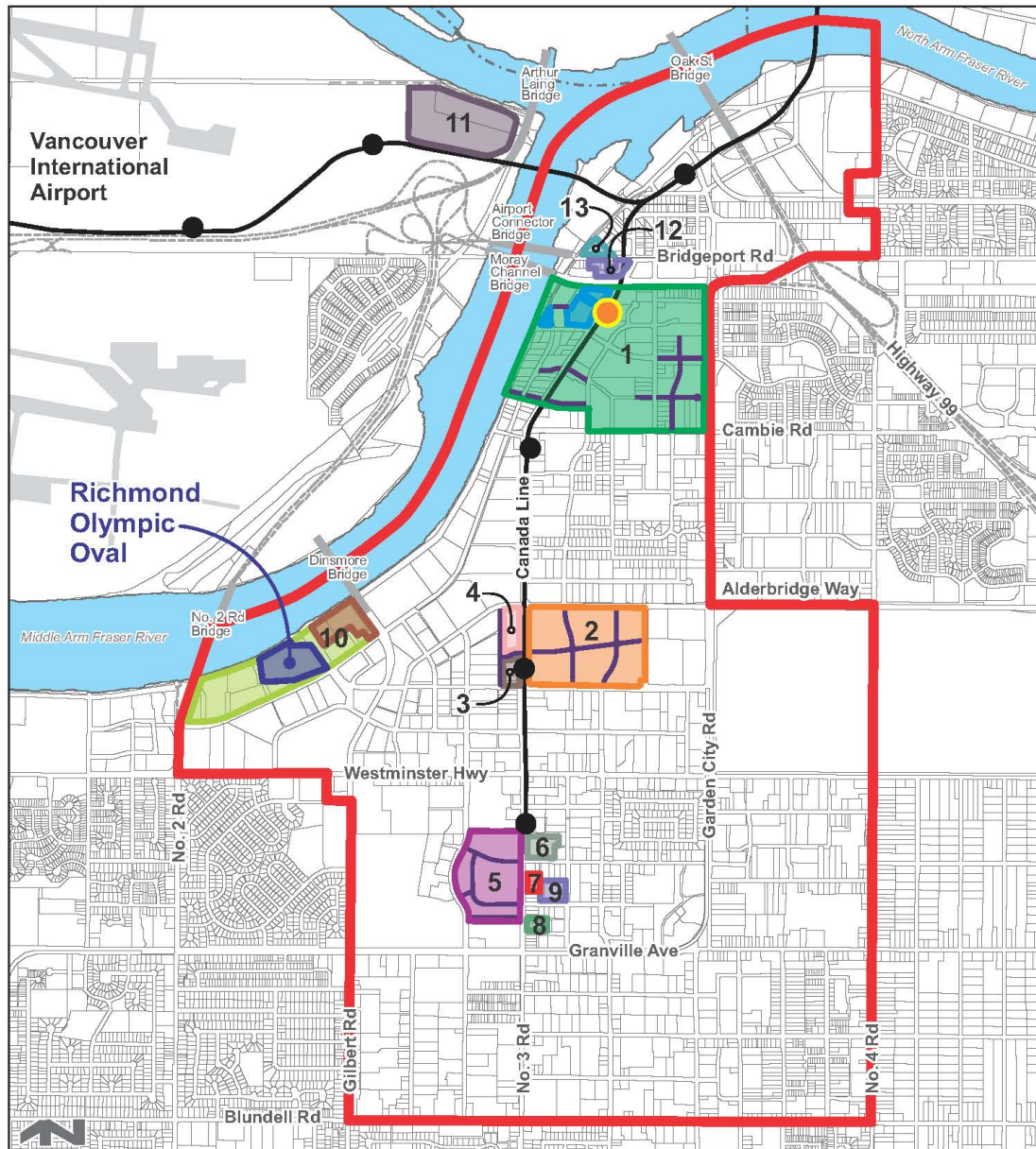
In this address, I will focus initially on the growth of our community and highlight the continuing importance of the transportation and distribution sectors to our local economy. What steps are being taken to keep our community moving and ensure our economic vitality? After then reviewing the finances, community safety, the budget and sustainability, we will turn to some of our exciting achievements, plans and milestones.

### **Economic Growth**

Richmond is well-known as a City on the move. As our current population has surpassed 225,000 residents, we fully expect to easily meet our Official Community Plan 2041 (“OCP”) target of 280,000 residents. Economic growth remains strong as evidenced last year with \$879 million in building activity, the second highest annual total on record. And there are many more large development projects in process that will continue to drive growth in the City. If you look around, you will see that most of the growth is right here in our City Centre and is transit-oriented according to plan.

Generally, a good example of a major growth area is the Capstan Village area in north Richmond (#1 on map). Approximately 57 hectares in size, it is planned as a mixed-use waterfront arts community. As envisioned in the City Centre Area Plan, the highest concentration of new residents and jobs in this neighbourhood are found near the Capstan Canada Line station (orange dot on map). At full build-out, the area should be home to over 15,000 residents and 3,000 jobs.

The Capstan Village is the site for Yuanheng’s *Viewstar* development, which includes 850 units in nine residential towers, of which 59 are to be affordable housing units. In addition to the future City Centre North Community Centre, the development also includes an office tower, new streets, off-street bike paths and pedestrian greenways (blue area on map).



**LEGEND**

|                             |                      |                          |                               |
|-----------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1 Capstan Village           | 5 Richmond Centre    | 9 Park Village           | 13 International Trade Centre |
| 2 Lansdowne Centre          | 6 Keltic - Paramount | 10 Oval Village          | Proposed Roads                |
| 3 Townline - Luxe           | 7 Bene - Time Square | 11 McArthurGlen Phase II | Proposed Capstan Station      |
| 4 South Street - Atmosphere | 8 Ifortune - Glitz   | 12 New Continental       |                               |



Elsewhere, though mostly in the planning stages, a number of other major new developments are well underway, most notably:

A. Lansdowne Centre (#2 on map):

Council continues to work with the property owners on completing plans for a major redevelopment of the 50-acre Lansdowne Centre site. To be built in phases, it includes 4 million square feet of new residential space and almost 750,000 square feet of retail and office space. Extensive new public features would include affordable housing units, a 10-acre park, the extensions of Hazelbridge Way and Cooney Road through the site, as well as a new 50,000 square foot City amenity space. Also to be built is a portion of a linear park which will eventually stretch from the Garden City Lands to the Richmond Olympic Oval. The detailed master land use plan and 15–20 year implementation strategy for this development are yet to come.

B. Townline's development *Luxe* at No. 3 and Lansdowne Roads (#3 on map):

On No. 3 Road across from Lansdowne Centre, Council has approved a development with four towers including more than 350 residential units along with office and commercial space. It will also include a number of affordable market rental units, community amenity space, transportation improvements, and a portion of the linear park along Lansdowne Road.

C. South Street's development *Atmosphere* at No. 3 Road and Alderbridge Way (#4 on map):

South Street's development is set to proceed with its initiative involving more than 800 residential units in seven towers. It will include some market rental and affordable housing units, plus commercial and office space. Included in the plans is construction of new north-south and east-west roads within the site to further improve our City Centre road network.

D. Richmond Centre (#5 on map):

Council recently approved redevelopment plans for the south-end of the Richmond Centre mall site. The former Sears building and parkade along with other portions of the current mall will be demolished to enable redevelopment in two phases. There will be twelve new residential towers with 2,200 units, including 150 units for affordable housing and 200 for market rental, plus 420,000 square feet of new retail space. Among its public amenities, this development will provide new streets through the site including extending Park Road eastward to Minoru Boulevard.

E. East side of No. 3 Road across from Richmond Centre:

The four-tower *Paramount* development by Keltic at No. 3 and Cook Roads will provide 550 units of new residential, plus office and commercial space. In addition to a number of affordable housing units, this project will also include a 19,000 square foot Early Childhood Development Hub with related support services (#6 on map).

Two towers will be contained within the *Bene* redevelopment of the Times Square site between Park and Cook Roads on No. 3 Road with more than 160 new residential units and new commercial/office space (#7 on map). This is in addition to the two-tower *Glitz* development at No. 3 and Anderson Roads containing a further 75 new residential units along with additional office and commercial space (#8 on map). Included in these developments are 14 affordable units.

- F. Park Road and Buswell Street (#9 on map):  
8071/8091 Park Road will be the site of two residential towers as well as a further tower for combined office and residential use. In addition to 351 residential units including 21 affordable dwellings, this complex will tie into District Energy and feature car share vehicles on-site for transportation demand management.
- G. Oval Village:  
Development activity continues in the Oval Village. The latest phase in Aspac's *River Green* development beside the Dinsmore Bridge includes three towers (#10 on map). There will be 459 units of market residential located on Pearson Way as well as a pedestrian pier, new riverfront park amenities, dike upgrades and a City-owned childcare facility. When the entire *River Green* project, including land on the west side of the Oval is fully built out, it will contain over 2,100 residential units (green area on map).
- H. Vancouver International Airport ("YVR") (#11 on map):  
There is significant additional construction activity at YVR. In Phase 2 of the McArthurGlen Designer Outlet Centre, expect up to 35 new outlet stores to open in 84,000 square feet. Work also continues in YVR's \$9 billion construction program. This will expand the international terminal while it provides a new parkade and ground transportation facility, as well as airside improvements.
- I. New Continental on No.3 Road and north-side of Sea Island Way (#12 on map):  
Three towers will be built on Sea Island Way, featuring 400 hotel rooms along with university-level educational space in addition to commercial and office development. This project will greatly improve the pedestrian experience in this area and support the connection between the Capstan and Bridgeport Villages.

In addition to these projects, there are many projects currently being constructed. The International Trade Centre on Bridgeport Road is an example (#13 on map). This three-tower development is set to open soon on the north side of Bridgeport Road. As a single-phase development, it includes a 100-room *Opus* hotel in addition to office and commercial space. New and re-aligned streets are also part of this development.

Generally, the overall strength of Richmond's economy is demonstrated by over 15,000 licensed businesses providing more than 130,000 local jobs, an increase of 8% in 2018. This allows Richmond to maintain one of the highest jobs-to-worker ratios in the region.

Our rapid pace of growth has been supported by the operation of the Canada Line and our visionary City Centre Area Plan, both of which contemplate sustainable transit-oriented development with added density in our downtown core. Investments in key facilities such as the Richmond Olympic Oval, the Minoru Centre for Active Living and the City Centre Community Centre support this trend.

This civic growth results in heightened economic activity and enhances our enviable quality of living. It enables us to add new roads, parks, childcare centres, public art and other amenities to our infrastructure. Add to that the opening of the City Centre Community Policing Office expected this year as well as the previously-mentioned future City Centre North Community Centre on Capstan Way. Growth has also funded hundreds of new affordable housing units as housing affordability continues to be an important concern across the region.

As expansion also brings challenges, our Council constantly updates our policies to ensure that new residential growth reflects community values. For example: in the recent past such updates include revisions to the massing regulations for new single-family homes, farm house size, Development Cost Charges and our Affordable Housing Strategy, while we extinguished the obsolete Land Use Contracts. Policies have also been introduced to encourage more rental housing and a broader array of housing forms.

## **Transportation**

Richmond's strong job performance is closely linked to transportation and distribution. Transportation of people and goods is involved in almost 70% of Richmond's employment base. This includes industries that participate in global markets such as distribution, logistics, manufacturing, wholesale and tourism-related enterprises, among others.

Richmond is a major West Coast hub for intermodal transportation and distribution with a large logistics sector. As Canada's second largest airport, YVR set records last year when it served almost 26 million passengers and moved over 338,000 tonnes of cargo. We are also the site of a 700-acre transloading facility offering direct access to Canada's busiest deep-sea port, the Port of Vancouver.

Over 500 freight, logistics and cargo companies – many with household names like UPS, FedEx, Purolator, Canada Post and DHL – enable goods to be efficiently distributed within the region and between Canada's major trading partners. Richmond continues to strengthen its position as the gateway to and from Asia Pacific markets.

To keep our local economy moving, Council has placed a real focus on the mobility of people and goods within Richmond. This starts with transportation within our rapidly-growing City Centre. Some examples of road improvement projects completed in the recent past include:

- Extension of Lansdowne Road to provide a continuous east-west link from the Garden City Lands to Hollybridge – this added capacity relieves east-west congestion when travelling across the City Centre;
- Extension of Ackroyd Road from No. 3 Road to Minoru Boulevard and widening Gilbert Road along the southern approaches to the Dinsmore Bridge; and
- Construction recently started on the River Parkway to extend River Road directly between Gilbert and Cambie Roads along the old CP Rail corridor. With future redevelopment, this will eventually become a 4-lane arterial road to improve the movement of traffic through the north-end of the City Centre. River Parkway will also eliminate the traffic bottlenecks that currently occur where River Road now crosses Gilbert Road.

In the next decade, the City is planning to develop a 40-acre waterfront park along that section of the Middle Arm adjacent to the Dinsmore Bridge.

Outside the City Centre:

- No. 2 Road from Steveston Highway south to Dyke Road is being widened, complete with a shared continuous cycling/pedestrian pathway and intersection/traffic signal improvements; and
- Major upgrades are nearly complete along Westminster Highway and Nelson Road in east Richmond, except for the soon-expected upgrade of the CN Rail crossing. This includes road widening, intersection improvements and additional walking/cycling paths. These projects made a huge improvement in the movement of truck traffic to and from the Port of Vancouver's Richmond properties as well as easing congestion for local area traffic.

When it comes to traffic congestion, the Highway 99 corridor at the Massey Tunnel remains top of mind. A solution must be found to relieve this bottleneck as it negatively impacts the movement of goods and people. However, our Council has long-understood that the previously-proposed bridge with its immense design would have imposed significant negative impacts on Richmond as well as the region. The ultimate solution must address traffic flow for the entire corridor from the north-end of the Oak Street Bridge to the south-end of the tunnel and not simply transfer the location of the highway bottleneck. The Ministry of Infrastructure and Transportation is guiding the effort to work collaboratively with local governments and other stakeholders on better solutions. While we await results, we are heartened by the Province's commitment to move forward immediately on corridor improvements, including the Steveston Highway interchange.

More generally, because our transportation challenges will not all be solved by simply adding more asphalt, our OCP identifies transition policies towards a more sustainable system.

In 2008, 82% of all trips in the City were made by car with the remaining 18% by transit, cycling and/or walking. When you combine our reliance on the car with increasing population, the result will ultimately be gridlock and a deterioration of air quality. As a result, the City set a goal of reducing the percentage of car trips to below 50% by 2041. In the past decade, significant progress has been made in this regard with transit ridership in the City increasing by 7% and car trips reducing by 8%. Although we make progress, much remains to be done.

The importance of the Canada Line is long-established. We have now received the necessary funds from development to construct a new Capstan Canada Line station. Once design is complete, TransLink has agreed to construct the station within 30 months. More immediately, TransLink procurement is underway for 24 new Canada Line cars so that by the end of 2020, service capacity and frequency will increase dramatically.

On the buses, local expansion is also planned. Along with dedicating more vehicles to the City routes, TransLink will soon implement a new B-Line service between our Brighthouse Station and Metrotown. Also in the works is construction of a bus mall adjacent to the Canada Line Brighthouse station. Starting next year, buses connecting to the Canada Line will be able to park off-road and make transfers more seamlessly.

The popularity of cycling provides another important opportunity to switch to more sustainable transportation choices. Excluding dike and park trails, Richmond currently has 72 kilometres of bike lanes and multi-use paths. This network is ever-expanding, particularly on routes within the City Centre such as connections to and from the Canada Line.



Last fall, a public bike-sharing pilot program was launched by the private sector using dockless technology. Only in its first phase, the program will expand towards the peak summer cycling season. This bicycle innovation augments the car-share programs already available in Richmond.

Finally, Richmond is one of the finalists in the prestigious Smart Cities Challenge. This national competition with a \$10 million prize challenges local governments to envision innovative ways to engage technologies and data that will improve the lives of residents and enhance service delivery. Richmond's hi-tech proposal would provide many benefits including:

1. Improved coordination of emergency response;
2. Safer streets with reduction of traffic crashes, congestion and commute times;
3. Greater community resiliency for 72 hours post-disaster;
4. Early incident detection of flooding, earthquakes and spills; and
5. Improved communication with our residents.

Our final submission is due in early March with a decision expected later this spring. A component of the judging criteria will be based on the community support shown for our proposal. We need everyone to let Ottawa know that Richmond is your favorite Smart City. Please visit [smartcity.richmond.ca](http://smartcity.richmond.ca) to learn more about the proposal and find out how you can help us bring home the prize.

## **Finances and Community Safety**

Richmond residents and businesses have traditionally enjoyed low property taxes relative to the rest of the region. Our increase this year will be uncharacteristically high. Besides the Employers Health Tax, the biggest factor in this increment arises from our commitment to community safety in response to growth. This commitment is demonstrated by Council agreeing to add 107 RCMP and Richmond Fire Rescue officers plus support personnel within this Council term.

Richmond currently employs one police officer for every 976 residents, the lowest such ratio in the region. With an additional 51 RCMP officers and 20 police support staff, our local RCMP detachment's *3-Year Resource Plan* will address the challenges posed now and in the future. It will provide more officers for every phase of local policing from officers on the street to those dedicated to investigation of organized crime.

The recent *Richmond Fire-Rescue Plan Update* identified that in order to maintain current service levels with expected community growth, more firefighters would be required in the Steveston/Seafair and City Centre/Brighthouse areas. Thirty-six additional firefighters will be hired over the next three years as the result.

## **Sustainability**

The concept of building a sustainable community is a priority in Richmond's OCP and guides much of Council's efforts.

As a signatory in 2008 to the BC Climate Action Charter, Richmond took steps to reduce overall greenhouse gas emissions in the City by 12% between 2007 and 2015, despite a similar percentage of growth in population during the same period. These results positively affect the bottom line. For example, we estimate that as a whole, owners of residential buildings in Richmond saved \$20 million in 2015 alone in energy spending due to efficiency measures. Since 2013, the City has also achieved carbon neutral operations by reducing emissions in civic buildings/fleet and through our innovative *Richmond Carbon Market Program*. We expect to maintain carbon neutrality for the foreseeable future. Our award-winning District Energy Utility is on track to become the largest of its kind in North America once future and existing projects are hooked into the District Energy Utility. This year will see the first buildings being constructed with our “first in North America” requirement that all parking stalls in new developments be energized to support Level 2 EV charging.

Richmond also leads in recycling and reducing the waste going to local landfills as we close in on our target to meet the regional goal of 80% waste diversion by 2020. To help us reach this goal, the Richmond Recycling Depot has extended operations to six days per week as it accepts electronics, upholstered furniture, propane tanks and butane cylinders. The *Large Item Pick Up Program* now allows for the collection of up to six large household items per year with tires included as a newly-accepted item.

There is a very low risk of flooding in our City. Council is working proactively on necessary long-term improvements to keep our island community safe. Flood protection remains an important issue for our Council with more than 49 kilometres of local dikes and 39 drainage pump stations. We spend over \$10 million annually to bolster our dikes and drainage network. However, with the threat of rising sea levels and the increase of extreme weather events resulting from climate change, Council understands the need to further improve Richmond's flood protection measures. For this reason, our long-term *Flood Protection Management Strategy* and the *Dike Master Plan* call for the City to raise all the dikes by approximately 1.2 metres over the next 50 years. These are only a few of the climate change adaptation initiatives Richmond has adopted to protect and enhance our community.

## **2019 Highlights**

The community is looking forward to the official opening of the \$79 million Minoru Centre for Active Living. This spectacular new facility will provide a major expansion of aquatics, seniors' activities and other sport/recreation services.

The new aquatic centre increases the water surface area by 60% from the old Minoru Aquatics Centre and includes many significant features, such as:

- Two 25-metre pools allowing for greater usability and flexibility in programming with accessible features;
- A large leisure pool including a large river run as well as spray and play elements;
- A wellness area with two hot pools, a cold plunge pool, steam room and saunas; and
- A large change room area with a mix of gender-specific and universal change areas.

The Minoru Centre for Active Living will also serve as home to an expanded Seniors Centre with a dedicated entrance and lobby. The two-storey design contains a lounge together with a full-

service café plus multipurpose and additional activity rooms such as an arts studio, woodworking shop, and a billiards/games room. With twice the programming space as the existing seniors centre, we will address the needs of older people who will represent the fastest-growing segment of our population for decades to come.

And there's much more in the new Centre:

- 8,500 square feet of fitness space offering a range of machines and equipment to cater to users of all ages and abilities;
- For sport field users of Minoru Park – eight team rooms that are accessible from the fields along with multipurpose spaces to support tournaments and events;
- A full service cafe with a commercial kitchen; and
- Three outdoor plazas surrounding the facility to support programming of the Centre as well as Minoru Park as a whole.

Unfortunately, because of major structural problems recently encountered during construction, the opening of the aquatics and fitness areas must be postponed. The balance of the facility will open to the public by mid-March. More information on this will be provided on an ongoing basis. We hope the Centre is fully open soon.

Throughout the community for completion this year, the City has a number of other projects to enhance services. They include:

- A new City Centre Community Policing Office located at the corner of Gilbert and Granville. This office promises to increase police presence, reduce response times and provide increased support for crime prevention programs while it enhances access for storefront police services;
- A waterfront pedestrian pier at the north foot of Hollybridge Way;
- A number of affordable housing projects scheduled to open;
- BC Housing will complete a new Temporary Modular Housing project at Elmbridge and Alderbridge to provide 40 self-contained rental homes for local people who are homeless. With the latest local Homelessness Count almost doubling in recent years, site preparation is underway and units are expected to be ready for occupancy this spring;
- Our new 36-bed Emergency Shelter on Horseshoe Way in South Richmond to replace closing facilities; and
- As part of development, a new childcare facility on River Drive with over 60 spaces. This will add to the nine facilities already secured over the years by the City.

Last year, the City made significant progress on the Garden City Lands, while our partners at Kwantlen Polytechnic University launched their new farm school on the site. In addition to implementing the new trail system, extensive landscaping will result in new trees and vegetation throughout the Lands. The remaining bog eco-system is being protected as an environmental preserve. We expect upcoming phases of development of the Lands to include expanded farming activities along with community gardens and more trails.

And there's more. Over the next two years, we look forward to developments such as the new 6-acre West Cambie Neighbourhood Park, construction of a new Steveston Community Centre, an expanded animal shelter and a new lawn bowling clubhouse at the north-end of Minoru Park.

## Significant Achievements

As shown by a few examples of the accolades we received in 2018, Richmond continues to be recognized worldwide for its leadership, innovation and excellence in service delivery:

- Richmond was among the first cities in the world to be named as a *Global Active City* based on work with our partners in developing key initiatives such as our *Community Wellness Strategy* and the *Recreation and Sport Strategy*. To earn this designation, a City must offer residents the opportunity to enjoy active, healthy lifestyles while improving their well-being. Richmond joins other first cities: Buenos Aires, Argentina; Hamburg, Germany; Lillehammer, Norway; Liverpool, UK; and Ljubljana, Slovenia;
- Our *District Energy Program* has been the subject of more than a dozen awards since 2011, including two awards in 2018 – the *Innovative Energy Project of the Year Award* from the Association of Energy Engineers and the *District Energy Leadership Award* from the International District Energy Association;
- *Project of the Year Award* from the Public Works Association of BC for the design of our new No. 2 Road North Drainage Pump Station;
- The American Public Works Association and Government Fleet magazine honoured Richmond with their *Leading Fleets Award*;
- *Governance Award* from the Union of BC Municipalities for our innovative *Electric Vehicle Readiness Policy*;
- *Planning Excellence Award in Social Planning* from the Canadian Institute of Planners for the new Storeys affordable housing project on Granville Avenue east of No. 3 Road;
- One of the *50 Top Smart Cities in the World* in the Smart 50 competition for the development of our new *MyRichmond* e-services portal;
- Awards from the BC Recreation and Parks Association Award including the *Building Excellence Award* for the City Centre Community Centre and the *Program Excellence Award* for our Pollinator Pasture project; and
- For Richmond's financial reporting by the Government Finance Officers Association of the US and Canada – we received the *Canadian Award for Financial Reporting* for the 16<sup>th</sup> year in a row and the *Popular Finance Reporting Award* for the 9<sup>th</sup> year in a row for our 2017 Annual Report.

## Upcoming Highlights

In addition to the various projects in Richmond, 2019 marks the 140<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Richmond's incorporation. As we did during our very successful *Canada 150* celebrations, Council is creating a special grant program to assist neighbourhoods in planning celebrations and creating legacies to mark the anniversary.

And we need to be ready as next year will also be an exciting time in Richmond. As host of the 55+ *Games* in 2020, the competition will attract seniors to our City from throughout the Province. The City will also host the *Canadian Adult Recreational Hockey Association World Cup* (CAHRA), a huge international event known as the *Olympics of Recreational Hockey* with over 120 teams coming to compete. Both of these events will be strong draws for the tourism industry.



## **Conclusion**

Starting immediately, this entire City Council term for Richmond will again be very busy as we implement the many initiatives outlined today and continue to deliver the core municipal services so important to our community. I look forward to working together with members of City Council, our staff, volunteers, community stakeholders and partners. Together, we will fulfill our vision for Richmond and continue to ensure that our civic services, our quality of life and our economic vitality set the standard of excellence for our region and our country.



## **City of Richmond**

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