

CITY OF RICHMOND
Recreation and Sport Strategy
(2022–2024)



June 2025

PROGRESS UPDATE



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Executive Summary

The Recreation and Sport Strategy Progress Update (2022–2024) presents progress highlights and accomplishments achieved over the last three years. The Recreation and Sport Strategy (2019–2024) guides the work of Parks, Recreation and Culture Division, especially the Recreation and Sport Services Department, with the aim to increase reach and impact of recreation and sport benefits to all residents in Richmond. The City of Richmond collaborates with Richmond’s Community Associations and Societies and other community organizations to deliver a broad range of recreation and sport opportunities. Through community facilities, arenas, aquatic facilities, fitness and sport facilities, arts, culture and heritage opportunities, and in outdoor spaces, parks and schools, there are a myriad of options to meet the physical activity, wellness and sport needs of Richmond residents.

In order to meet the Strategy’s vision—**that Richmond is a leader in the planning and delivery of recreation and sport opportunities, inspiring individuals and communities to be active, connected and healthy for a lifetime**—seven focus areas of action were identified:

1. Increasing awareness and understanding of the opportunities and benefits of participation in recreation and sport.
2. Ensuring that recreation and sport opportunities are accessible, inclusive and support the engagement of all residents.
3. Promoting physical literacy to ensure residents have the skills, competence, confidence and motivation to move for a lifetime.
4. Encouraging active people through connections with vibrant, natural and built environments.
5. Creating opportunities for Richmond residents to connect with nature.
6. Building community capacity through collaborations, partnerships and volunteerism.
7. Leveraging technology and innovation to connect and inspire participation in recreation and sport.

With full Recreation and Sport services resuming in the second quarter of 2022, Richmond has seen a steady increase in participation in events, programs and physical activities since the COVID-19 pandemic. The achievements highlighted in the forthcoming document capture only a fraction of the ongoing recreation and sport work that is accomplished year-over-year in Richmond, with the support of Community Associations and Societies and key community partners. Every day we get closer to the Strategy’s vision, and every day Richmond residents are finding ways that work for them to be active for life.



Introduction

The Parks, Recreation and Culture Division offers residents of all ages and abilities access to recreation and sport programs and services and special events through community centres, arenas, aquatic facilities, fitness and sport facilities, numerous art, culture and heritage offerings, and in outdoor spaces, parks and schools. Both indoor and outdoor opportunities are available to increase physical activity and overall wellness, and enhance community connectedness. The Division works to understand and address barriers and promote participation of people with disabilities, individuals and families in financial need, and Richmond’s diverse cultural groups. In addition, creating welcoming environments for those who are new to the community and offering multiple gateways to participate in recreation that includes arts, heritage, culture and sports are priorities.

The Recreation and Sport Services Department embraces a relationship-based approach, working with a range of community organizations, non-profit organizations, recreation and sport organizations, and individuals to provide programs and services. The City of Richmond’s Community Associations and Societies assist with understanding the needs of individual neighbourhoods, as in the case of community centres, or in specific service areas such as arenas or fitness and wellness, provide direct connections to community members and deliver programs and services to the public. The Recreation and Sport Services Department also works closely with local sport organizations through the Richmond Sports Council on a wide range of initiatives and projects. These relationships add value to people’s experiences and provide a multitude of opportunities for people to become engaged in their community.

The renewed vision for recreation and sport in Richmond was developed through a collaborative and holistic approach involving engagement with Richmond residents, community partners, and staff. The resulting future-oriented and aspirational vision is:

Richmond is a leader in the planning and delivery of recreation and sport opportunities, inspiring individuals and communities to be active, connected and healthy for a lifetime.

Key benefits of participating in recreation and sport are well-documented and include:

- Enhancing mental and physical well-being;
- Enhancing social well-being;
- Helping to build strong families and connected communities;
- Helping people connect with nature;
- Providing economic benefits by investing in recreation;
- Achieving sport excellence for individuals and communities; and
- Creating safe and supportive environments through social development and community building.



The Recreation and Sport Strategy (the Strategy), along with the Community Wellness Strategy and other City of Richmond (City) strategies, provide a solid foundation that guides the Recreation and Sport Services Department’s focus on the long-term outcomes of increasing community participation and physical activity.

Given the long-term nature of the Strategy and the breadth of strategic initiatives that help move the needle on increasing physical activity and participation levels, this document provides a snapshot of progress on selected achievements in each strategic focus area. Since the launch of the Strategy in 2019 and the 2019–2021 Progress Update, key themes have emerged from actions taken over the course of the last five years of the Strategy’s implementation, including:

- Connecting people to opportunities and each other;
- Better promoting the benefits of participating in recreation and sport;
- Helping to cultivate lifelong participation in recreation and sport; and
- Identifying and reducing the barriers that individuals face in meeting their health and physical activity goals.

With sustained, collective effort on the Strategy’s seven focus areas, progress has been made on lowering barriers and increasing participation. It is anticipated that sustained efforts will increase the number of Richmond residents meeting physical activity targets.



About the Strategy

On January 14, 2019, Richmond City Council adopted the Recreation and Sport Strategy (2019–2024) to guide the planning and delivery of recreation and sport opportunities in the City over the following five years. In 2021, as a result of the pandemic, it was anticipated that the Strategy would be extended by two years. The 2022–2024 Progress Update has reaffirmed this approach, highlighting that the Strategy still holds relevance and there are still actions that can be elevated further.

The City of Richmond, together with its partners, continue to build on the strong foundation already present in Richmond to encourage citizens of every age to enjoy the benefits of an active and involved lifestyle. The Strategy emphasizes a holistic approach to recreation, including planning for a variety of opportunities from connecting with Richmond’s beautiful natural environment to regular participation in formal and informal sports and recreation. It also embraces the Sport for Life philosophy and the Long-Term Athlete Development model by prioritizing opportunities to develop sport excellence, physical literacy and positive life-long sport participation for all citizens.

Strategic Focus Areas

In the Richmond Recreation and Sport Strategy (2019–2024), seven strategic focus areas and 57 recommended key actions were adopted to address the current and future needs related to recreation and sport in Richmond.

- 1. Awareness and Understanding:** Richmond residents understand the opportunities and benefits of participation in recreation and sport.
- 2. Engaged Community:** Recreation and sport opportunities are accessible, inclusive and support the needs of a growing and diverse population in Richmond.
- 3. Physical Literacy and Sport for Life:** Richmond residents have the fundamental movement skills, competence, confidence and motivation to move for a lifetime.
- 4. Active People and Vibrant Places:** Natural and built environments within neighbourhoods in Richmond encourage connectedness and participation in recreation and sport.
- 5. Connectedness to Nature:** Richmond residents enjoy opportunities to connect with nature.
- 6. Community Capacity-Building:** Collaborations, partnerships and volunteerism are strengthened to expand the reach and impact of recreation and sport in Richmond.
- 7. Technology and Innovation:** Technology and innovative ideas connect and inspire Richmond residents to participate in recreation and sport.

It is anticipated that by taking action in the strategic focus areas, Richmond’s community will see improvements in the intended long-term outcomes of the Recreation and Sport Strategy, which are to:

- 1.** Increase participation of all residents in recreation and sport; and
- 2.** Increase the number of Richmond residents who achieve physical activity targets.



Focus Area 1: Awareness and Understanding

Richmond residents understand the opportunities and benefits of participation in recreation and sport.

 *Focus Area 1: Awareness and Understanding contains 3 of 57 strategic actions.*

Why is this important?

Increasing awareness and understanding of the opportunities and benefits of participation in recreation and sport is important for several reasons. The ultimate goal of the collective actions in the Recreation and Sport Strategy is to prompt behaviour change and create conditions that make it easier for everyone to be more physically active and engaged in community life over the long term. A key ingredient for behaviour change is to ensure the audience knows why a change is desirable, and how they can take action. Diversifying communication methods and messages facilitates a broader reach, particularly as there is more reliance on digital and social media.

According to ParticipACTION's 2021 Adult Report Card and 2024 Child and Youth Report Card, Canadians of all ages are falling short on recommendations around physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and sleep. These Report Cards revealed that only 56% of adults between the ages of 18 and 79 are meeting Light Physical Activity Guidelines (at least three hours per day of light physical activity), and that only 39% of children and youth achieved the recommended 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity per day. Raising awareness and building understanding around the benefits of physical activity and the many opportunities available help to motivate Richmond residents to get active.

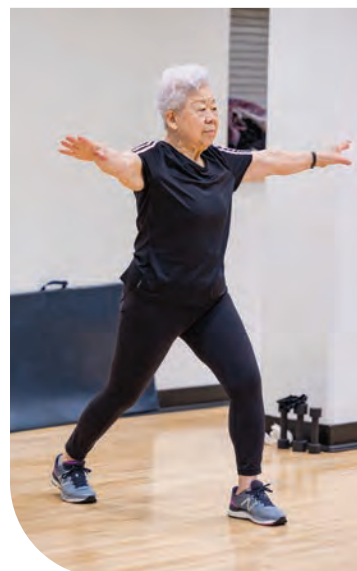
Through strategy actions that aim to address barriers and support participation the following outcomes are anticipated:

- The benefits of physical literacy, recreation and sport are recognized and supported by the public and organizations.

Highlights and Achievements

The priority initiatives in this Focus Area aim to:

- ↑ Increase communications initiatives and resources for community members, partners and City staff.
- ↑ Increase understanding and awareness of physical literacy.
- ↑ Increase understanding and awareness of recreation and sport opportunities and benefits.



The following provides a snapshot of successes and progress highlights:



PARTICIPACTION COMMUNITY CHALLENGE

Along with being designated a Global Active City through the Active Well-being Initiative, Richmond has been one of Canada's Top 50 Most Active Communities since the annual Community Challenge (formerly Community Better Challenge) began in 2019. This nationwide initiative, led by ParticipACTION, recognizes communities for their activity levels and innovative efforts in motivating residents of all ages to get physically active. The Community Challenge takes place each June to inspire Canadians to move more and compete for the title of Canada's Most Active Community. Being active is essential not only for individual physical and mental well-being but also for building stronger, connected, healthier, and more vibrant communities. By actively promoting and celebrating the Community Challenge and the benefits of physical activity, Richmond enhances public awareness of recreation opportunities, reinforcing the importance of accessible and engaging physical activity options for all.

2022

In 2022, Richmond joined more than 280 communities in BC to take part in the Challenge. Through this community effort, tracking 9,700,000 minutes of physical activity, Richmond earned for the first time the coveted title of British Columbia's Most Active Community, along with a \$15,000 prize to be used to support local physical activity and sports.

Throughout the month-long challenge, individuals had the opportunity to register for free programs and sessions available both online and in-person across Richmond, including Family Yoga, Boomer Boot Camp, Nordic Pole Walking, personal training, and Dance Fit.

2023

In 2023, Richmond residents enthusiastically returned to participate in the Challenge, this time logging 11,700,000 active minutes and surpassing 2022 results by 20%. For the second year in a row, Richmond was selected as one of 50 finalists across Canada. Throughout the month of June, the City and its community partners offered over 50 free or low-cost activities including a Jazz Dance Party, a Sports Day for preschoolers and a Fitness Marathon, all of which contributed significantly to the event's success.

2024

Throughout the month, over 30 Richmond organizations joined the 2024 Community Challenge, offering more than 540 physical activity initiatives, programs and events, engaging approximately 258,000 participants in diverse activities ranging from individual pursuits to team sports. Numerous free or low-cost events, programs and activities encouraged participation across Richmond. Local Community Associations and Societies engaged in neighbourhood-based outreach and invited residents to take part in Challenge events fostering neighbourhood connections, along with free "try-it" sessions open to all.

For the second time in three years, Richmond proudly earned the title of British Columbia's Most Active Community in the 2024 ParticipACTION Community Challenge. Accompanying the prestigious title, the City was awarded \$15,000 to boost community programming aimed at enhancing physical activity for Richmond residents and supporting the implementation of the Council-approved Community Wellness, and Recreation and Sport strategies.

BUILDING COMMUNITY THROUGH UNDERSTANDING

Building understanding is fundamental to creating connection between people, and ultimately building a sense of community. Sharing a personal health or wellness journey or experience can be a powerful way to build understanding, awareness and community. But building community also means supporting people in overcoming personal challenges, and guiding them towards success. Stories of Wellness and Generation Health Community illustrate two different approaches to building community through understanding.

Stories of Wellness in Richmond

In 2024, the Stories of Wellness in Richmond campaign was launched, and four stories were shared. This online initiative is focused on developing a healthy, active living campaign to promote innovative and collaborative approaches to improving wellness outcomes by raising awareness and encouraging participation in physical activity, healthy eating, and mental wellness. Stories of Wellness in Richmond supports this goal by showcasing the benefits of active community engagement and healthy lifestyles while inspiring participation.

By featuring personal wellness stories, this initiative not only celebrates individual achievements but also encourages others to explore new ways to improve their well-being. Whether through small lifestyle changes or long-term commitments to health and wellness, these stories serve as a source of motivation and connection for the Richmond community.

Generation Health Community

Launched for the first time in 2024, Generation Health Community is a collaborative initiative between the Childhood Healthy Living Foundation, the East Richmond Community Association, and Mitchell Elementary School. Designed to support children living with obesity and their families, the program increases health and physical activity awareness and understanding through education and skill-building opportunities, led by nutritionists and exercise specialists. Health and physical activity awareness and understanding are nurtured by covering topics including nutrition, healthy sleep habits, recreation, and active living, equipping participants and their families with the knowledge and tools to make sustainable, health-focused lifestyle changes that promote physical activity and healthy living behaviours.

CONNECTING AND BUILDING AWARENESS IN A DIGITAL ERA

Parks, Recreation and Culture E-newsletter

Over the past three years (2022, 2023, and 2024), the Parks, Recreation and Culture e-Newsletter has kept Richmond residents informed and engaged with updates on special events, seasonal programming, registration reminders, volunteer opportunities, and other timely news. In September 2024, the e-Newsletter transitioned to a twice-monthly format, providing subscribers with more frequent and up-to-date information. With a growing audience and over 1,300 subscribers, the e-Newsletter continues to serve as a valuable resource for the Richmond community.





Leveraging and Engaging through Social Media

Richmond maintains an active presence across multiple social media platforms, including Facebook, X (formerly Twitter), Instagram, LinkedIn, and Blue Sky. These channels provide residents with up-to-date information on City events, programs, and initiatives while offering opportunities for engagement. Community members are encouraged to join the conversation, ask questions, share photos and videos, and stay connected. Richmond’s digital presence continues to grow, and in 2024 the City’s total number of social media followers grew by more than 15%. With thousands of followers and views across platforms, Richmond’s social media is fostering a more informed and engaged community.

Beyond the City’s social media presence, Community Associations and Societies also maintain their own social media channels to foster community connection and engagement. These channels cater to specific audiences, such as fitness enthusiasts, youth and parents of preschool and childcare children, offering a dynamic and immediate means of sharing timely and relevant information. Additionally, hashtags such as #RichmondBC help viewers discover other pertinent resources.

■ UNDERSTANDING EVOLVING COMMUNITY NEEDS

By hearing from Richmond residents, the City and its partners are able to deepen their awareness and understanding of Richmond’s recreation and sport needs and interests. Community feedback allows for offerings, services and facilities to be tailored to meet the diverse needs of Richmond residents, and also ensure the City’s internal processes are aligned with and reflect what is being heard in the community.

2023 Community Needs Assessment

The 2023 Community Needs Assessment (the Needs Assessment) provided an opportunity to hear directly from Richmond residents, gaining a deeper understanding of their perspectives on parks, recreation and culture programs, services, and facilities. The Needs Assessment offered invaluable insights that help identify community needs, optimize future planning, and address potential service gaps.

The engagement approach prioritized inclusivity and representation throughout the data collection and communication process, aiming to reach and hear from all segments of the community. Over 1,500 Richmond community members contributed feedback through multilingual engagement opportunities including a telephone survey, online survey hosted on Let’s Talk Richmond, and in-person focus groups.

Findings from the Needs Assessment reinforce the value of Richmond’s high-quality parks, recreation, and cultural programs, services, and facilities. The study highlights their essential role in promoting individual and community well-being, enhancing quality of life, and fostering a more active, creative, and connected community. The Needs Assessment is an important tool to support the City and

its partners in building awareness and understanding of community needs. The recommendations from the Needs Assessment will guide future actions to ensure programs and services continue to meet the evolving needs and interests of residents.

Equity Lens Toolkit for Recreation


The Equity Lens Toolkit (the Toolkit) was created and piloted in 2024 across the City's community centres to ensure that programs and services are tailored to the diverse needs of the community. The Toolkit includes a reflective guide that supports City staff in identifying gaps, setting priorities, and integrating equity considerations into program planning and service delivery. A monitoring and reporting plan also ensures ongoing assessment and responsiveness to community needs. City staff are analyzing learnings from the pilot which will help inform the next steps, with the goal of expanding the Toolkit's use across more City programs and services, continuing to drive equity, diversity and inclusion forward. The project was supported by a \$15,000 BC Healthy Communities grant received in 2021.





Focus Area 2: Engaged Community

Recreation and sport opportunities are accessible, inclusive and support the needs of a growing and diverse population in Richmond.

 *Focus Area 2: Engaged Community contains 14 of 57 strategic actions.*

Why is this important?

Participating in recreation and sport provides a number of benefits to one’s physical, social, mental and emotional health. However, those are only gained when one is able to participate. Barriers to participation may be related to external circumstances (such as cost or transportation), impacting circumstances (such as availability of programming, competing priorities, or social environments within a recreation and sport context), or internal circumstances (such as familiarity, confidence and prior experiences with recreation or sport). Multiple barriers may be experienced simultaneously that create a complex situation that does not make participation easy for some.

By developing a better understanding of the range of barriers and how they are experienced by community members, it is possible to begin intentionally working to address them in order to make lifelong participation a reality for more people. Providing opportunities to build confidence and basic skills, to become familiar with the range of activities that might appeal to different preferences, to have fun and build social connections through recreation and sport are keys to engaging a broader range of community members to “move more, sit less” — however they envision doing so for themselves.

Through strategy actions that aim to address barriers and support participation the following outcomes are anticipated:

- The benefits of physical literacy, recreation and sport are recognized and supported by the public and organizations;
- Accessible opportunities exist for all residents to participate in recreation and sport according to their stage of development; and
- Richmond has a coordinated, accessible, effective and efficient sport delivery system using the Long-Term Athlete Development Model.

Highlights and Achievements

The priority initiatives in this Focus Area aim to:

- ↓ Decrease barriers Barriers to access and participation.
- ↑ Increase opportunities to sample programs.
- ↑ Increase recreation and sport program opportunities.
- ↑ Increase resident participation and engagement.



The following provides a snapshot of successes and progress highlights:

ADDRESSING FINANCIAL BARRIERS TO PARTICIPATION

Richmond is committed to ensuring all residents have the opportunity to participate in recreation and sport opportunities by reducing barriers to access. Through a range of resources, financial support, and low- or no-cost opportunities, the City works alongside community partners to make programs and services more inclusive and accessible for all.

Recreation Fee Subsidy Program

The Recreation Fee Subsidy Program (RFSP) continues to play a key role in promoting inclusion and enhancing community livability by providing financial assistance to residents of all ages facing financial hardship, and access to a wide range of registered and drop-in recreation, culture, and parks programs offered by the City and its Community Associations and Societies. The total number of Richmond residents enrolled in the program has steadily been increasing, allowing more residents to benefit from the physical, mental, and social benefits of these activities.

APPLY NOW!

Recreation Fee Subsidy Program

The Recreation Fee Subsidy Program (RFSP) helps people of all ages living in Richmond who require financial support to be able to participate in the many registered and drop-in parks, recreation and cultural programs offered by the City of Richmond and Community Associations and Societies.

For those who qualify, the RFSP will provide:

- Free admission to many drop-in programs and services; and
- A 90% discount on most registered programs:
 - Up to a maximum of \$300 per year in subsidy for children and youth (18 years and under), and
 - Up to a maximum of \$100 per year in subsidy for adults and seniors (19+ years).

To download an application form, visit www.richmond.ca/subsidy.

Application forms are also available any City of Richmond recreation facility, the Richmond Cultural Centre and Richmond City Hall.

For questions about the RFSP, email subsidy@richmond.ca or phone 604-247-4909.

Metric	September 1, 2021 – August 31, 2022	September 1, 2022 – August 31, 2023	September 1, 2023 – August 31, 2024
Number of RFSP Subsidies Approved	1,992	2,984	3,899
RFSP User Drop-in Admissions	52,910	86,692	114,237
RFSP Participant Program Registrations	1,351	2,472	2,419

RFSP Highlights:

Expanding the RFSP at with the Richmond Olympic Oval

In 2024, the Richmond Olympic Oval expanded its opportunities for RFSP participants by providing free access to the following programs:

- In 2024, the Richmond Olympic Oval expanded the opportunities available to youth (Grades 8–12) and seniors (55+ years) participating in the RFSP to include two new drop-in programs: Youth Pro-D Days and Forever Young Wednesdays. Youth participating in the RFSP receive free admission to the Oval’s Youth Pro-D Days which includes access to the Oval’s fitness centre, sport courts, and climbing wall on Richmond School District’s Pro-D days. Equipment lending is available with a student ID, and climbing rentals are included. Seniors participating in the RFSP receive free admission to Forever Young Wednesdays which includes access the Oval’s fitness centre and sport courts as well as four hours of free parking every Wednesday between 6:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m., from September 1 to June 30.

Streamlined access to the Lime Access program

Affordable transportation plays a key role in enabling participation in recreation and community activities. Starting May 2024, as part of its agreement with the City, the Lime Access program, which operates the e-scooter and e-bike share system in Richmond, began accepting RFSP participation as proof of eligibility for the Lime Access program. Between May and December 2024, over 20 users enrolled in the Lime Access program and took more than 165 discounted trips.

Active Recreation & Sport Fund

In 2023, Richmond Sport Council, with support from City grant funding, introduced the Active Recreation & Sport Fund (the Fund). The Fund supports Richmond youth facing financial barriers to organized sports and recreation participation, and increases opportunities for more children to stay active and engaged in sport. The Fund provides financial assistance for children and youth under 18 who participate in community recreation and sport activities that are not affiliated with a provincial sport organization, nor delivered directly by the City. Since its launch, the program has funded registrations for 26 children and 16 families, providing a total of \$8,375 in financial support in 2024.



\$29 Summer Active Pass initiative

The \$29 Summer Active Pass was introduced to reduce financial barriers and expand access to recreation and support youth in leading active, healthy lives. The Summer Active Pass provides children and youth aged five to 18 with an affordable way to stay active throughout the summer. For just \$29, the pass offers unlimited drop-in access to public sessions at community centres, swimming pools, arenas, and the West Richmond Pitch and Putt for the summer months.

The initiative has been rapidly growing in popularity, with 28,800 Summer Active Pass scans recorded across all facilities in 2022, 57,800 scans recorded across facilities in 2023, and 54,000 scans recorded in 2024.

Grade 5 Active! Pass

By providing accessible opportunities for physical activity at a pivotal stage in children’s development, the Grade 5 Active! Pass plays an important role in keeping Richmond’s youth engaged in recreation and fostering lifelong healthy habits. This free pass provides complimentary drop-in access to select recreation programs, including public swimming at any Richmond public swimming pool, and public skating at Minoru Areas and Richmond Ice Centre. This initiative introduces—or reintroduces—youth to community spaces while removing financial barriers to participation. Close to 900 of 1900 Richmond Grade 5 students signed up for the Grade 5 Active pass in the 2023–2024 school year.

KidSport Richmond

KidSport Richmond is a not-for-profit organization whose goal is to ensure that kids from Richmond families with financial challenges have access to the positive experience of sport and physical activity. KidSport Richmond offers Richmond children and youth (18 years and under) financial grants to help cover the cost of registration fees for organized sports affiliated with Sport BC. The City of Richmond has a long history of working together with KidSport Richmond through volunteer opportunities, and between 2022 and 2024 provided \$64,000 to KidSport Richmond through the Parks, Recreation and Community Events Grant Program.

Canadian Tire Jumpstart

Canadian Tire Jumpstart helps Richmond children and youth (4-18 years) facing financial barriers to sport and physical activity by providing funding towards the costs of registration, transportation and equipment. The City of Richmond has supported and promoted the program since its formation in 2005.



A FOCUS ON WOMEN AND GIRLS

G.O. Day

Girls Only Day (G.O. Day) is a joint initiative by the City of Richmond, Richmond School District No. 38, Vancouver Coastal Health, and Richmond Community Associations and Societies. Taking place annually, G.O. Day is a free expo for female identifying youth to participate in both educational and physical activity workshops. Post-pandemic, G.O. Day returned in 2022 and has continued through 2023 and 2024. Over these three years, G.O. Day has seen over 180 girls participate in sport and education-related activities and events, providing low-barrier opportunities to sample a diverse selection of programs and build connections.

In 2024, the wide range of events and activities includes a fitness class, a basketball lesson, Snack Attack—a workshop focusing on healthy and accessible snacks, a self-esteem and reflection exercise and a K-pop dance class. To support continued participation after the event, Youth Outreach Workers and Youth Development Coordinators from the Richmond community centres were able to connect participants with the “Empower Her” group and many other affordable activities to provide ongoing social and skill development opportunities for girls. Feedback from participants has been incredibly positive and indicates that they find value from G.O. Day.

Empower Her

A new program introduced in 2024, the City offered “Empower Her”, a free, referral-based program for female-identifying youth 13–24 years interested in taking part in physical activities and outings. Through low-barrier introductions to activities such as hiking, kickboxing and volleyball, the City’s Youth Outreach Workers supported participants to overcome barriers to participation, build positive relationships and access other community supports, as needed.

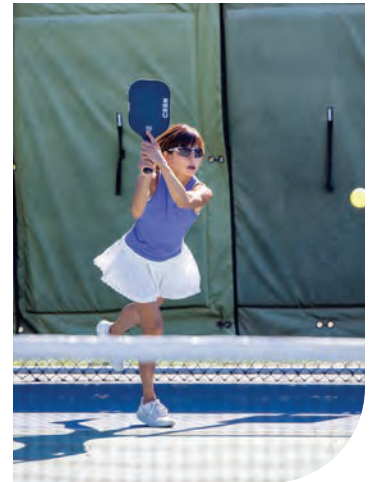
Fitness and Strength for Girls and Seniors

In Winter 2024, the Minoru Centre for Active Living introduced Fitness for Girls, and WOW – Women on Weights. Fitness for Girls is a program designed to promote lifelong engagement in physical activity among female youth. Inspired by G.O. Day, youth are introduced to different fitness centre equipment and classes, gaining essential knowledge on safe and effective participation. By building confidence and foundational skills, this inclusive, accessible program empowers participants to incorporate fitness into their daily lives, fostering long-term health and well-being.

WOW – Women on Weights is a program that provides a tailored environment for women aged 55 and up to try strength training. The program is designed to support older adults in developing strength, confidence, and knowledge in weight training. This program provides participants with guided instruction on proper techniques, fostering a safe and supportive environment for building physical strength as well as overall well-being.

Senior Women’s Pickleball Programming

In Spring 2022, West Richmond introduced a new 55+ Women’s Pickleball program in celebration of BC Seniors Week. Made possible through funding from the Government of Canada – Sport Canada and Women and Gender Equality (WAGE), the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association’s (CPRA) Equity in Recreational Sport Grant provides funding for this free program, which provides women aged 55 and older with the opportunity to learn pickleball in an inclusive and supportive environment, fostering social connections and long-term engagement in the sport. Many participants from the inaugural program continue to actively participate in drop-in sessions and utilize outdoor courts.



MORE ACCESS AND MORE OPPORTUNITIES

The City continues to expand access to recreation and sport opportunities for Richmond residents. Through innovative and accessible programs, expanded facility access, and new partnerships, more residents can engage in activities that support their health and wellness goals. Below is a snapshot of the different ways the City has expanded access and opportunities, so that Richmond residents can meet their health and activity goals.

Recreation Facilities Open on Christmas Day

Several City facilities are open Christmas Day, December 25, for those who may not celebrate Christmas, and for Richmond residents with diverse interests, beliefs, practices, and needs. Expanding access provides residents with more opportunities to stay active and connect.

City Centre has offered Christmas Day access since opening its doors in 2015, while South Arm Community Centre began offering Christmas Day access in 2021. Minoru Centre for Active Living opened on Christmas Day for the first time in 2023, welcoming 1,141 visitors. The facility extended its services for a second year in 2024, with an average of 275 visitors per hour, which is well above the typical 150 to 180 visitors per hours seen during a typical day.

Further broadening recreation and sport options over the holidays, Minoru Arenas introduced a Winter Wonderland Skate on Christmas Day in 2024, for the first time. The event drew 287 participants.

It is clear that these facilities serve as valuable gathering spaces for individuals and families seeking recreation opportunities to get active and connect with others on Christmas Day.

Community Connects Week 2022

Community Connects Week, held in September 2022, played a vital role in strengthening community ties and reengaging residents with Richmond’s diverse recreational, creative, and wellness programs. This initiative highlighted the benefits of community centre participation, fostering happiness, enhancing physical and mental well-being, and building more connected, resilient communities post-pandemic.

The City, in partnership with Community Associations and Societies, hosted a diverse range of free events and activities at the City’s eight Community Centres during Community Connects Week. Community Connects activities included a re-launching of some community events that had been paused during the pandemic, as well as offering free “Try-It” activities for people of all ages. These activities introduced participants new and old to community centre programming, including: dance classes, visual art workshops, fitness classes, health and wellness information booth hosting, and cultural celebrations.



BC Youth Week in Richmond

BC Youth Week is an annual celebration of youth. It is a week of fun-filled interactions and celebrations intended to build a strong connection between youth and their communities. As a member of BC Youth Week, the City and its partners offer many free activities for youth to try throughout the week, and also host celebration events to recognize the positive contributions of youth while fostering engagement and connection. In 2023 and 2024, some of the free recreation and sport activities offered included a scavenger hunt, a 3-point basketball competition, a volleyball tournament, a youth and preteen intro to pickleball program, and a youth indoor cycling class. Across 2023 and 2024, over 850 youth participated in events held across the city.

Therapeutic Thursdays

In 2024, Hamilton Community Association, with support from the Seniors Can grant, introduced Therapeutic Thursdays, a free program designed to promote physical activity and healthy aging among seniors. Each week, participants engage in a variety of movement and wellness activities, including fitness, taiko drumming, art, and fall prevention. To ensure accessibility, the program also provides complimentary lunch and transportation, enabling more seniors to participate and benefit from a supportive, engaging environment.



Try-It Opportunities

Various factors can impact people’s ability to participate in sports and recreation. Try-it opportunities are one way for the City and its partners to offer more access and more opportunities to participate in recreation and sport. Giving people a chance to sample activities, lowers barriers to participation and provides new and fun ways to build competence, confidence, connections, and motivation.

■ Richmond Winter Club Try-It Events

Richmond Winter Club has been expanding its Try-It offerings, working to build more awareness of curling in the community, and more opportunities and access for residents interested in trying curling for the first time. Over the 2022–2023 and 2023–2024 seasons, the Club hosted 25 Try-It events, resulting in more than 200 participants trying the sport. Expanding on the success of these Try-It events, Richmond Winter Club began hosting open house events in fall 2023 and fall 2024, as well as launching the Family Day Try-it curling event in February 2024. These additional events attracted more than 180 additional participants.

■ Walking Soccer and Walking Basketball

New in 2024, South Arm Community Centre offered Try-it sessions for two adapted sports; Walking Soccer and Walking Basketball. These free Try-it sessions were designed for seniors with joint concerns, but they were also open to anyone who wanted to play group sports in a low impact setting. In total, there were 20 participants for the two sessions, and feedback was positive. Moving forward, staff are exploring the possibility of including these adapted sports through facility passes or workshops.

■ BC Golf Try-It Partnerships

Launched in 2023, BC Golf partnered with South Arm and Hamiton Community Centres’ Out of School Care and children’s summer daycamp programs to offer a unique Try-It golf initiative for children. This initiative introduced children to golf, and allowed them an experience they might not have otherwise explored. The program further expanded in Winter 2024, with two free Try-It sessions offered to the general public at South Arm Community Centre, broadening the reach of golf within the community. Across 2023 and 2024 over 300 people participated in these try-it opportunities.





■ CYCLING FORWARD

Cycling is an excellent way to be physically active, get outdoors, connect with others, and travel to your destination. But cycling can be challenging when you don't know where you're going, or you aren't feeling confident, safe and prepared to hop on a bike. The City and its partners offer a diversity of cycling initiatives, giving Richmond residents the chance to become familiar with existing and new cycling routes, while simultaneously learning about the benefits of cycling, and developing skills to participate safely and confidently.

The Annual "Island City, by Bike" Tour

2024 marked the 22nd annual Island City, by Bike tour here in Richmond. The bike tour provides an opportunity for the public to experience both long and short routes that feature recent improvements to Richmond's active transportation network. This event helps raise community awareness of neighbourhood facilities, lower barriers to sustainable travel options, celebrate the joy of cycling, and build community connections. All participants in the 2024 bike tour were invited to the Britannia Shipyards National Historic Site to enjoy a BBQ, refreshments and draw for raffle prizes.

Bike to School Education for Students

In collaboration with the Richmond School District, the City annually funds the delivery of bike skills education courses for all Grade 6/7 students. In these courses, students participate in in-class lessons to learn rules and responsibilities for riding on city streets and bike paths, as well as hands-on practice with fundamental cycling skills on school grounds and local neighbourhood streets. The program has proven popular, with over 1,800 students taking part over these three years.

This partnership with the Richmond School District plays an important role in supporting teachers and assisting schools to develop curriculum, while the courses themselves offer students accessible and inclusive physical literacy. In recognition of its bike courses at public elementary schools and within the community, the City received HUB Cycling's 2023 Cycling Education award.

Walk to School Plan for Youth

In 2024, the City's Walk to School Plan for Youth kicked off with three youth engagement sessions, coordinated at Community Centres across Richmond. The purpose of these sessions was to encourage and promote walking, cycling and transit trips to school, while also gathering feedback from students regarding their current travel habits. The insights provided by students will help inform active transportation plans and initiatives aimed at fostering more sustainable transportation options for trips to school.

HUB Cycling Partnership

HUB Cycling (HUB) is a charitable non-profit organization that works to build awareness and lower barriers to cycling. HUB’s cycling expertise and resources allow City staff to broaden the reach of cycling awareness, education and events for Richmond residents. The City of Richmond has partnered with HUB to deliver a number of cycling events and cycling education opportunities to Richmond residents.

■ Go by Bike and Bike To Initiatives

Go By Bike Week, Bike to Shop Week, and Bike to School Week are annual events led by HUB across Metro Vancouver, encouraging all ages and abilities to give cycling a try, track their bike trips, and explore their communities by bike. Participants are incentivized to participate and track their bike trips for discounts at participating local shops or win raffle prizes.

HUB, the City and City partners work together in the planning, promotion, and delivery of these week-long events. Those events foster a sense of community amongst cyclists and successfully engage new participants through the inclusive and accessible promotion of cycling in Richmond.

■ StreetWise

From 2022 to 2024, HUB and the City hosted “learn to ride” and bike maintenance StreetWise courses. StreetWise provides in-person and online cycling training, enabling youth, senior and adult participants to build their cycling skills and gain confidence riding on city streets.



Cycling Network Plan

Encouraging cycling as a healthy and convenient transportation choice is an integral part of the City’s community and transportation planning. In July 2022, Council adopted the updated Cycling Network Plan that provides an implementation strategy over a 15-year period to enhance cycling infrastructure and safety. The City’s goal is to grow cycling as a travel choice for 10 % of all trips in Richmond by 2041. In doing so, the plan will help to ensure that the City’s neighbourhoods accommodate a range of uses with convenient access to jobs, services and recreation. Between 2022 and 2024, the City has completed nine major active transportation projects that have contributed to an all ages and abilities comfort-level cycling network.

RECREATION IN ARTS AND CULTURE

Intentionally integrating recreation with arts and culture makes for a natural fit, as much of the community's beauty and creative and cultural expression is seen and felt as we move through our day and our city. There are a number of opportunities to take in arts and culture in Richmond through recreation, providing Richmond residents a multitude of individual and community health and wellness benefits.

Public Art Walking Tours

The City offers a number of self-guided neighbourhood public art walking tours that are available online. These tours provide participants an immersive experience, fostering a deeper appreciation for the city's public art landscape, all while staying active and building community connections.

The City hosted a walking tour on April 23, 2023, highlighting the Canada Line public art installations at Aberdeen and Lansdowne Stations. Continuing these public art engagement efforts, as part of Culture Days in 2024, a new walking tour featured a guided exploration of artworks in Capstan Village, led by guest tour guide Jas Lally from the Richmond Art Gallery Association.

Richmond Museum Walking Tour Guides

Since 2022, the Richmond Museum has offered free, self-guided historical walking tours of Terra Nova, Brighthouse, and Sea Island. These one to two hour tours provide an active and in-depth exploration of the area's local history, encouraging the discovery of and engaging with Richmond's historic places.

Britannia Shipyards Walking Tour

Britannia Shipyards launched daily guided tours in Summer 2022, creating a unique experience for visitors. Local guides shared compelling stories of the lives of Britannia Shipyards' past residents and workers during the one-hour tour. Participants leave the site with an enhanced understanding of Richmond's rich and diverse maritime history, which continues to shape the local community. This tour is now a regular experience offered in summers.



PARTICIPATION IN RECREATION AND SPORT

Increasing Participation in Parks, Recreation and Culture Programs and Services

With the full resumption of recreation and sport services in the second quarter of 2022, participation in programs and services has continued to grow post-pandemic. This positive trend is demonstrated across several key metrics, including total drop-in admissions, and total program registrations. As Richmond continues to grow, so too is the demand for accessible, high-quality community recreation and cultural programming.

Metrics: Parks, Recreation and Cultural Drop-in Admissions and Program Registrations 2022–2024

	2022	2023	2024
Total Drop-in Visits	1,446,492	1,832,805	1,921,081
Total PRC Program Registrations	96,400	105,287	116,532

Records Broken!


Minoru Centre for Active Living set a new attendance record with 102,472 visits in August of 2024, and a daily attendance record with nearly 3,900 visits on BC Day (August 5, 2024).





Focus Area 3: Physical Literacy and Sport for Life

Richmond residents have the fundamental movement skills, competence, confidence and motivation to move for a lifetime.

 *Focus Area 3 Physical Literacy and Sport for Life contains 12 of 57 actions.*

Why is this important?

Fundamental movement skills are the basic physical skills for building competence, confidence and motivation to try physical activities and sports, such as throwing, catching, jumping, kicking and running. Confidence and competence in these basic skills enables people to develop more complex movement skills and can motivate them to enjoy lifelong participation in a range of sports and physical activities. The Long Term Athlete Development (LTAD) model provides a framework to guide skill development opportunities that support lifelong participation in both competitive and recreational sports and physical activities. In addition to the many opportunities for recreational sport participation, Richmond is recognized for its dedication to sport excellence and for supporting high performance athletic development. The legacy of Richmond's role during the 2010 Winter Olympics has laid the foundation of the City being a leader in providing high performance training facilities and supporting athletes on the performance pathway.



Through Strategy actions that focus on improving fundamental movement skills and the LTAD pathways for participation, the following outcomes are anticipated:

- The benefits of physical literacy, recreation and sport are recognized and supported by the public and organizations;
- Accessible opportunities exist for all residents to participate in recreation and sport according to their stage of development; and
- Richmond has a coordinated, accessible, effective and efficient sport delivery system using the LTAD model.

Highlights and Achievements

The priority initiatives in this Focus Area aim to:

- ↑ Increase the integration of fundamental movement skills in community services programs;
- ↑ Increase the adoption of the LTAD model by sports groups;
- ↑ Increase Physical Literacy initiatives implemented in schools;
- ↑ Increase the number of children, youth and adults involved in all stages of the LTAD pathway; and
- ↑ Increase involvement of residents in sport excellence.

Some key highlights include:

BUILDING PHYSICAL LITERACY EARLY IN LIFE

The After-School Art Truck



The After-School Art Truck is a mobile programming unit that brings low-barrier, high-quality arts and recreation programming to children on school grounds. This “vehicle” also provides children exposure to protective factors that enhance mental health and resilience. The two-hour program delivers elements of social connectedness and belonging, safety, participation, play, and physical activity through a variety of artistic experiences and active games. In 2023 the Art Truck was reinstated after a two-year hiatus due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In partnership with Richmond School District No. 38 and Vancouver Coastal Health, the After-School Art Truck was offered once a week, for up to 14 weeks, to approximately 60 students at Cook and McKay Elementary Schools. In January of 2024, 30 students, from Grade 4 to Grade 7, participated in four Art Truck program sessions at McKay Elementary. Feedback received has been positive from both parents and students.

BC Summer Reading Club

Richmond Public Library’s Summer Reading Club offers kids and teens reading activities and events through the summer. New in 2024, the City, and the Richmond Olympic Oval teamed up with the Richmond Public Library to add physical literacy opportunities to story time at the Summer Reading Club, and physical Literacy cards were created and posted around the library to encourage fundamental movements.

In addition, a city-wide scavenger hunt and physical literacy passport was created as a supplement to the BC Summer Reading Club passport. To complete the scavenger hunt passport, children were required to visit nine community recreation facilities across the City to search for a hidden objects and complete various physical activities. The passport helped introduce families to community facilities and provided children with opportunities to learn and practice fundamental movement skills.



Adapted Sport and Play Pilot Program

The Adapted Sport and Play pilot program was launched at the South Arm Community Centre, supported by funding from the Government of Canada and delivered through Canadian Parks and Recreation Association (CPRA)'s Reaching Each and Every One: A Community Sport Intervention initiative. This program was designed to provide young children with autism and neurodevelopmental differences with an accessible, high-quality, recreational and social opportunity within a local community centre setting.

Structured to foster fundamental movement skills such as kicking, throwing, catching and active play, the program emphasizes inclusive participation in a supportive and engaging environment. To enhance program delivery, physical literacy instructors were recruited and they received specialized training from the Canucks Autism Network, equipping them with the knowledge and skills to support participants effectively. Due to its success, the Adapted Sport and Play pilot program continues to be offered seasonally, reinforcing the commitment to inclusive and adaptive recreation opportunities.

PLAYBuilder

In 2024 and into 2025, Sport for Life is providing Cambie and Hamilton Community Centres with access to PLAYBuilder. PLAYBuilder, an online education tool, offers structured activities, progressions, and lesson plans to enhance the delivery of quality sport, physical activity, and education programs for Kindergarten to Grade 7 educators. This two-year initiative provides training and platform access to sports, preschool and Out of School Care instructors, enabling them to design programs that promote physical literacy and inclusive, and high-quality sport opportunities for children.

New Water Safety Education Presentations in Schools

In collaboration with the Richmond School District, Water Safety Education Presentations were introduced in schools in May and June 2024, tailored to specific grade levels to align with BC's Physical and Health Education curriculum. During this period, Aquatics staff visited seven schools, delivering both individual classroom sessions and multi-class assemblies. These presentations not only reinforced essential water safety messaging and fostered future water safety leaders but also highlighted career opportunities in aquatics, such as lifeguarding and swim instruction. More than 900 Richmond students from kindergarten to Grade 12 participated and the program will continue in future years.





HEALTHY AND ACTIVE AGING

Engaging in regular physical activity becomes increasingly important with age, contributing to improved strength, balance, mental health and overall well-being. Beyond physical health benefits, staying active reduces the risk of illness and fosters social connections, enhancing community engagement and quality of life. Recognizing this, there are a range of programs and events designed to support older adults and seniors in maintaining an active and healthy lifestyle.

BC Seniors' Week

BC Seniors' Week changes theme each year, yet its constant, underlying goal is to celebrate older adults and their many contributions. The City of Richmond and its partners continue to take part in the annual BC Seniors Week by offering a number of low- and no-cost activities for seniors to get active, learn new skills, and connect with others across the city.

■ *Highlight: Seniors Week Swim, Splash, and Relax*

Swim, Splash and Relax sessions have been taking place during BC Seniors' Week at Minoru Centre for Active Living since 2023, with plans to include them again in 2025. Swim, Splash and Relax participants have a facilitated swimming pool orientation, while also having fun splashing around in the leisure pool, relaxing in the hot tub, and recharging with a dip in the cold plunge pool. Providing 90 minutes of light physical activity and social connection, Swim, Splash and Relax has been a popular way to keep seniors connected and moving as they age.

Active Opportunities for Seniors

In March 2024, West Richmond introduced a series of active programs for seniors, supported by funding from the New Horizons for Seniors grant. These offerings include fitness classes, pickleball, golf, ballet, and more, providing diverse opportunities for older adults to engage in physical activity. The grant also facilitated specialized staff training and the acquisition of high-quality equipment, ensuring participants are supported in continuing to stay active for a lifetime.

Forever Young 8K

The 8th, 9th and 10th annual Forever Young 8K (FY8K) took place on the second weekend of September 2022–2024. The only running event in Metro Vancouver exclusively for individuals aged 55 and older, the FY8K celebrates the dedication of these active individuals to a lifelong commitment to health and wellness. In addition to promoting physical activity, the event serves as a fundraiser for the Dream On Foundation, which grants wishes to seniors who may not otherwise have the opportunity to fulfill their dreams. Each year, approximately 200 runners and walkers participate, demonstrating the ongoing enthusiasm for this unique and meaningful event.

INSPIRING SPORT EXCELLENCE

Richmond has a long history of sport excellence. Celebrating sport excellence inspires the community and can help transform a sporting dream into a tangible goal. By celebrating those who have achieved sport excellence and those striving to reach the pinnacle of sport, Richmond continues to offer opportunities for its residents to shine.

Richmond Olympian Recognition Events – Paris 2024

At the September 9 Council meeting, Richmond City Council recognized the achievements of three Richmond Olympic athletes—Nicholas Zhang (fencing), Evan Dunfee (race walking), and Camryn Rogers (hammer throw)—who proudly represented Canada at the 2024 Paris Olympics. A community celebration, hosted in partnership with the Kajaks Track & Field Club, was also held on September 15 at Minoru Plaza to celebrate the Olympians and honor their achievements on the world stage.

At the community celebration, the Olympians shared their Paris 2024 Olympic experiences. They spoke about the commitment, discipline, and resilience required to compete at the highest level. A standout moment was celebrating Camryn Rogers, whose gold medal made national history as the first Canadian woman to win Olympic gold in hammer throw. Her achievement reflects the excellence, determination, and pride that define Richmond’s athletic community. This celebration not only honored outstanding athletic accomplishments but also highlighted Richmond’s commitment to fostering a culture of excellence in sport and inspiring the next generation of athletes in Richmond.

Richmond Sports Wall of Fame

The Richmond Sports Wall of Fame was established in 2015 to celebrate the rich history of sport in Richmond, and recognize the outstanding achievements of Athletes, Masters Athletes, Teams, Coaches, Officials, Builders, Pioneers, and Special Achievements within the Richmond community. Nominations for new inductees are collected each December for consideration in the following year. In 2023 there were two inductions, Trish Nicholson (athlete) and the 1986 U14 Oldon Pirates (team). Ceremonies for these inductions took place at a regular Council meeting in Council Chambers. Celebrating the accomplishments of Richmond community members ignites the pursuit of goals and dreams, and continues to inspire physical activity regardless of age.



Barnsley Lifeguard Championship

In July 2024, South Arm Outdoor Pool hosted the Barnsley Lifeguard Championship, a prestigious event showcasing excellence in lifesaving and aquatic safety. This one-day competition featured rigorous fitness challenges and first aid simulations, testing participants’ skills in a series of simulated pool incidents, both individually and as teams.

Nine teams from across the province competed for the esteemed Barnsley Shield, a sterling silver symbol of bravery and expertise. Richmond’s own Connor McMillan, James Liu, Matthew Howie, and Timofey Zinin, who made up the team “Whistleblowers”, competed in four challenges and came first overall, winning the Barnsley Shield. The event also welcomed several first-time competitors, including many young participants embarking on their careers in aquatics, further inspiring and strengthening Richmond’s next generation of lifeguards.



SPORT HOSTING

Richmond Sport Hosting

Sporting events are a great way to motivate and engage the community to participate in recreation and sport for life. Sport events can also inspire future high-performance athletes, sending them along the Term Athlete Development Model (LTADM) pathway. The City, in collaboration with the Richmond Sport Hosting (RSH) Office, worked closely with event organizers to facilitate sporting events across Richmond. In 2022, the RSH Office supported 76 events, with 17,560 room nights actualized at designated host hotels. In 2023 and 2024, 86 and 78 events were supported, respectively, with a total of 21,970 actualized room nights in designated host hotels in 2023, and 15,750 actualized room nights at designated host hotels in 2024.

To ensure the success of these events, the RSH Office provides comprehensive support, including bid development, coordination of site visits, community partner engagement, and strategic connections with local resources. Additionally, financial assistance is available through a grant program to further enhance event planning and execution.

Canadian Adult Recreational Hockey Association (CARHA) World Cup

From March 19 to 26, 2023, Richmond hosted an eight-day adult hockey tournament that welcomed over 1,600 participants from 11 countries. The Richmond Ice Centre and Richmond Olympic Oval served as key venues, hosting 133 games, with the showcase match taking place on the Stadium Rink at Minoru Arenas. The tournament generated nearly 4,000 room nights for Richmond hotels and was an overwhelming success for participants and attendees alike. Beyond its economic and tourism impact, the tournament reinforced Richmond’s commitment to fostering lifelong participation in sport by providing opportunities for adult athletes to compete at a high level, stay active, and remain engaged in organized sport well into adulthood.

World Wheelchair Curling

In 2023, the Richmond Winter Club hosted the World Wheelchair and World Wheelchair Mixed Doubles Curling Championships, bringing together 100 athletes from 17 nations for 10 days of elite competition. This international event showcased high-performance sport and highlighted the importance of accessibility and inclusivity in athletic participation. By hosting world-class competitions, Richmond reinforces its commitment to fostering opportunities for athletes of all abilities to engage in sport, develop skills, and inspire future generations.



Focus Area 4: Active People and Vibrant Places

Natural and built environments within neighbourhoods in Richmond encourage connectedness and participation in recreation and sport.

 *Focus Area 4 Active People and Vibrant Places contains 11 of 57 actions.*



Why is this important?

With Richmond’s population now estimated at over 230,000 and continuing to grow, it is essential to offer diverse recreation and sport opportunities that align with evolving participation levels and preferences. Ensuring accessible, flexible options—allowing residents to choose how, when, and where they engage—while providing both familiar activities and new experiences fosters lifelong physical activity and community well-being.

The City makes significant ongoing investments in facility, amenity and park maintenance, and development to ensure there is a broad range of infrastructure throughout all areas of the city that support both structured and unstructured participation in recreation and sport. Safe, well-maintained and welcoming infrastructure, coupled with a rich array of programmed and unprogrammed opportunities in public spaces, are keys to creating built and natural environments that promote and sustain active lifestyles, social connection and a sense of community.

Through strategy actions that focus on providing a broad range of natural and built environments that facilitate participation and connection, the following outcomes are anticipated:

- Accessible opportunities exist for all residents to participate in recreation and sport according to their stage of development; and
- Richmond has supportive and healthy built and natural environments for recreation and sport.

Highlights and Achievements

The priority initiatives in this Focus Area aim to:

- ↑ Increase welcoming, safe facilities and spaces;
- ↑ Increase infrastructure improvements;
- ↑ Increase active transportation; and
- ↑ Increase unstructured recreation and sport opportunities in public parks and open spaces.

The following provides a snapshot of successes and progress highlights:

WELCOMING PLACES AND SPACES

The City is committed to creating inclusive spaces by working collaboratively with its partners and the community to enhance places and spaces to ensure they are intentionally designed to be welcoming and accessible to all. Below are examples of initiatives that reflect this commitment.

Shade and Shelter Program

The Shade and Shelter Program responds to the growing need and demand for shaded areas in public spaces, offering Richmond residents both protection from the elements and opportunities for community gathering and connection. In 2024, three new shelters were installed at Garden City Community Park, McLean Neighbourhood Park, and Dover Neighbourhood Park, enhancing accessibility and comfort in these outdoor spaces.



Wake Public Artwork and Shelter

In 2022, *Wake*, a public artwork that is also a shelter, was installed at Tate Waterfront Park. Taking design inspiration from the waves of the Fraser River located at the park's edge, this structure by Aaron and Christian Huizenga provides a dynamic and inspiring covered gathering space and programming opportunity for the nearby Cambie Community Centre.

Community Participation in Murals

From 2022 to 2024, Richmond Public Art completed eight murals on City facilities through the Community Mural Program, including two pools, four trail washrooms, the Cultural Centre Annex and the Minoru Arenas. Murals add vibrancy to public spaces, foster community participation in their creation, and encourage citizens to take pride in building inclusive and diverse neighbourhoods. Highlights include:

■ **Highlight: Gathering Pond**

Artist Carolyn Wong collaborated with the Richmond Arenas Community Association to create a mural at the Minoru Arenas entitled Gathering Pond. This mural was completed in September 2024 and is a vibrant celebration of the Richmond community, drawing inspiration from the heart of the ice rink—a place where everyone comes together in the spirit of play and connection. The mural captures the dynamic energy of hockey, ringette, lacrosse, skating and more, showcasing each activity as a thread in the rich tapestry of shared experiences at Minoru Arenas.

The London Farm Revitalization

The London Farm Revitalization project creates a more welcoming visitor experience by improving wayfinding, heritage interpretation, pathways, landscaping and site furnishings. Completed in spring 2023, in close collaboration with the London Heritage Farm Society, the project has greatly enhanced the experience of the site for visitors, creating comfortable, welcoming and engaging spaces for families to spend the day.



UNSTRUCTURED RECREATION AND SPORT

Neighbourhood Free Play

Neighbourhood free play provides affordable, accessible and unstructured recreation opportunities to build social cohesion and inclusion across neighbourhoods. In 2022, four Community Associations and Societies implemented outreach programs in their neighbourhoods. In partnership with the City, weekly Summer Free Play drop-in programs were offered to children aged 2–12 years at Thompson Neighbourhood Park, West Richmond Playground, Garden City Park and Steveston Park. Although the program was paused in 2023, unstructured recreation programs and activities took place in a variety of parks in 2024, including Burkville Park, Hugh Boyd Park, Thompson/Burnett Community Park, South Arm Community Park, Steveston Community Park, Westwind Neighbourhood Park, Homma Neighbourhood Park and Garry Point Park

Play Streets

In partnership with the Society of Children and Youth of BC, the City hosted Play Streets events in Spring 2024. Temporarily closing two streets to vehicular traffic for an evening and a weekend day, these street closures created safe, open spaces for children and youth to play freely. The initiative featured a variety of play equipment, including bikes, building blocks, reading areas, and badminton, fostering active recreation and social engagement. Additionally, co-design sessions were incorporated, empowering youth to contribute to the selection and design of sport and play activities, ensuring the space reflected their interests and needs.

SAFE, VIBRANT AND WELCOMING COMMUNITIES

The City's Signature Events

The City's signature events continued throughout the term including the popular Children's Arts Festival, Cherry Blossom Festival, Doors Open Richmond, the Steveston Salmon Festival, the Richmond Maritime Festival and Culture Days. Highlights in 2024 included the Salmon Festival Parade, new Catch of the Day Stage and the expanding programming for the Children's Arts Festival at the new Cultural Centre Annex. By activating public spaces and fostering vibrant community gatherings, these signature events enhance Richmond's cultural and recreational landscape, creating dynamic, inclusive environments that encourage active participation and social connection.





Neighbourhood Celebration Grant

The Neighbourhood Celebration Grant Program is a City-funded initiative designed to bring residents of diverse backgrounds together through community events and shared experiences, fostering a stronger, more engaged, and inclusive community.

Between 2022 and 2023, 128 applicants received grants totalling \$153,931, including Parent Advisory Councils, student and strata groups, and non-profit societies. With these funds, recipients hosted events that connected neighbours and communities, including 28 school events, 33 block parties, and 67 community events and programs. In 2024, the program evolved and was split into two-streams—the Community Celebration Grant Program and the Neighbourhood Block Party Program.

Community Celebration Grant

The Community Celebration Grant Program invited Richmond-based not-for-profit community organizations to submit creative proposals for hosting a free public event that offers opportunities to connect residents of diverse backgrounds through shared experiences.

In 2024, Council approved 46 projects which received funding totalling \$52,536. Grant-funded activities delivered by the community included intercultural celebrations, outdoor concerts, art activities in the park, community carnivals, and sport events. Participation ranged from 25 to 500 participants in attendance at each event.



Neighbourhood Block Party Program

Starting in 2024, the Neighbourhood Block Party Program provided funding to encourage Richmond residents to connect and create a sense of community in their neighbourhoods by offering block parties in a variety of spaces, including parks, on local streets or in a strata property.

In 2024, 26 neighbourhood block parties received funding, totalling \$12,338. Block parties took place in neighbourhoods across Richmond and activations included barbecues, international food potlucks, crafts for children, a Vancouver Canucks neighbourhood watch party, face painting, storytelling in the park, and even a visit from the Richmond Fire Rescue Community Engagement team.

Minoru Centre for Active Living – Plaza Activations

Minoru Plaza continues to be a vibrant, welcoming outdoor space, drawing the community together for events, concerts and countless activations.

From June to September in both 2023 and 2024, the Minoru Seniors Association hosted Concerts in the Plaza. Concerts In the Plaza offered free live performances, providing an opportunity for the community to gather while listening and dancing to recognizable tunes from local talent. In 2023, four concerts welcomed 100 to 150 attendees each. In 2024, 10 concerts were hosted, drawing over 1,600 participants. With the success of Concerts in the Plaza, the series expanded, offering “Summer Fun in the Plaza”. These were offered as no-cost programs and included: Art in the Plaza, Dance Party in the Plaza, and Lantern Decorating in the Plaza. These were fun intergenerational experiences that brought children, youth, adults and seniors together, and averaged 60 to 70 participants per session.

PARKS INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS

Parks and playgrounds provide access to greenspace and nature for all ages and backgrounds. They encourage physical activity and community connection and cohesion, which contributes to building community identity, and supports positive health and wellness outcomes. Richmond residents continue to share how important parks and playgrounds are to them, and the role these spaces play in meeting their recreation and sport pursuits. As a result, the City and its partners continue to be committed to delivering high-quality parks, playgrounds and outdoor amenities to the community.

Between 2022 and 2024, the City undertook a number of new construction and revitalization projects to further enhance Richmond’s parks, playgrounds and outdoor amenities to continue to support recreation and sport events and opportunities, and encourage connectedness.

These projects include:

Playgrounds and Outdoor Sports Facilities

- **King George/Cambie Community Park Synthetic Turf Field Replacement**

In 2022, the synthetic turf field at King George/Cambie Community Park was replaced. The new turf surface provides an updated shock attenuation base pad for extended durability and performance playability. It also includes a thermoplastic elastomer infill layer with enhanced environmental and playability benefits.

- **The Fields**

In 2022, construction began to create a new outdoor sport and event venue that would create additional opportunities for the community to engage in sport, recreation and fitness. In 2023, The Fields were completed and include over 4,200 square metres of multi-sport turf, three hard-surface basketball courts, and a dedicated outdoor fitness area.

- **The South Arm Playground Renewal**

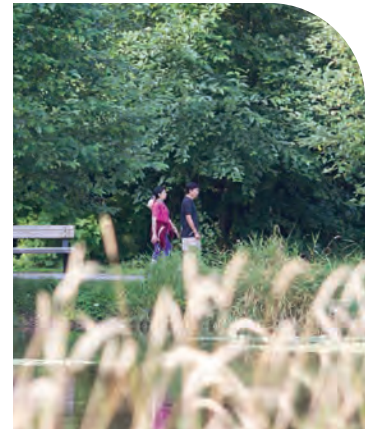
The South Arm Playground Renewal project updates and unifies the playground and surrounding areas at South Arm Community Park. Completed in spring 2023, with close collaboration and generous financial support from the South Arm Community Association, the project introduced expanded play opportunities for a wider range of ages and abilities, along with new pathways, public art, and seating areas.

- **Heather Dolphin Park Basketball Court update**

In 2023, the basketball court at Heather Dolphin Neighbourhood Park was upgraded with new hoop equipment and a new sport court surfacing. These upgrades help ensure that basketball remains a popular and accessible sport for Richmond residents.

- **The Odlinwood, Heather-Dolphin, and Great West Cannery Playgrounds**

The Odlinwood, Heather Dolphin, and Great West Cannery playgrounds provide updated and expanded play opportunities for their surrounding neighbourhoods. Completed in spring 2024, these playgrounds feature new equipment and surfacing designed to accommodate a wider range of ages and abilities.





■ Steveston Community Park Tennis Court update

In 2023, the tennis courts at Steveston Community Park were refreshed with new sport court surfacing. These tennis courts continue to be popular and well-used, and the court resurfacing ensures recreational and competitive users alike continue to enjoy playing, while building a vibrant and welcoming tennis community in Richmond.

Parks

■ The Minoru Lakes Renewal

The Minoru Lakes Renewal project addresses infrastructure, maintenance, and water quality challenges while enhancing informal recreational opportunities for the growing Brighthouse neighbourhood. Completed in spring 2023, the renewal features updated pond infrastructure and new park amenities, providing spaces for walking, jogging, gathering, resting, and connecting with nature.

■ Alexandra Neighbourhood Park

In spring 2022, construction of Alexandra Neighbourhood Park was completed. The design, informed by community engagement, includes a stormwater detention pond, wildflower meadows, a dog off-leash area, basketball court, table tennis, a children’s playground, and a public art structure titled Pergola Garden.

■ Aberdeen Neighbourhood Park – Phase 2

In summer 2022, the second phase of Aberdeen Neighbourhood Park was opened, bringing with it several new amenities including a public washroom, a Chinese garden, a covered pavilion building, and a children’s playground.

■ Tait Riverfront Park

Tait Riverfront Park provides new park and recreation amenities for the growing Tait/Bridgeport neighbourhood, helping strengthen its sense of community and recreation and sport offerings. Open to the community in summer 2022, the waterfront park features a play area, basketball court, skateboard skills zone, flexible lawn spaces, picnic tables, benches, an artist-designed pavilion, and trails.

■ London/Steveston Neighbourhood School Park Dog Off-Leash Area

In summer 2023, construction of a new dog off-leash area in London/Steveston Neighbourhood School Park was completed. The design, informed by community engagement, includes separate enclosures for small/shy and large dogs, fencing, site furnishings, planting, gravel and mulch surface treatments, and a buffer zone between the dog park and adjacent residents.

■ Steveston Community Park Dog Off-Leash Area Upgrade

In winter 2022, an upgrade to the existing Steveston dog off-leash area was completed. The design, informed by community engagement, includes separate enclosures for small/shy and large dogs, new fencing, site furnishings, planting, and gravel and mulch surface treatments.

Community Gardens

Community gardens offer numerous benefits, including enhancing food security and engaging in light physical activity. Community gardens also create spaces for social interaction, fostering a sense of community as neighbours come together to share gardening tips, resources, and experiences.

Between 2022 and 2024, over 500 new community gardens and garden expansions were planned and constructed, including Garden City Lands, and Cook Neighbourhood Park (expansion), as well as three distinctive locations on the Railway Greenway; Hamilton Community Park, Alexandra Neighbourhood Park, and Terra Nova Rural Park (expansion). These new gardens provide residents additional opportunity to connect with nature, cultivate plants and vegetables, and engage in and learn about sustainable gardening practices.



FACILITY RECREATION AND SPORT INFRASTRUCTURE

Recreation and sport infrastructure is vital for the delivery of sport, physical activity and recreation programs and services, which helps in increased recreation and sport opportunities and participation, while building community capacity and vibrant places. The Recreation and Sport Services department is continually working to plan, improve, renew and build new facilities to meet the needs and interest of the growing community. Below highlights the City's commitment to delivering state-of-the-art recreation and sport infrastructure in Richmond.

Sports Facilities Needs Assessment

In 2023, a Sport Facility Needs Assessment was completed in collaboration with Richmond Sports Council, local sport organizations and user groups, and Community Associations and Societies. A prioritized list of sports facility and infrastructure projects was developed, and subsequently endorsed by Council for consideration in future corporate facility and park plans in the next one to 10 years. These projects will help meet community recreation facility needs, and encourage even more participation in recreation and sport.



2023 BC Recreation and Park Association (BCRPA) Facility Excellence Award – Minoru Centre for Active Living

In 2023, the Minoru Centre for Active Living was honored with the prestigious Provincial Facility Excellence Award for projects exceeding \$3 million, presented by the BC Recreation and Parks Association. This award recognizes outstanding facility design or redevelopment that reflects community culture, innovation, and responsiveness to community needs. Designed to prioritize accessibility and certified to the LEED Gold standard, the facility aligns with Richmond's vision of being a leader in recreation and sport. It provides high-quality, sustainable, and environmentally friendly spaces, ensuring all Richmond residents have the opportunity to achieve their physical activity goals.

Steveston Community Centre and Library

Construction on the new Steveston Community Centre and Library is underway, with the 60,350 square foot, three-story facility set to open in late 2026.

In September 2024, Council approved the Operating Plan for the facility. Developed through extensive planning and collaboration between the community centre and library boards, the plan includes expanded services and extended hours of operation. It maximizes alignment between the community centre and library to allow for ongoing collaboration and synergies in service delivery and operations.

This modern community centre and library space will include a community “living room”, double gymnasium, fitness center, library, study zones, digital creation areas, and multipurpose rooms. The larger facility will be able to deliver more programs and services, allowing more people of all ages to benefit from sport, recreation, health and wellness opportunities in the community.



Capstan Community Centre

The forthcoming Capstan Community Centre will be a new, 33,000 square foot, two-story community centre, located directly across from the new Capstan Canada Line station, at No. 3 Road and McMyn Way. Once open, the Capstan Community Centre will serve the north end of City Centre, as well as the Bridgeport, West Cambie and Sea Island areas, offering programs and services for all ages. The facility will include a gymnasium, indoor walking track, and several multi-purpose spaces including an art room. The new Community Centre will bring more services and program opportunities to local residents and lower barriers to participation for residents of the neighbourhood.

Bowling Green Community Activity Centre

The Bowling Green Community Activity Centre’s Operational Model was approved by Council in October 2024, and is scheduled for completion in Q3 2025. This facility will meet the day to day operational needs of the Richmond Lawn Bowling Club (the Club) and better position the Club to host more regional and provincial events and tournaments throughout the year. In addition to supporting future growth of Richmond’s lawn bowling community, the facility will provide multipurpose space for community programs and public use, ensuring the facility serves both sport and community needs, while enhancing accessibility, engagement, and overall utilization.



West Richmond Pavilion

In July 2024, Council approved the West Richmond Pavilion site and budget, followed by the facility’s naming in October 2024. This 10,830-square-foot facility—the City’s first Passive House-certified building—will feature a covered outdoor viewing deck, multipurpose rooms, team change rooms, public washrooms, a referee room, storage space, a Class 3 kitchen, and a concession. Centrally located within Hugh Boyd Community Park, it will serve as a hub for recreation, sport, and community programs.

Designed to support the day-to-day needs of local sport organizations and community programming, the facility will enhance accessibility and engagement while also attracting high-profile tournaments and sporting events. By providing a centralized, multi-use space, it will foster greater community participation and contribute to a more active, connected Richmond.





Recreation and Sport at The Richmond Olympic Oval

While the Recreation and Sport Strategy (2019–2024) – Progress Update 2022–2024 primarily focuses on achievements related to the City and its Community Associations and Societies, the Richmond Olympic Oval plays an important role in meeting the recreation and sport needs of those who live, work and play in Richmond. As a legacy of the 2010 Winter Olympics, the Oval is a centre of excellence for sports, health and physical activity, and has become a premier training and competition hosting facility for high performance sport, all while showcasing local to international arts, culture and heritage. The Oval provides training facilities and services for athletes ranging from local community through to, and including, those preparing for the Olympic and Paralympic Games. These athletes represent a large number of sports including, but not limited to, short track speed skating, softball, volleyball, sport climbing, wheelchair rugby, wheelchair basketball, ice hockey, table tennis and athletics. Some highlights between 2022 and 2024 include:

Oval Community Day

The Oval welcomed 7,000 community members to the inaugural Oval Community Day on August 25, 2024. The free event featured family-friendly obstacle courses and activations by community groups like BC Wheelchair Basketball, Richmond Curling Centre and Ramptime Productions on the Oval's south plaza and Fields. Additionally, Richmond's up-and-coming 2011 and 2012 soccer teams competed in 6v6 games throughout the day, and the Can3X Summerfest 3-on-3 basketball tournament played on the outdoor courts. The day also included complimentary admission to the Olympic Experience, Olympic-themed selfie stations, and various entertainment options, including festival food, music and Oval sport and fitness challenges.

A Legacy of Skating

The Oval continues to build on its 2010 speed skating legacy. The Oval is home to the Richmond Rockets short track club, and the club continues to see athlete growth and development. To develop Richmond Rockets short track talent further, OVALHP offered its first Club Development and Podium Prospects speed skating summer camp in 2023. Fourteen athletes ages nine to 12 participated in the week-long camp, which included morning ice sessions, strength and conditioning sessions, OVALfit RIDE classes and afternoons in the Olympic Experience.

BC School Sport Climbing Competitions

In 2023, Richmond Olympic Oval hosted two BC school climbing competitions to introduce sport climbing to local independent high school students and create a pathway for students to work towards. Nearly 500 students from 35 schools in Metro Vancouver and Vancouver Island competed in the two competitions.

These competitions gave students a chance to try sport climbing, set goals and challenge themselves in a competitive environment, and learn about high-performance sport opportunities. The competitions have brought clubs and teachers together, which plays an important role in helping teachers develop curriculum and secure funding for sport within their schools.



Building Futures through the LTAD model

Richmond's Wesley Chiu's progression from a novice figure skater to an Olympic hopeful has been supported by OVALHP strength and conditioning coaches to complement his on-ice training with the Connaught Figure Skating Club. He began 2023 with an impressive third-place finish at the Canadian National Men's Championships, placed second at the ISU Cranberry Cup in Boston, and was selected as one of 18 athletes to compete as a part of Team Canada at the ISU Grand Prix of Figure Skating Series held in Vancouver.



Focus Area 5:

Connectedness to Nature

Richmond residents enjoy opportunities to connect with nature.

 *Focus Area 5 Connectedness to Nature contains 4 of 57 strategic actions.*

Why is this important?

According to ParticipACTION's 2022 Family Influence report, spending some time outdoors each week as a family is an easy and effective way to increase physical activity, limit screen time, decrease sedentary behaviour and improve sleep for both girls and boys. Outdoor play also supports cognitive development and social skills. Similarly, the Canadian Mental Health Association highlights the benefits of green spaces—such as forests, gardens, and parks—including lowered cortisol (stress hormone) levels and increased endorphins and dopamine, which can enhance mood and overall well-being.

Creating supportive environments that encourage outdoor activity is an important facet of increasing physical activity, including addressing real or perceived concerns about safety and providing education to help build confidence in outdoor pursuits. Richmond has a wealth of parks, trails and natural areas that allow community members to connect with nature, including 133 parks that total about 2,150 acres serving the wellness and recreation needs of a diverse, growing community, and more than 70 kilometres of trails to support walking, rolling, cycling and other forms of active transportation to many of Richmond's park and waterfront destinations.

Through Strategy actions that focus on connecting Richmond residents with nature the following outcomes are anticipated:

- Richmond has supportive and healthy built and natural environments for recreation and sport; and
- Accessible opportunities exist for all residents to participate in recreation and sport according to their stage of development.

Highlights and Achievements

The priority initiatives in this Focus Area aim to:

- ↑ Increase awareness of benefits of being in nature;
- ↑ Increase nature play opportunities;
- ↑ Increase nature education options; and
- ↑ Increase residents' connectedness to nature.



The following provides a snapshot of successes and progress highlights:

■ CONNECTING CHILDREN AND YOUTH WITH NATURE

Connecting children at an early age to the outdoors can help foster a lifelong appreciation and stewardship of the natural world.

Terra Nova Nature School

Terra Nova Nature School’s Artist-in-Residence program hosted free accessible photo-based activities, workshops and events surrounding climate and weather changes and their effects on ecology. Specific work with local and invasive plant species in Terra Nova Rural Park invited individuals to learn about the world and how to become honest stewards of and to support Indigenous communities in caring for their traditional territories.

For Terra Nova Nature School’s 10th Anniversary in 2024, past and present registrants and members of the public were invited to learn about the unique opportunity in Richmond. Approximately 600 community members were in attendance for this milestone.

Adventure Camp – Bike Tours for Youth

The West Richmond Community Association has offered a series of Adventure Bike Camps for Youth during the summers of 2022, 2023, and 2024. These camps help foster an appreciation for outdoors and nature recreation throughout Richmond, while also providing participants the opportunity to develop confidence and proficiency in cycling. Across these three years, West Richmond Community Association has hosted nine camps, attracting over 65 youth participants.



Take Action Camp for Youth

In spring break of 2024, City Centre and West Richmond Community Associations paired up to offer youth the Take Action Camp. The Camp is an opportunity for youth to develop skills in public speaking and critical analysis, while learning about global and environmental issues and actively engaging with the natural environment. As part of the camp, youth attended different out-trips every day with a “Take Action” theme. For the out-trips, youth attended a bee discovery workshop led by the Sharing Farm Society at Terra Nova Rural Park, got their hands dirty with a shoreline cleanup, took part in a Forest Fundamentals walking tour led by the Stanley Park Ecological Society, and visited Beaty Biodiversity Museum at the University of British Columbia (UBC). Participants were able to connect to nature while both learning about and actively contributing to nature conservation.

FUN AND WELLNESS IN NATURE

Whether digging in the dirt to plant your favourite veggies, hunting for treasure in nature, or learning about stewardship and sustainability, there were a number of hands-on, nature-based programs and opportunities between 2022 and 2024 in Richmond.

Richmond GeoTour

Geocaching is an outdoor treasure-hunting game that uses a smartphone or GPS device, making it convenient for people of all ages to participate and engage with the outdoors. The goal is for participants to navigate a specific set of GPS coordinates to find hidden geocaches (treasures). The GeoTour, entering its 11th year in 2024, continues to invite participants of all ages to explore the city by foot or by bike in search of 50 hidden geocaches. Since 2014, 5,197 geocachers from 46 different countries have logged a total of 39,849 geocache finds.

Geocaching Adventure Labs

Richmond Adventure Lab is an app-based scavenger hunt for all ages launched in June 2023. There are currently three Adventure Labs offered in Richmond; the Terra Nova Rural Park Adventure, the Richmond Nature Park Adventure, and the Garden City & Paulik Park Adventure. Each Adventure offers a unique storyline and set of challenges in which players can embark on thrilling quests, answer trivia questions and learn about wildlife, ecology and local history, all while playing in nature. From its launch until the end of 2024, 640 visitors from 14 countries have completed the three Adventure Labs.

Rediscover Richmond Parks

The Rediscover Richmond Parks program was a new initiative for 2024, aimed at providing accessible park-based programming for seniors, particularly in areas that are often hard to reach. In its first year, 300 seniors took part in 19 workshops held across nine different parks, each centered around unique nature themes such as bird watching, kite flying, local flora and fauna, and bees. Thanks to a \$5,000 PlanH Community Connectedness Grant awarded to the Richmond Nature Park Society in 2023, all costs were fully funded. The program received overwhelmingly positive feedback, with many participants expressing interest in more workshops in the future.



Seniors Centre Nature Offerings

The Minoru Seniors Society provides a variety of organized nature offerings, both within Richmond and to surrounding areas, including Fort Langley, Maple Ridge, and Burnaby.

In the Summer of 2023, the Minoru Seniors Society offered two local nature-based activities in Richmond:

- Nature Walk and Picnic, where seniors participated in facilitated walks around some of Richmond’s most scenic parks, followed by a picnic lunch.
- Garden Games and Refreshments, where seniors participated in outdoor games such as horseshoes and cornhole.

These nature-based activities have been deeply appreciated by participants. They have enjoyed the combination of outdoor recreation and educational experiences, allowing them to be physically active, and feel the benefits of being in nature.

MOVING THROUGH NATURE WITH ART AND CULTURE

Bird Walk at Garry Point Park/West Dyke Trail

On July 20, 2023, Richmond Art Gallery collaborated with WalkRichmond and Birds Canada for a guided walk of Garry Point and the West Dyke Trail. The four to five kilometre walk was led by Birds Canada and the Richmond Art Gallery, and included a warm-up, cool-down and light stretching. Along the walk, participants learned about shoreline bird diversity, and were shown some of the installed bird nest boxes that help preserve local bird species. This program connected to the Art Gallery exhibition MOTHLIKE/silvery blue that highlights local shoreline habitat and ways people of all ages can help save birds. Overall, this collaboration and walk shows the ways that physical activity, nature and art can come together to build health, wellness and community.





Family Farm Day

In 2022, the London Heritage Farm Society re-established their Family Farm Day event. Offered in August each year, the popular family-friendly event takes place on the London Farm grounds, with a focus on activities for families with young children, including pony rides, animal interactions, games, crafts, heritage displays and live music. Family Farm Day continues to provide Richmond residents a space to enjoy nature play and the benefits of being outside.

Cultural Centre Rooftop Garden Workshops

From June to September 2024, a variety of outdoor workshops and events for adults were held at the Cultural Centre Rooftop Garden. During this summer growing season, opportunities included hands-on learning with visual artists, gardening experts, and learning from Indigenous knowledge keepers and food specialists. The workshop activities led by these artists, experts and knowledge keepers included natural fabric dyeing, jam making, cyanotypes, and plein air painting. Bringing people together for recreation, art, and play provided learning opportunities that lifted spirits and brought people together through outdoor experiences.



Focus Area 6: Community Capacity-Building

Collaborations, partnerships and volunteerism are strengthened to expand the reach and impact of recreation and sport in Richmond.

 *Focus Area 6 Community Capacity-Building contains 7 of 57 strategic actions.*

Why is this important?

In Richmond, recreation and sport services and programs are delivered collaboratively with the City and Community Associations and Societies, and through over 50 community sport clubs. These relationships add value to people's experiences and provide a multitude of opportunities for Richmond residents to become engaged in community recreation opportunities, as participants, instructors, coaches, referees, administrators and volunteers. Supporting the capacity of these organizations is of utmost importance to maintain a sustainable and robust service delivery system that provides a wide range of physical activity and sport opportunities that meet the needs of beginner recreationalists to competitive high-performance athletes, throughout their life course.

Through strategy actions that focus on building capacity through collaboration, partnerships and volunteerism, the following outcomes are anticipated:

- Capacity building supports needs of an effective recreation and sport delivery system; and
- Richmond has a coordinated, accessible, effective and efficient sport delivery system using the Long-Term Athlete Development Model.

Highlights and Achievements

The priority initiatives in this Focus Area aim to:

- ↑ Increase sport organization capacity to provide excellent opportunities;
- ↑ Increase the number of young athletes who lead and teach recreation and sport programs;
- ↑ Increase the number of early years providers that promote physical literacy; and
- ↑ Increase the number of Champions for recreation and sport are established and recognized by the community.





The following provides a snapshot of successes and progress highlights:

STRENGTHENING RICHMOND’S RELATIONSHIP-BASED SERVICE DELIVERY MODEL

The City has a long-standing commitment to a relationship-based model for delivering parks, recreation, arts, culture and heritage programs and services. The Parks, Recreation and Culture Division works closely with Community Associations and Societies to provide a range of programs and services that bring people of all ages and abilities together to build healthy, active and vibrant communities. These volunteer-led organizations, in partnership with the City, play an integral role in delivering opportunities for Richmond’s rapidly growing and diverse population to promote their health and wellbeing, connect with nature, explore avenues for creative expression, and build social and cultural connections. There are well over 200 volunteers, who commit thousands of hours of volunteer time each year to improving the quality of life for their fellow residents and add vibrancy to the community by enabling volunteerism.

2023 Richmond Communities Conference

2023 marked the return of the Richmond Communities Conference (the Conference). The Conference is a day of professional development that brings together Richmond’s Community Associations and Societies, along with community recreation staff, to provide learning from industry experts, experienced facilitators and passionate leaders. Topics are customized to the emerging opportunities attendees have experienced as non-profit organizations and community recreation service providers, such as volunteerism, employment law, recruitment, and retention of high performing staff, mental health and wellness in the workplace, and creating diverse, accessible, and inclusive environments.

The 2023 Richmond Communities Conference supports ongoing development, knowledge and capacity building of City staff, as well as Community Association and Societies, volunteers, and staff. The Conference also highlights the importance of the City’s relationship-based service delivery model, and contributes towards a sustainable and robust recreation service delivery system.





THE POWER OF GRANTS

Parks, Recreation and Community Events Grants Program

The Parks, Recreation and Community Events Grants Program (PRCE Grants) increases community capacity to benefit Richmond residents by assisting non-profit community organizations in delivering parks and recreation programs and services, and community events. PRCE Grants have strengthened the City’s partnership with non-profit community organizations, including Richmond’s Community Associations and Societies, and continue to be instrumental in delivering high-quality and popular recreation and sport opportunities to the community.

PRCE Grant Distribution from 2022 to 2024

Year	Number of Grants Awarded	Funding Awarded
2022	11	\$115,423
2023	10	\$120,017
2024	13	\$125,017

DEVELOPING LEADERS

Instructor Lifeguard Subsidy Program

The Instructor/Lifeguard Subsidy Program (ILSP) trial launched in May 2023 to allow Richmond residents from low-income households to pursue careers as aquatics instructors or lifeguards. In 2023, the pilot program garnered interest in Richmond, with 12 candidates approved for the subsidy program. Showing continued interest, the number of applicants approved for the subsidy in 2024 grew to 16. Richmond City Council has approved funding for ILSP through to 2025.

Developing Youth Day Camp Leaders

In 2023 and 2024, Community Associations and Societies and the Richmond Museum Society received \$285,000 in Canada Summer Job Grants to fund youth employment positions, primarily in summer day camp programs. The Richmond Nature Park Society received an additional \$10,000 through the Canadian Parks and Recreation Association Youth Employment Experience Grant in 2024 to help fund summer day camp leader positions and an environmental program development supervisor at the Richmond Nature Park. The summer leaders gained valuable people, leadership, supervisory and team skills in their roles caring for and educating children throughout the summer.

Get Out Camp

An annual camp geared towards youth, in 2024 the Get Out Camp was offered by the West Richmond Community Association from May 24–26. The Get Out camp serves as an opportunity for youth to gain outdoor experiences away from cellphones, technology and daily distractions. This program fosters positive community connections with youth from municipalities across Metro Vancouver. It provides a safe, supportive and inclusive environment to enrich the lives of youth through engaging, intentional programming, opportunities for growth and leadership.



Volunteerism

Volunteering in recreation and sport provides a multitude of benefits both for the volunteer, and the community at large. Volunteering is a great way to learn new skills, cement friendships, and gain leadership experience, while also strengthening community capacity and bringing joy and opportunity to all. The City's online volunteer management portal "I Can Help", provides a convenient and easy way to match volunteers with the wide range of volunteer opportunities available throughout the City and Community Associations and Societies. Based on hours of volunteer time tracked in the system, the total number of volunteers and number of volunteer hours has grown significantly between 2022 and 2024.

Richmond’s Volunteering from 2022 to 2024

Year	Number of volunteers	Total volunteer hours
2022	955	61,660
2023	1768	58,878
2024	1935	66,897

Below is a snapshot of the recreation and sport volunteer opportunities that were available to all Richmond residents between 2022 and 2024 through Richmond’s “I Can Help” volunteer portal:

- Tour guide volunteers for Richmond Nature Park Events;
- Richmond Aquatics volunteers at multiple City locations;
- Walk Leader volunteers for Richmond Fitness and Wellness Association’s Walk Richmond program;
- Volunteer secretary positions for both the Richmond Sports Council and KidSport Richmond;
- Seasonal Program and Event volunteers for various Community Associations and Societies;
- Volunteer Coaches and Scorekeepers for Richmond Youth Basketball League; and
- Program and Event volunteers at Richmond Olympic Oval.

Growing Volunteerism amongst Richmond’s Youth

Volunteer opportunities provide youth with valuable leadership development while fostering meaningful contributions to their community. In 2023, 1,094 youth volunteers dedicated 31,680 hours, increasing to 1,271 volunteers and 36,232 hours in 2024. Their efforts supported Parks, Recreation, and Culture programs and events, as well as initiatives led by the City, Community Associations and Societies, the Richmond Public Library, and other City partners. To recognize their contributions, the City and Community Associations and Societies issue certificates of appreciation and accomplishment.



Focus Area 7: Technology and Innovation

Technology and innovative ideas connect and inspire Richmond residents to participate in recreation and sport.

 *Focus Area 7 Technology and Innovation contains 6 of 57 strategic actions.*

Why is this important?

The increase in society's dependence on technology is a double-edged sword. While increasing screen-time contributes to more sedentary behaviour, technology can also play a role in connecting people with information and opportunities to be physically active as more people rely on smartphones for many aspects of life. Digital communication options such as social media and direct email can be used to promote opportunities and increase convenience when they facilitate action, such as a direct link to a registration portal. Apps also have the potential to offer interactive and engaging opportunities to learn about the benefits of physical activity, and to actually participate and build healthy habits.

Through strategy actions that leverage technology and innovation to promote and support participation the following outcomes are anticipated:

- Existing and new technology connects Richmond residents to recreation and sport.
- The benefits of physical literacy, recreation and sport are recognized and supported by the public and organizations.

Highlights and Achievements

The priority initiatives in this Focus Area aim to:

- ↑ Increase technology and innovation supports for recreation and sport;
- ↑ Increase app enhancement of recreation and sport participation; and
- ↑ Increase multi-lingual videos introduce residents to opportunities.





ENHANCING ACCESSIBILITY THROUGH THE DIGITAL EXPERIENCE

Activity Search Tool

The Activity Search Tool, which launched in October 2024, enhances the online registration experience by aligning program offerings with customers' interests, age and location. This modern solution replaces outdated static guides with a dynamic, user-friendly platform that provides a more personalized experience. The tool simplifies program searches by allowing users to filter activities, including drop-in classes, registered programs, and one-time events. It enables users to save favorite programs, export searches into a printable PDF, and access up-to-date information. By improving accessibility and engagement, this initiative supports broader participation in Richmond's Parks, Recreation, and Culture programs while transitioning towards more sustainable and efficient communication methods.

MyRichmond App

Launched in May 2023, the MyRichmond app enhances the integration of City services into residents' daily lives, providing a seamless and accessible digital experience. With 5,500 downloads and an average of 150 daily active users, the app keeps residents informed and engaged with key community services.

Notable features include city-wide alerts for registration nights, real-time notifications for course start dates and cancellations, and integrated GPS mapping tools to help users navigate to community centres, art galleries, and museums. The app also offers a digital Active Pass, streamlining access to memberships and programs. Additionally, a news feed on the dashboard provides timely updates on arts, recreation, and other City initiatives, ensuring residents stay connected to their community.

Richmond Media Lab Digital Assets

Getting the most out of the digital experience isn't just a matter of improving and launching software like apps and websites. Yielding the best experience also means having high quality and modern hardware and equipment. The Richmond Media Lab, with a \$360,000 Provincial grant, increased its inventory of digital assets including 3D printers, iPads and state of the art desktop computers to provide youth and children access to hardware and software technology, along with the skills needed to use this technology in a positive way. Most importantly, these assets provided greater opportunities for youth to gather and engage in skills building, networking, and healthy socialization. Monthly music performance events have also created an opportunity for youth to connect and engage with their peers. As an added bonus, due to the location, youth have shown interest and subsequently participated in other recreational activities such as pottery.



ELEVATING RECREATION AND SPORT THROUGH TECHNOLOGY

Richmond Sports Wall of Fame

The Richmond Sports Wall of Fame and its digital kiosk, both housed in the Richmond Olympic Oval, are accessible to visitors at no cost. Located in the first-floor lobby, the Wall of Fame honors all award recipients and inductees. In 2024, a new website and mobile kiosk were introduced to further celebrate inductees. The digital kiosk, featured in the second-floor History of Sports Exhibit, highlights each inductee's achievements. Both the kiosk and website provide the public with convenient access to this information from home or through the mobile kiosk at select City events and facilities throughout the year.

Measuring Use of Pedestrian and Bicycle Routes

The City continues to expand its bicycle-pedestrian counters throughout the city. The data gathered helps inform planning, improvements and delivery of pedestrian and cycling routes to support and encourage active transportation and lifestyles. As of December 2024, there are 17 counters that record pedestrian, bicycle, and e-scooter volume by direction on various pedestrian and bicycle routes across the City. Also in 2024, people counters were introduced on trails at Britannia Shipyards and London Farm to track pedestrian traffic through each site.

Continuing forward, each new pedestrian and bicycle route will incorporate counters to monitor the use and success of connectivity, allowing for more comprehensive monitoring of the City's active transportation network. This will help inform the Updated Cycling Network Plan, adopted by Council in 2022, which aims to add an additional 89 projects over its 15-year horizon.

Active Transportation Safety Initiatives

The City remains committed to informing pedestrians and cyclists about safety education and outreach opportunities while actively promoting pedestrian and cyclist safety through targeted initiatives. Key safety information is regularly updated and shared via the City's social media platforms and website, ensuring residents stay informed about bike safety programs and initiatives. In partnership with HUB Cycling, the City supports Learn to Ride and Bike Maintenance courses for youth and adults, with details available online to encourage broader community participation in safe and sustainable transportation.





Conclusion

The Recreation and Sport Strategy (2019–2024) set the vision for Richmond to be a leader in the planning and delivery of recreation opportunities and to inspire residents to be active, connected and healthy for a lifetime. The Strategy provides a roadmap for focused action by the City and its community partners that build on the foundation of high-quality recreation and sport services, programs, places and spaces available throughout the community. Ultimately, as progress in the seven focus areas is achieved, the long-term outcomes that are expected over time include increased participation in recreation and sport opportunities, and an increase in the number of residents who achieve their physical activity targets.

The City, Community Associations and Societies and other community partners are committed to moving several initiatives forward over 2025 and 2026. One significant initiative is ParticipACTION's Community Challenge, and the pursuit of becoming Canada's most active community. Striving to win this national title involves building more awareness and promoting the benefits of recreation and sport to Richmond residents, and connecting the community to more opportunities offered by the City and City partners.

Additionally, efforts will be made to continue enhancing and expanding low-barrier recreation and sport options, including no-cost and low-cost activities, and increasing capacity for high-demand, popular programs, providing all Richmond residents the opportunity to access programs that align with their interests and needs. These actions will be guided by recommendations from the 2023 Community Needs Assessment, helping to shape an inclusive, active, and engaged community.

Through these concerted efforts, and thanks to the collective commitment of the City's partners, Richmond is well-positioned to continue supporting Richmond residents in meeting their health and activity goals.







City of Richmond

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