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By Mayor Malcolm Brodie

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RICHMOND: Our Path to a Bright Future



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Richmond: Our Path to a Bright Future

On November 10, 2019, our City marked its 140th anniversary of incorporation as a vibrant, growing urban centre filled with unprecedented opportunity and possibilities. We are now well into the second year of the current City Council term and our role is ever more complex as we meet current challenges and envision a path to a bright future for Richmond.

In its first year, Council agreed on its 2018-2022 Strategic Plan to provide the focus for the term. The four-year strategy outlines eight key areas to form the framework for our approach. The eight areas are:

1. A Safe and Resilient City;
2. A Sustainable and Environmentally Conscious City;
3. One Community Together;
4. An Active and Thriving Richmond;
5. Sound Financial Management;
6. Strategic and Well-Planned Growth;
7. A supported Economic Sector; and
8. An Engaged and Informed Community.

The components of this Plan denote our major challenges and opportunities. The City of Richmond has always provided a high quality of life. We must work hard to preserve this standard far into the future and move towards our numerous goals.

Goal 1: A Safe and Resilient City

To be a safe and resilient City, Richmond needs vision along with supporting infrastructure. With strong planning and leadership in the development of partnerships and practices, City Council is safeguarding our community for this generation and the future.

Last year, City Council made a major commitment to increase our community safety complement over 3 years with an additional 51 RCMP officers, 20 municipal employees and 36 firefighters. As the first year of this Safe Community Priority Program, last year we actually introduced 19 RCMP officers and 10 municipal employees along with 12 firefighters to strengthen our existing first responder resources. More recruits for each are expected for the next two years to fulfill all commitments. This will ensure that Richmond will continue to boast one of the lowest rates of violence and property crime in the Lower Mainland as well as timely firefighter response.

Improved equipment and technology is also part of the solution to keeping us safe. For instance, along with the added personnel as mentioned, this year will see the installation of traffic intersection cameras to support enforcement.

Richmond Fire-Rescue and RCMP will now have faster access to locked multi-family and commercial buildings in case of an emergency thanks to a new smartphone app-based system. Because seconds count in an emergency, the technology uses a first responder's smart phone and electronic key application to allow immediate access into the building.

Residents will also recall the recent forest fire on the DND Lands in the midst of the City. Richmond Fire-Rescue now has a Structure Protection Unit Type II Trailer to protect against any wildfire threat. This provides wildfire protection for many previously-inaccessible areas including some homes, with over 16,000 feet of fire hose, 130 sprinklers, multiple pumps, water tanks and supporting firefighting equipment.

There are many facets to ensuring safety at the Vancouver International Airport with its annual 26 million passengers and well over 300,000 tonnes of cargo. For instance, our specialized Snow Geese Deterrence Program engages community volunteers and highly-trained dogs to keep the airport free of snow geese as their migratory path can pose a significant danger to aircraft. The birds are encouraged to relocate from Sea Island toward large tracts of land in South Richmond and Delta sown with winter cover crops specifically for migratory flocks.

This past year, much concern has been raised over the crime of money laundering. Though the jurisdiction to deal with this is mostly with senior governments, City Council took many steps, including:

1. The City no longer accepts cash payments over \$10,000 for taxes or other fees;
2. We are actively participating in an inter-governmental and private sector working group to combat money laundering through the sharing of information and strengthening of financial systems and controls;
3. The Union of BC Municipalities endorsed Richmond's suggestion that government should undertake legislative reform to make Beneficial Ownership of land and corporations across our Province more transparent; and
4. The City also sought more specialized RCMP resources to combat the problem.

In November, the Cullen Commission of Inquiry into Money Laundering came to Richmond to present and seek input on allegations of crime within our City. That session, one of five across British Columbia, attracted considerable interest.

Lacking any significant funding from senior levels of government, the City has also fully supported the Restorative Justice Program implemented in partnership with Touchstone Family Association. Last year, over 30 cases were concluded bringing together the youth offender with the victim under an agreement to hold the youth accountable. The restorative

justice program is proven to achieve beneficial results that far exceed what can be expected under the traditional criminal justice approach.

Goal 2: A Sustainable and Environmentally Conscious City

We are reminded each day that climate change poses an existential threat to the world. As a result, Richmond joined many other cities in declaring a climate emergency. This is not a substitute for action – it simply reminds us strongly of the importance of the extensive Richmond environmental programs that we have undertaken for decades. As an established local government leader in climate action, Richmond is committed to implementing practices to build a sustainable and environmentally-conscious City.

As a component of this situation, scientists predict that sea levels will rise dramatically in the next hundred years. Last year, under our Flood Protection Strategy and with assistance from the senior government, Richmond invested over \$16 million to raise the south dike between Gilbert and No. 3 Roads by 1.7 metres. For complete protection around the City many kilometers of dikes remain to be addressed.

To further protect the City from flooding by increasing pump capacity, a new multi-year program to upgrade the drainage pump stations is now underway at Horseshoe Slough, No. 2 Road South, No. 7 Road, Shell Road North, and Boundary Road in Hamilton. At the same time, the City's proactive infrastructure renewal program led to the replacement or upgrade of over 5 kilometres of water lines to keep our drinking water clean and flowing, while ensuring there is sufficient water for fire crews to protect lives. Since 2003, the installation of water meters and other water conservation programs have enabled us to decrease water usage by 11% despite an increase in population of 25%. This reduction in overall water usage has resulted in annual savings for utility ratepayers of almost \$10 million.

This past summer, City Council developed bylaws banning single-use plastics such as straws, shopping bags and foam containers. These products can leave an irreparable footprint on the environment and thus Richmond needs to be part of the solution. While we await the requisite Provincial government approval, we predict that phasing out single-use plastics will locally remove as many as 35 million items weighing 650 tonnes from the waste stream annually. Consultation has been extensive to inform businesses and enable them to accommodate the changes for these everyday items.

As Richmond City Council leads the challenge to become an even more sustainable and environmentally-conscious City, we are adopting many circular economy principles. Thus, we design our systems and communities to reduce waste while we encourage the reuse and regeneration of materials or resources. As a component, we expanded the hours and services at the popular Richmond Recycling Depot. For instance, we now accept electronics, upholstered furniture, propane tanks and butane cylinders 6 days a week. 40,000 additional users in 2019 provided an extra 400 tonnes of materials for diversion for recycling or proper disposal.

By mid-2020, the Recycling Depot will open 7 days per week to make it that much more convenient to recycle even more items. The scope of materials accepted will then be further expanded to include used motor oil, fire extinguishers and car batteries. We expect that by opening for that seventh day, the number of visits will increase by over 30,000 annually, thus providing a further 250 tonnes of materials for diversion through recycling.

Under the Community Energy and Emissions Plan, the City remains committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by up to 50% over the next decade despite growth. The City is updating the strategy that incorporates the input of over 1,000 residents involved in stakeholder consultations. Using more electric vehicles in the fleet, expanding the number of public EV chargers at community and City facilities with a fee policy for use to encourage more vehicle turnover, creating policies that require energy-efficient, low carbon developments, as well as expanding our award-winning District Energy infrastructure are only a few of the ways we are creating a cleaner City and a healthier environment. The City has already slashed greenhouse gas emissions by over 12% since 2007 and is on track toward a further reduction to 50% of the original within the next decade.

While electric vehicles grow in popularity and accessibility, heavy duty trucks and work vehicles present more challenges. In a pilot project, 14 City trucks were converted to propane last year. We also mandated conversion for our contracted waste management fleet of garbage and recycling trucks, resulting in 30% fewer fuel-related greenhouse gas emissions.

For sustainable energy, we keep extending our award-winning District Energy initiative which avoids the use of fossil fuels as it makes use of low carbon energy sources. The system currently provides energy services to 4.1 million square feet of space representing over 3,700 condominium units. While providing competitive user rates, this utility alone could reduce 44,000 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions annually when fully built in the City Centre.

Richmond is leading the way with other examples of clean energy. For instance, last year the City installed over 1,300 new LED roadway street lights to annually achieve 422 megawatt hours of electricity savings, the equivalent of powering 52 households. These are in addition to the LED traffic control signals and street signs which are increased each year.

Richmond is now recognized as the first truly “bat friendly” community in the region with our initiatives in a pollinator program that highlights the important role of bats in generating healthy plants and agriculture. In partnership with Border Free Bees and Community Bats BC, the City is creating habitats for local pollinators and has built a large ‘Bat Condo’ in Terra Nova Park. Educational bat programming is also conducted at the Richmond Nature Park.

In the agricultural sector, while we revise our long-standing Agricultural Viability Strategy, the City is developing agreements with the Richmond Food Security Society and School District No. 38 (Richmond) for the administration of 355 community garden plots on six City sites and three School District locations. The City also finalized an agreement with the Sharing Farm Society, enabling it to continue to grow fresh produce for the local Food Bank

and other charitable food distribution organizations while it delivers community and educational programs related to agriculture, environmental sustainability, food security and wellness.

The City was pleased to join forces with *FoodMesh* in launching the Richmond Food Recovery Program. Commercial food businesses are encouraged to divert from the landfill their surplus, nutritious, edible food. We expect that annually through this partnership, 225,000 kilograms of food will be diverted while 300,000 meals are created. The value of the savings are estimated at \$1.25 million.

Goal 3: One Community Together

The City of Richmond is one community – a place of resiliency, identity and belonging. With over 225,000 residents, our population continues to grow supported by extensive infrastructure and our robust business sector as well as our access to key transportation links for people, goods and services.

Our diversity makes Richmond truly unique and the impacts are visible throughout the City. Differences in cultural heritage sometimes create tensions, although such situations are rare and do not reflect who we are as a community. Over the past year, we strengthened our sense of neighbourhood and community through Canada's first municipal Cultural Harmony Plan. The Plan, as published on our website, demonstrates the City's leadership in building on its social inclusion practices. It also signifies our response to the evolving needs of Richmond's increasingly diverse population, whether the needs are for long-time residents, recent immigrants or newcomers.

Another such strategy is the Richmond Resilient Communities Program which facilitated 29 workshops right across our community last year. These sessions enabled participants to foster intercultural harmony while providing important information such as emergency safety procedures to a large portion of the community.

To mark Pride Week, the month of July saw the installation of our City's first painted rainbow crosswalk on Minoru Boulevard. This is a lasting reminder that Richmond is a City of inclusion, respect and support.

Another avenue to build community is to create a sense of belonging and foster resilience through culture, arts and heritage. Each year on July 1st, over 80,000 people of all ages and backgrounds attend the famous Steveston Salmon Festival as part of our Canada Day celebrations. This is a partnership between the City, the Richmond Agricultural & Industrial Society and the Steveston Community Society. On Labour Day weekend, Minoru Park transforms annually into a multi-cultural community-gathering place for the City's World Festival as over 60,000 people take part in this annual celebration of music, dance, art, culture and food. These and many other major events, such as the Childrens' Art Festival on Family Day, add to our economic vitality and count on numerous partnerships as well as the involvement of many committed volunteers to continue.

Richmond City Council aims to support our youth in its programs and initiatives. With suggestions made by a group of civically-aware secondary school students, Council approved the initiation of a Youth Civic Engagement Program whereby interested youth would be introduced to facets of civic governance. These programs will be offered throughout the year and will enable our youth to extend their knowledge of the City's governance process.

Goal 4: An Active and Thriving Richmond

The fact that Richmond is already among the healthiest communities in Canada is not taken for granted. As an active and thriving community, we continually strive to provide infrastructure to ensure the wellness and good health for all our residents.

The Minoru Centre for Active Living will soon open in full. In 2019, the Seniors Centre opened its doors followed by the 790 square metre Fitness Centre on New Year's Day. Memberships in the Minoru Seniors Society have increased almost 80% since the opening. We expect a heightened response when the state-of-the-art aquatic centre finally welcomes users later this year. Contractors have been hard at work to remedy the unfortunate problems encountered in the aquatics area before completion and hand-over to the City.

The 10th anniversary of the Olympic Winter Games in our City encourages all of us to consider the impact of the Games on our community, our province and our country. With the eyes of the world on our City, Richmond demonstrated that we have the vision and foresight to seize a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to create a vibrant legacy for future generations.

The Richmond Olympic Oval continues to serve an active community by providing a wide spectrum of sport and recreational programs. Thousands of active users of all ages and background regularly attend the Oval to play, participate or watch the action. The Oval serves approximately 6,000 members, almost 80% of whom are Richmond residents. It hosts over 50 events annually with the vast majority being provincial, national or international in scope. As a key venue for sport hosting in our City, Oval-held events alone resulted in over 6,000 hotel room nights. In high performance sport, the Oval serves as a training center for national teams, such as Wheelchair Rugby, Softball, Volleyball, Table Tennis, Field Hockey and Sport Climbing.

Overall, Richmond hosts over 70 major sporting events each year which attracts millions of dollars in direct economic benefits. We expect 2020 to be a very big year for such attractions. For instance, in March Richmond will play host to the largest international adult recreational hockey tournament in the world – the 2020 Canadian Adult Recreational Hockey Association (CARHA) World Cup. This Canadian event held every four years is called by many the “*Olympic Games of Recreational Hockey*” as it features a minimum of 140 teams from 15 nations around the world as diverse as Slovenia, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, England and Finland. We expect all the participants will enjoy Richmond's hospitality and our offerings.

As an active and thriving community, we encourage participation in recreational and organized sports at all ages and all levels. This September, Richmond will play host to the largest gathering of athletes aged 55 and over as they attend the BC 55+ Games at venues throughout our City. Once known as the BC Seniors Games, this multi-sport event attracts over 4,000 participants from across the Province who take part in 32 competitions ranging from golf, soccer and tennis, to lawn bowling, curling and pickleball. Richmond is blessed with many high quality venues which we look forward to showcasing to our guests from September 15 to 19.

Together with our partners, Richmond supports many other facilities that encourage us to be an active and thriving community. These include:

1. Minoru Park will soon be home to a new tennis bubble, in addition to the recently-installed brightly coloured new running track. Originally constructed in the early 1960s, the Clement Track is one of the few running tracks in the Lower Mainland to meet International Association of Athletics Federations (IAAF) specifications for competition-level meets.
2. Also in Minoru Park, designs are underway for the 2021 completion of the new Lawn Bowling Clubhouse to replace the current Clubhouse which is over 50 years old. A large multi-purpose space in the building will accommodate other community groups. Also in the Park, work is well underway to convert the former Minoru Place Activity Centre to community arts programming uses. For the enjoyment of all, the Minoru Lakes are also set for renewal this year.
3. As part of a large mixed-use complex, a new Community Centre in north Richmond on Capstan Way and No. 3 Road is planned. It will include a gymnasium and indoor walking track, along with a variety of multi-purpose spaces to provide our residents with opportunities to be physically active and socially connected.
4. The project to replace the artificial turf fields at Hugh Boyd Park is now complete. With an area of 24,000 square metres, this is one of the largest single artificial turf fields in Canada and is home to countless soccer games for players of all ages and skill levels.
5. After many years of discussion and contemplation, City Council approved the Steveston Community Centre and Branch Library program. Site selection and concept designs are among the challenges for 2020. Affordable housing and a potential transit exchange are envisioned for the vacant lot on the south side of Moncton Street, opposite the current Community Centre building.

Everyone is overwhelmed by the sense of community spirit and giving that exists in Richmond. Last year, our "*I Can Help*" volunteer program connected almost 1,800 Richmond volunteers to about 650 volunteer opportunities, generating over 77,000 volunteer hours. This is only a small portion of the total volunteer commitment in our community. We are very fortunate to have so many volunteers who are generous in giving their time for the benefit of others.

As an active and thriving community, we go beyond physical activity and human connections. Richmond provides support for many who might sometimes struggle, whether because they are new to our community or dealing with personal and economic challenges. An example was provided in 2019 when the City funded our first Mental Health Car to create a unique partnership between the RCMP and Vancouver Coastal Health. To respond to and diffuse challenging situations, an RCMP officer is paired with a trained mental health professional. This inter-agency approach should positively impact our community by enabling people in distress to connect with the care they need without necessarily involving law enforcement.

To avoid encouraging unhealthy lifestyles, particularly for our youth, Richmond became the first City in the region to develop and implement an advertising ban on vaping and related products on City property and City-maintained infrastructure. City Council has advocated for the Province to consider a more general ban on such advertising as they have done for tobacco products. The Province is considering this approach along with general regulations for vaping products.

Goal 5: Sound Financial Management

Maintaining a sound financial position requires discipline, accountability, responsible decision-making and vision.

Through strong leadership practices over the years, our City and its residents are well-positioned for the financial challenges and opportunities that lie ahead. Relative to other cities in Metro Vancouver, our residential and business property taxes are reasonable. When one considers our favourable location near other major cities in the region, the border and highway connections, a deep-sea port and the presence of the international airport, Richmond provides a healthy economy and enviable levels of municipal services for families.

For 2020, our budgeted tax increase is higher than usual because of our significant commitment to community safety and the need to continually add to our reserves. With those reserves, Richmond will minimize the necessity of borrowing in the future to build new facilities. Amounts are added to reserves each year under our Long-Term Financial Management Strategy.

After decades of using the facility under a lease, City Council recently acquired the Richmond Ice Centre, a 155,000 square foot multi-rink facility situated on over 3.0 strategically-located hectares in the Riverport area. The purchase of this facility with its heavy year-round use is another major investment in civic infrastructure for recreation.

Goal 6: Strategic and Well-Planned Growth

As Richmond is growing rapidly in population and infrastructure, we want to preserve our tradition of fostering strong, connected communities that build a sense of pride, family and belonging.

Last year, City staff issued building permits for over \$980 million in construction. The largest mixed-use projects promise to further change the City Centre, while residential densification also continues on the arterial roads. According to the Homebuilders Association, Richmond is one of the few Metro Vancouver cities to exceed its annual net new home housing target.

Families in the City are supported in many ways. For instance, the City is expanding our cycling networks to provide alternate transportation options. In 2019, over 3.0 kilometres of bike lanes were added, including the multi-use pathway on No. 2 Road from Steveston Highway to Dyke Road. This year, a further 3.8 kilometres of construction is expected throughout Richmond, including a multi-use pathway on the south side of Steveston Highway from Shell Road to Mortfield Gate. Design work will be undertaken this year for construction in 2021 on a number of sections including:

- Steveston Highway – from Mortfield Gate to Railway Avenue; and
- No.2 Road – from Steveston Highway to Williams Road.

After securing the funds through development in the area, the City has now paid Translink \$29 million to provide for construction of the new Capstan Village Canada Line station, scheduled for completion in 2–3 years. Long-envisioned as an addition to rapid transit, the station will support the rapidly-growing Capstan Village community to further ensure the City's vitality. This station is one factor which necessitates this year's expected 35% expansion of capacity on the Canada Line.

Another aspect of our strategic and well-planned growth is to ensure an adequate supply of housing for people of all ages and income levels. We assist in providing for a brighter future for residents in need. For instance:

1. The City works with the development community to ensure an increased supply of affordable rental housing. In 2019, the City's program secured housing agreements for 179 new affordable housing units for low and moderate income Richmond households. The program also secured over \$2.4 million cash-in-lieu contributions to be applied towards future affordable housing options.
2. During the past year in the Ironwood area, the City opened a 36-bed emergency shelter for men and women because our smaller shelter for men and the temporary cold weather shelter both closed. The need for this resource grows each year.
3. 2019 also saw the opening of the 40 unit temporary supportive housing facility on Alderbridge Way. Social support services are offered on-site and in the area to local residents who have no home and will use this accommodation to provide a foundation to improve their quality of life. This temporary supportive housing

supports the Provincial government's "Rapid Response to Homelessness" strategy and our own Richmond "Homelessness Strategy" approved by Council in late 2019. A permanent site for this facility is being sought.

Goal 7: A Supported Economic Sector

Richmond has traditionally featured a strong business sector with one of the highest job-to-worker ratios in the region. The majority of the jobs are in sectors linked to the City's location as a gateway for people and goods movement, such as transportation, warehousing and logistics, manufacturing, wholesale and tourism.

Tourism remains an increasingly strong driver for the local economy, with our hotels experiencing occupancy rates among the highest in Canada. The City's partnerships with Tourism Richmond and the Richmond Hotel Association supports this sector with opportunities such as the Richmond Discovery Shuttle that last summer connected thousands of visitors to Richmond's key tourist attractions such as the Feast Asian Dining Festival, the colourful Richmond Night Market, the Richmond Olympic Oval, Britannia Heritage Shipyards and the Gulf of Georgia Cannery.

Activities resulting from the legalization of cannabis for recreational use have taken constant attention from City Council in the past year. While the retail sale of cannabis is not allowed in Richmond, City Council also restricted the growing of cannabis in buildings on farmland such as greenhouses. This was followed by the outline of policies to generally limit the growing of cannabis on land in the Agricultural Land Reserve in addition to important recommendations being made to Metro Vancouver for odour control.

Our filming sector continues to thrive. The number of 2019 filming days in locations like Steveston Village, Britannia Heritage Shipyards, Minoru Park and City Hall doubled over the previous year. Providing 300 jobs each once they open in Richmond are two privately-owned and operated film studios geared to productions by major networks and streaming services.

As a staple of our local economy throughout the history of the City, Richmond continues to be an ardent advocate for agriculture as we inspire the farming and agricultural cultures of tomorrow. "*Farming First*", an update of our Agricultural Viability Strategy, will elevate agriculture to a new level through policies that examine investment in this industry and identify opportunities to attract people to farming. Our Food Security and Agricultural Advisory Committee brings together local farmers, interested partners at Kwantlen Polytechnic University and local food security advocates to promote opportunities for agriculture in the 21st century.

Agreements with the City have enabled Kwantlen Polytechnic University to operate components of the Richmond Farm School and the Department of Sustainable Agriculture and Food Systems university degree programs on City-owned land. These programs provide agricultural training and programs on the Garden City Lands among others.

The City also supports business leaders and the innovators of tomorrow through the Young Entrepreneurship Leadership Launchpad, a registered Canadian charity founded by three local entrepreneurs interested in developing leadership, business and entrepreneurial skills. For the past six years, the City of Richmond has organized a tour for secondary school students to visit local businesses to learn about the necessary ingredients to be a market leader and innovator.

Goal 8: An Engaged and Informed Community

A safe and resilient City is one whose residents and businesses are engaged and provide input on future direction. Constantly seeking opportunities for public engagement connects civic government with the community. Reaching out to those who live or work in Richmond helps us to fundamentally improve our decision-making and better meet the needs.

With over 20 public engagement projects this past year, the City sought input on aspects ranging from single-use plastics and sustainability to cultural harmony and our Farming First strategy. The *LetsTalkRichmond* platform continues to connect and engage the City with people of all backgrounds from across our community on a diverse range of topics.

Annually, we now experience over two million visits to the City's website, while our Facebook and Twitter platforms see double-digit increases in followers and engagement. Almost half the online users access information via mobile devices rather than computers. This confirms how technologies – and lives – are changing.

Engagement, of course, involves much more than just using the internet. Council is committed to ensuring our residents and stakeholders gain important information in a timely, accurate and accessible manner through a variety of methods. There are many examples, including:

1. Community Bylaws launched an educational campaign with multi-residential strata corporations to raise awareness of outstanding issues. As a result, some strata corporations have now incorporated City bylaws into individual strata bylaws. Others have become more proactive by assisting in bylaw enforcement, including reporting illegal short term rentals or animal control-related offences such as unlicensed or aggressive dogs; and
2. The public, particularly youth, are also actively engaged through the City's Public Works Annual Open House and Project WET initiatives. Over 5,000 residents attended the 2019 Open House at the Public Works Yard, while hundreds of elementary school students attended Project WET. Through these programs, residents learn how the City's water, sewer and drainage infrastructure, environmental programs and other City services impact daily lives. This Open House was recognized for its excellent community engagement with the Public Works Association of BC's *Public Works Week Community Celebration* award.

The Year Ahead

Working productively with other levels of government enabled Richmond to lead in many areas last year. At the annual Union of BC Municipalities conference, the City received the UBCM Community Excellence Award in Governance for our 2017-2022 Child Care Needs Assessment and Strategy. This was one of the many awards the City received in 2019 for its work, such as our first-of-a-kind Electric Vehicle infrastructure, our District Energy Utility, our financial reporting, and the Storeys affordable housing partnership.

Like 2019, I expect that 2020 will be full of activity. Look for some of City Council's initiatives to include:

1. As ride-hailing companies like Uber, Lyft and Kabu received the go-ahead to start business, local government has been well-organized to soon finalize the mechanisms for this service. Central to ride-hailing will be permanent local bylaws as well as an inter-municipal business license to facilitate pick-up and drop-offs in multiple jurisdictions. We need to ensure fairness between the taxi industry and the ride-hailing companies.
2. The Provincial government should settle the issue of the appropriate replacement structure for the Massey Tunnel so the project can proceed. While there has been controversy over the appropriate structure, City Council has unanimously advocated for a new tunnel which is supported by the vast majority of the Metro Vancouver Directors.
3. Though the provision of a new hospital tower is exclusively a Provincial government responsibility, our local community has been generous in pledging its financial support. Richmond hopes that 2020 will record the final commitment from the Province for the new tower to replace the existing facility which is obsolete and inadequate for the future needs of our growing community.
4. With the start-up of a new industry based on the legalization of recreational marijuana, City Council will continue to define and refine the expectations for its production and distribution. Senior levels of government need to recognize that because local government is bearing the cost of enforcement, funds need to be allocated to cities for this purpose.
5. To accommodate the anticipated growth over the coming decades, we expect to consider more major projects in the City Centre. One of the largest expected to be introduced in 2020 will be the plan for the phased re-development of the 20 hectare Lansdowne Centre site.
6. In addition to other facilities, 2020 should soon see the opening of the Community Police Office across from the fire hall at Granville Avenue and Gilbert Road. This will improve the deployment of resources as well as police response times.

7. 81 more childcare spaces in the Bridgeport area will open this year with the City's 10th licensed childcare facility.

Conclusion

Richmond City Council's strategic plan provides a visionary agenda for the direction we wish to take. It reflects Council's desire to provide proactive and forward-thinking leadership that recognizes our unique identity and rich history. Our future success will depend in part on how well City Council develops partnerships in the public and private sectors while working with fully-engaged residents and businesses.

Our many civic achievements during 2019 and expectations for the future will continue to improve the lives and affairs of our residents and businesses. The City of Richmond has always been a leader with bold, innovative programs and strategies as we build a safe and resilient City for generations to come.

Each member of Richmond City Council looks forward to another year of success and to working with all who live or work in our City.

