

Richmond Youth Advisory Committee 2024 Annual Report

Purpose

The purpose of the Richmond Youth Advisory Committee (YAC) is to support the City's commitment to amplifying youth voices and ensuring their perspectives contribute to plans, programs and services that are important to youth and impact their lives. This includes supporting the implementation of the City's Youth Strategy 2022–2032.

2024 Membership

The composition of the YAC includes up to 15 Council-appointed members – nine citizen representatives between 13 to 24 years, one citizen representative over 24 years and up to five organization representatives. These organizations include: Richmond Addiction Services Society (RASS), Aspire Richmond, Foundry Richmond, Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) and Richmond School District No. 38 (SD38).

The YAC consisted of 12 voting members in 2024:

- Cindy Fu
- Ekatarina Gofsky
- Rav Johal (SD38)
- Salaar Khan
- Linus Lau
- Alvin Li (RASS)
- Jason Liu (Aspire Richmond)
- Gregg Loo (Foundry Richmond and VCH)
- Emmett Mark
- Zachary Thompson
- Joe Vu
- Wendy Zhang

The YAC also included four non-voting City of Richmond representatives:

- Councillor Carol Day (Council Liaison)
- Stefanie Myler (Parks, Recreation and Culture Staff)
- Gabriel Narciso (Recording Secretary)
- Grace Tiu (Staff Liaison)

Meetings

The YAC held six meetings in 2024. City staff, organizational representatives and guest speakers provided information and resources to the YAC on topics related to youth, including City and community programs and support services for youth.

2024 Highlights

Highlights of the YAC's work and participation in youth-related initiatives in 2024 included:

- Guest speakers were invited to share information and seek input from YAC members. Invited guests in 2024 included:
 - Alvin Li, Program Coordinator, Richmond Addiction Services Society (programs available to youth)
 - Gregg Loo, Operations Manager, Mental Health and Substance Use Services, Richmond Infant, Child & Youth Mental Health, Vancouver Coastal Health (programs available to youth)
 - Jason Liu, Manager of Youth Connections Program, Aspire Richmond (programs available to youth)
 - Rav Johal, Director of Instruction – Student Services and Data Analytics, Richmond School District No. 38 (programs available to students)
 - Alan Hill, Inclusion Coordinator, Richmond Multicultural Community Services (Strengthening Intercultural Dialogue Program)
 - Emily Huang, Policy Planner, City of Richmond (engagement on the Official Community Plan Update)
 - Omar Rajan and Mia Mascarina, Youth Outreach Workers, City of Richmond (programs available to youth)
 - Sherry Baumgardner, Tourism Development Liaison, City of Richmond (engagement on the Draft Community Wayfinding Strategy)
- **Annual Work Program** – In 2024, YAC identified YAC priority areas of focus and aligned its Work Program and the Council-adopted Youth Strategy and is committed to supporting the City in the ongoing Youth Strategy implementation.
- **Engagement** – YAC members were offered a number of opportunities to complete surveys and participate in information sessions to ensure youth perspectives were heard and that members were well-informed of matters relating to youth. This included completing the second federal State of the Youth report, the City's Arts Strategy Update 2024 Questionnaire and the Official Community Plan Update 2024. Members of the committee were also encouraged to share these opportunities with youth in their networks.

The Richmond Youth Advisory Committee would like to extend our heartfelt gratitude to the Mayor and Councillors for their support and guidance. Their commitment to the creation and success of this committee has significantly influenced its impactful first year. The committee would also like to thank Council Liaison Carol Day for keeping the YAC informed and updated on issues arising and resources that impact youth.

Report prepared by:

*Ekatarina Gofsky, Chair
Richmond Youth Advisory Committee*