

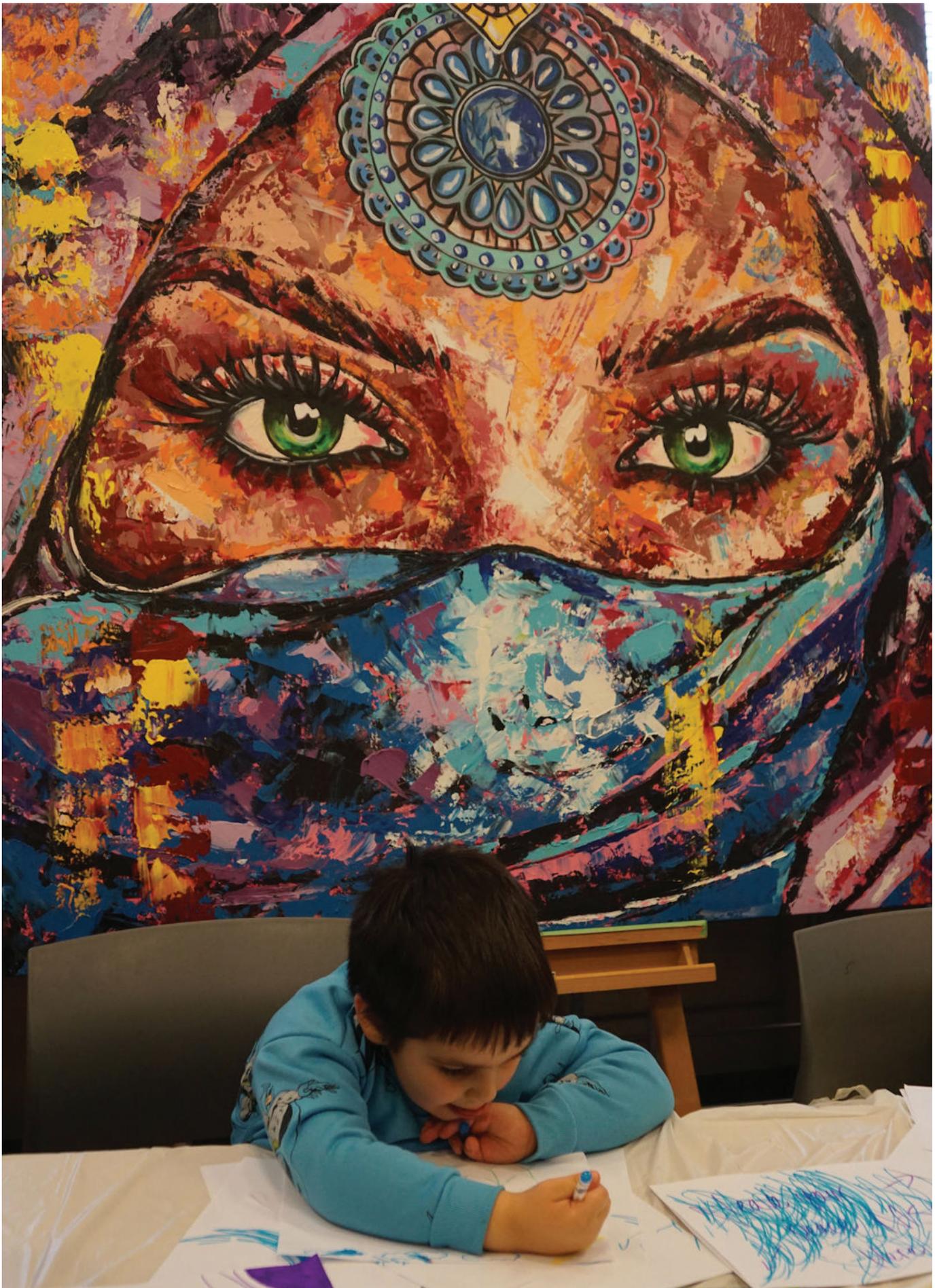


CITY OF RICHMOND  
**2019–2029 Cultural Harmony Plan**  
2022–2023 UPDATE



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Islamic Art Experience at the Richmond Public Library.

# INTRODUCTION

Since its adoption in November 2019, the *2019-2029 Cultural Harmony Plan* has guided the City's approach to fostering and enhancing intercultural connections among Richmond's diverse communities through policy development, program and service delivery, community engagement and inter-governmental relations. As Richmond continues to attract newcomers from all over the world, there is an ongoing need to ensure that it remains a welcoming and inclusive city where everyone is able to participate in all aspects of community life. Over the past two years, there has been significant progress in addressing the actions outlined in the Plan. The *Cultural Harmony Plan 2022-2023 Update* provides a high-level summary of the achievements the City, in partnership with the community, has accomplished in 2022 and 2023.

The 2021 Census, released in 2022, shows how Richmond's population has evolved into one of the most diverse cities in Canada, with over 60 per cent of its residents born outside of the country and 80 per cent identifying as racialized. Richmond continues to receive immigrants from all over the world and was the 4th largest recipient of recent immigrants to British Columbia in 2021. In the last two years, the city has welcomed increased numbers of people from countries impacted by war, including those affected by the current conflict in Ukraine. Due to its proximity to the Vancouver International Airport, many Ukrainian arrivals stay in Richmond during their first days in Greater Vancouver. The City continues to work with settlement service agencies to respond to the unique needs and challenges of new arrivals in Richmond and provide access to programs and services in the community.

Newcomers to Richmond continue to face challenges related to employment and income. Despite often a higher level of educational attainment, they face higher unemployment rates and earn less income than the Canadian-born population. The City continues to monitor policies that impact the labour force participation of newcomers in Richmond. In 2023, the Government of British Columbia passed the *International Credential Recognitions Act*, which seeks to increase fairness and transparency in the credential recognition process. It will require 18 regulatory bodies to remove barriers in 29 professions and make it easier for qualified professionals to seek credential recognition regardless of where they were trained. The Act will also eliminate the requirement of Canadian work experience prior to being accredited in Canada.

Mental Health Research Canada's 2023 report, *Examining the Mental Health Experiences of Newcomers*, found that newcomers to Canada report significantly higher levels of anxiety and depression in comparison to Canadian-born residents. Challenges related to housing, food insecurity, and meaningful employment are cited as the top sources of anxiety for newcomers, and poor mental health is often exacerbated by barriers such as cost and language constraints that prevent access to social and mental health supports. In addition, the City's *2023 Community Services Community Needs Assessment Study* found that Richmond residents who are not primary English or Mandarin speakers reported less usage

of the City's programs, services and facilities and that recent immigrants are seeking more opportunities to meet new people, engage with their neighbours and learn about the community. The findings in these reports, in addition to the data presented in the 2021 Census, highlight the unique challenges faced by newcomers and the need to reduce barriers to their participation in the community. It also presents an opportunity for the City to play an important role in providing targeted supports for newcomers within its mandate. In the last two years, the City has continued to partner with Community Associations and Societies to provide programs that allow newcomers to make meaningful social connections with others in the community. It has created a dedicated webpage for newcomers, featuring resources such as the *Newcomers Video Series* and *Newcomer's Guide to Richmond*, both of which are available in multiple languages and provide important information on how to access resources in the city. The City website now has a translation tool offering a selection of 58 languages to allow users to access City information in their preferred languages. In 2024, the City will once again offer the Newcomers Tour program, working with immigrant-serving agencies to bring newcomers to City Hall and other City facilities in order to increase their knowledge of civic and community resources.

To ensure the safety of Richmond's diverse population, the City also works in partnership with the RCMP to monitor and respond to hate-motivated incidents towards newcomers, racialized and equity-deserving groups. In 2023, there were a total of 25 hate crimes and incidents reported in Richmond from a previous high of 45 incidents in 2021 during the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic. While the total number of reported incidents pointed towards a downward trend, representing a 26 per cent decrease from 2022 and a 44 per cent decrease from 2021, the City recognizes there is still work that needs to be done to prevent incidents of racism and hate in the community. In 2023, the City endorsed the 'Richmond Community Protocol: Responding to Racism and Hate,' a resource designed to help organizations, residents, and community members respond to hate crimes and racist incidents and created an Anti-Racism webpage highlighting community-based resources and initiatives that address racism.

Despite the progress made in the last two years, newcomers continue to face challenges. Guided by the *2019-2029 Cultural Harmony Plan*, the City remains committed to work with community members, Community Associations and Societies, and key partners to strengthen intercultural connections among the city's diverse communities, provide City programs and services that address their needs, and remove barriers to participation so that Richmond community members can participate in all aspects of community life.

# ABOUT THE PLAN

The 2019–2029 *Cultural Harmony Plan* was adopted by City Council on November 25, 2019 to support its vision, “that Richmond residents recognize and respect diversity in the community and enable each individual’s contributions in all aspects of community life.” Developed in collaboration with community members, Community Associations and Societies, and key partners, the Plan outlines five strategic directions to enhance cultural harmony in Richmond. The five strategic directions are:

1. Intercultural Connections
2. Collaboration and Partnerships
3. Targeted Training and Professional Development
4. Communication and Community Engagement
5. Programs and Services

Under the five strategic directions, the *Cultural Harmony Plan* identifies 27 recommended actions with associated timelines and priorities to be completed over the ten-year time frame. The Plan, along with the previous update, is available on the City’s website at: [richmond.ca/CulturalHarmony](http://richmond.ca/CulturalHarmony).



# RICHMOND'S POPULATION PROFILE

Since the last *Cultural Harmony Plan 2019-2021 Update* was published, Statistics Canada has released the results of the 2021 Census of Population, which contains new and useful information on Richmond's demographics. This will help the City and its partners understand the needs and challenges faced by different groups and communities, and inform the City's planning and approach to cultural harmony in the coming years.

## Immigration to Richmond

Richmond's population is estimated at 230,584<sup>1</sup> in 2023. From 2016 to 2021, Richmond's population increased by 5 per cent. In the last two decades Richmond experienced a significant growth in its population mainly due to immigration. Between 2001 and 2021, Richmond's immigrant population rose by 37,300, accounting for 85 per cent of the total increase. Richmond has consistently maintained a larger share of immigrants compared to Greater Vancouver and almost all other Canadian municipalities<sup>2</sup>. Figure 1 highlights the population and immigration trends in Richmond and Greater Vancouver from 2001 to 2021.

*Figure 1: Population and Immigration Trends for Richmond and Greater Vancouver (2001-2021)*

	Richmond			Greater Vancouver		
	Total Population	Immigrant Population	% of Total Immigrant Population	Total Population	Immigrant Population	% of Total Immigrant Population
<b>2021</b>	208,400	125,600	60.3%	2,607,010	1,089,185	41.8%
<b>2016</b>	198,309	118,305	60.2%	2,463,431	989,540	40.8%
<b>2011</b>	190,473	112,875	59.6%	2,313,328	913,310	40.0%
<b>2006</b>	174,461	99,660	57.1%	2,116,581	831,265	39.6%
<b>2001</b>	164,345	88,300	53.7%	1,986,965	738,550	37.5%

Source: NewToBC Immigrant Demographic Profile 2023

In 2021, Richmond was the 4<sup>th</sup> largest recipient of recent immigrants<sup>3</sup> to British Columbia after Vancouver, Surrey and Burnaby. In addition, China, Philippines and India are the top three sources of recent immigrants to Richmond and the Greater Vancouver. However, in Richmond, China accounts for a much bigger proportion with 52% compared to 19% in Greater Vancouver. Figure 2 highlights the top places of birth for recent immigrants in Richmond and Greater Vancouver.

<sup>1</sup> This figure is based on Metro Vancouver Regional Growth Strategy Projections.

<sup>2</sup> NewToBC Immigrant Demographic Profiles 2023

<sup>3</sup> Recent immigrant refers to a person who obtained landed immigrant or permanent resident status in the five years preceding a given census. In the 2021 Census, this refers to the period from January 1, 2016 to May 11, 2021. In comparison, immigrant refers to a person who is, or who has ever been, a landed immigrant or permanent resident. Such a person has been granted the right to live in Canada permanently by immigration authorities. In the 2021 Census, this includes immigrants who were admitted to Canada on or before May 1, 2021.

Figure 2: Top Places of Birth for Richmond and Greater Vancouver (2021)

Richmond				Greater Vancouver				
Total Immigrants		Percentage	Recent Immigrants		Percentage	Recent Immigrants		Percentage
China	46,490	37%	China	7,090	52%	India	30,545	20%
Hong Kong	24,335	19%	Philippines	1,580	12%	China	28,970	19%
Philippines	13,570	11%	India	955	7%	Philippines	15,090	10%
Taiwan	7,745	6%	Hong Kong	820	6%	Korea, South	6,125	4%
India	5,380	4%	Taiwan	365	3%	Iran	5,615	4%
United Kingdom	2,210	2%	United States	275	2%	United States	5,460	4%
United States	1,605	1%	Korea, South	215	2%	Brazil	4,625	3%
Vietnam	1,510	1%	Brazil	195	1%	United Kingdom	4,555	3%
Korea, South	1,230	1%	Syria	125	1%	Syria	3,380	2%
Pakistan	995	1%	Iran	120	1%	Mexico	2,460	2%
Other Places	20,530	16%	Other Places	1,965	14%	Other Places	47,995	29%

Source: NewToBC Immigrant Demographic Profile 2023

## Ethnicity

There were over 150 different ethnic origins<sup>4</sup> and 100 languages spoken in Richmond in 2021. The most commonly reported ethnic origin was Chinese with 47 per cent of the population, followed by Filipino with 7 per cent, and English with 5 percent. The ten most common ethnic origins are highlighted below in Figure 3.

Figure 3: Top Ethnic Origins for Richmond and Greater Vancouver (2021)

Richmond		Greater Vancouver	
Chinese	99,780	Chinese	475,160
Filipino	15,905	English	365,150
English	12,185	Scottish	281,420
Hong Konger	9,760	Irish	235,970
Scottish	9,750	Indian	213,795
Indian	9,330	German	184,145
Canadian	8,280	Canadian	174,095
Irish	7,720	Filipino	141,230
Taiwanese	6,715	French	108,315
German	6,305	Italian	83,200

Source: Statistics Canada

<sup>4</sup> Statistics Canada defines ethnic origin as the “ethnic or cultural origins of the person’s ancestors.” A person’s ancestors are usually more distant than grandparents. A person can have more than one ethnic origin.

In 2021, 80 per cent of Richmond’s population identified as racialized<sup>5</sup>, which gives Richmond the distinction of having the highest proportion of racialized groups of any municipality in British Columbia. The predominant racialized group in Richmond in 2021 is Chinese at 67 per cent followed by South Asian and Filipino at nine percent each. Figure 4 highlights the top racialized groups in Richmond and Greater Vancouver.

*Figure 4: Top Racialized Groups for Richmond and Greater Vancouver (2021)*

Richmond		Greater Vancouver	
Chinese	113,060	Chinese	512,260
South Asian	15,370	South Asian	369,290
Filipino	15,130	Filipino	142,125
Japanese	3,885	Korean	63,465
Southeast Asian	3,305	West Asian	64,640
Arab	2,205	Southeast Asian	56,815
Latin American	2,155	Latin American	51,500
Korean	2,035	Black	41,180
Black	1,775	Japanese	31,195
West Asian	1,670	Arab	22,440
<b>Total racialized population</b>	<b>167,395</b>	<b>Total racialized population</b>	<b>1,420,270</b>

Source: Statistics Canada

<sup>5</sup> The concept of “racialized group” is based on the visible minority variable in the Canadian census. The Employment Equity Act defines visible minorities as “persons, other than Aboriginal peoples, who are non-Caucasian in race or non-white in colour.” The racialized population consists mainly of the following groups: South Asian, Chinese, Black, Filipino, Arab, Latin American, Southeast Asian, West Asian, Korean and Japanese.

## Indigenous Population

A total of 1,540 people in Richmond reported Indigenous identity<sup>6</sup> in 2021, which accounted for 0.7 per cent of the total population. Of this total, 58 per cent identified as First Nations, 36 per cent as Métis, and less than one per cent as Inuit. In Greater Vancouver, a total of 63,340 people reported Indigenous identity, which accounted for 2 per cent of the population: 58 per cent identified as First Nations, 36 per cent Métis and less than one per cent as Inuit. Richmond's Indigenous population accounted for 2.4 per cent of the total of Indigenous population in Greater Vancouver.

## Religious Affiliation

A little over half (52%) of Richmond's immigrant population reported no religious affiliation. For the recent immigrant population, this proportion increased to 60 per cent, which was significantly higher than the 38 per cent reported by recent immigrants in Greater Vancouver. In 2021, 23 per cent of recent immigrants identified as Christian, followed by Muslim at 6 per cent and Buddhist and Hindu at 4 per cent each. See Figure 5 for a breakdown of the religious affiliation of immigrants in Richmond and Greater Vancouver.

*Figure 5: Religious Affiliation in Richmond and Greater Vancouver (2021)*

	Richmond		Greater Vancouver
	Total Immigrants	Recent Immigrants	Recent Immigrants
<b>Buddhist</b>	8%	4%	3%
<b>Christian</b>	31%	23%	30%
<b>Hindu</b>	1%	4%	8%
<b>Jewish</b>	1%	1%	1%
<b>Muslim</b>	4%	6%	10%
<b>Sikh</b>	3%	2%	11%
<b>Other religions and spiritual traditions</b>	1%	1%	1%
<b>No religion and secular perspectives</b>	52%	60%	38%

Source: NewToBC Immigrant Demographic Profile 2023

<sup>6</sup> Indigenous identity refers to whether the person identified with the Indigenous peoples of Canada. This includes those who identify as First Nations (North American Indian), Métis and/or Inuk (Inuit), and/or those who report being Registered or Treaty Indians (that is, registered under the Indian Act of Canada), and/or those who have membership in a First Nation or Indian band.

## Language

In 2021, 69 per cent of recent immigrants to Richmond spoke languages other than English or French at home. This was a decrease from 74 per cent in 2016, suggesting that Richmond has welcomed more recent immigrants with official language (English and French) skills. Mandarin and Cantonese remained the most common languages spoken at home for recent immigrants with half of them speaking Mandarin and Cantonese at home. The top non-official home languages spoken in Richmond and Greater Vancouver are highlighted in Figure 6.

Figure 6: Top Non-official Home Languages Spoken for Richmond and Greater Vancouver (2021)

Richmond						Greater Vancouver		
Total Immigrants		%	Recent Immigrants		%	Recent Immigrants		%
Cantonese	32,000	25%	Mandarin	5,510	40%	Mandarin	21,675	14%
Mandarin	29,405	23%	Cantonese	1,245	9%	Punjabi	13,095	8%
Tagalog	4,270	3%	Tagalog	710	5%	Tagalog	6,160	4%
Punjabi	2,365	2%	Arabic	200	1%	Korean	4,515	3%
Russian	1,265	1%	Punjabi	175	1%	Cantonese	4,180	3%
Min Nan	1,200	1%	Portuguese	170	1%	Iranian (Persian)	4,105	3%
Japanese	820	1%	Spanish	150	1%	Arabic	3,670	2%
Spanish	780	1%	Korean	130	1%	Spanish	3,505	2%
Korean	725	1%	Hindi	115	1%	Portuguese	3,335	2%
Arabic	660	1%	Russian	100	1%	Hindi	2,510	2%
Other Non-Official Languages	6,075	5%	Other Non-Official Languages	935	7%	Other Non-Official Languages	19,865	13%

Source: NewToBC Immigrant Demographic Profile 2023

Overall, English as a mother tongue in Richmond is on the decline from 44 per cent in 2001 to 31 per cent in 2021. Cantonese (25%) remained the most common mother tongue for Richmond residents, followed by Mandarin (23%), Tagalog (3%), and Punjabi (2%). Figure 7 highlights the trends by the percentage of the population with English as their mother tongue for Richmond and Greater Vancouver.

*Figure 7: Language Trends with English Only as a Mother Tongue for Richmond and Greater Vancouver (2021)*

Richmond		Greater Vancouver
	Percentage	Percentage
2021	31.0%	51.0%
2016	33.1%	54.0%
2011	36.6%	56.0%
2006	38.6%	56.7%
2001	44.4%	60.2%

Source: Statistics Canada

In 2021, 21 per cent of recent immigrants to Richmond frequently spoke languages other than English or French at work compared to 10 per cent of recent immigrants in Greater Vancouver. Between 2016 and 2021, there was a significant decrease in the proportion of recent immigrants in both Richmond and Greater Vancouver who reported frequently speaking non-official languages at work, which suggests that recent immigrants to Richmond may have higher proficiency in official languages in comparison to previous years. See Figure 8 for the top non-official languages spoken at work by immigrants in Richmond and Greater Vancouver.

*Figure 8: Top Non-official Languages Spoken Most Often at Work in Richmond and Greater Vancouver (2021)*

Richmond				Greater Vancouver	
Total Immigrants		Recent Immigrants		Recent Immigrants	
Mandarin	10%	Mandarin	16%	Mandarin	4%
Cantonese	7%	Cantonese	4%	Punjabi	2%
Japanese	.3%	Punjabi	.5%	Cantonese	1%

Source: NewToBC Immigrant Demographic Profile 2023

## Education

In 2021, 59.4 per cent of recent immigrants held a bachelor's degree or higher. This was 12 percent higher than the proportion among all immigrants and 23 per cent higher than Canadian-born residents. Since 2016, Richmond saw a significant increase in its proportion of college and university-educated immigrants. In 2016, 50.6 per cent of Richmond's recent immigrants held a bachelor's degree or higher, compared to 43.2 per cent for all immigrants and 35.5 per cent for its Canadian-born population. See Figure 9 for the education comparisons for immigrants and Canadian-born residents in Richmond and Greater Vancouver.

*Figure 9: Highest Level of Education for Recent Immigrants, Total Immigrants and Canadian Born in Richmond and Greater Vancouver (2021)*

	Richmond			Greater Vancouver		
	Canadian Born	Total Immigrants	Recent Immigrants	Canadian Born	Total Immigrants	Recent Immigrants
University Certificate, diploma or degree at bachelor level or above	36.9%	47.9%	59.4%	35.7%	47.8%	63.4%
College, CEGEP or other non-university certificate or diploma	24.4%	19.9%	20.1%	24.5%	19.4%	15.6%
Apprenticeship or trades certificate or diploma	6.3%	3.3%	2.4%	8.1%	4.2%	2.7%
Secondary (high) school diploma or equivalency certificate	27.4%	22.3%	14.5%	26.2%	20.5%	13.4%

Source: NewToBC Immigrant Demographic Profile 2023

## Labour Force Participation

Despite a higher level of educational attainment, 12.1 per cent of recent immigrants were unemployed, slightly higher than the total immigrant population (11.2%) and the Canadian-born population (9.9%). The COVID-19 pandemic resulted in an increase in the unemployment rate for Richmond's labour force, regardless of immigration status, compared to the 2016 Census. In 2016, the unemployment rates for recent immigrants, total immigrants and Canadian-born residents were 9.9 per cent, 6.0 per cent, and 5.6 per cent, respectively. Figure 10 shows the labour market participation rates for residents aged 15 years and over in Richmond and Greater Vancouver.

*Figure 10: Labour Force Participation Rates in Richmond and Greater Vancouver (2021)*

	Richmond			Greater Vancouver		
	Canadian Born	Total Immigrants	Recent Immigrants	Canadian Born	Total Immigrants	Recent Immigrants
<b>Population aged 15 years and over</b>	48,760	122,045	11,940	1,035,580	1,053,850	135,165
<b>In the labour force</b>	31,515	71,040	8,170	708,255	655,110	101,265
<b>Participation rate</b>	64.6%	58.2%	68.4%	68.4%	62.2%	74.9%
<b>Employment rate</b>	58.2%	51.7%	60.1%	62.8%	56.5%	68.1%
<b>Unemployment rate</b>	9.9%	11.2%	12.1%	8.2%	9.0%	9.1%

Source: NewToBC Immigrant Demographic Profile 2023

## Income

Census 2021 showed a significant increase in income for all groups in Richmond, particularly recent immigrants. Recent immigrants saw their median income double from \$15,834 in 2015 to \$31,600 in 2020. The median employment income of recent immigrants who worked full-time and year-round was \$49,600 in 2020, reflecting a 34 per cent increase from 2015. In addition, the proportion of full-time, year-round recent immigrant workers increased from 16 per cent in 2015 to 28 per cent in 2020. However, despite the increase, the median income of recent immigrants was still 24 per cent less than Canadian-born residents, and the median income of recent immigrants working full time was 28 per cent less than Canadian-born residents.

The significant increase in total income<sup>7</sup> for all groups could be partly due to the replacement benefits received during the COVID-19 pandemic. The reference period for income data for the 2021 Census is the calendar year 2020, which coincided with the COVID-19 pandemic. At the onset of the pandemic, in response to shutdowns and job losses, the government provided financial support to employees and self-employed Canadians who had lost their job or were working fewer hours through a number of replacement benefits, such as the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) and the Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB). These benefits were directed at offsetting the decreases on employment income.

In general, immigrants in Richmond continue to face higher rates of low income in comparison to Canadian-born residents. In 2020, 22.5 per cent of recent immigrants and 18 per cent of all immigrants were classified as low-income compared to 8.9 per cent among Canadian-born residents.

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<sup>7</sup> Total Income refers to the sum of certain incomes, including employment income, cash income such as child support payments and scholarships, investment income, or income from government sources.

# HIGHLIGHTED ACHIEVEMENTS

## 1 Strategic Direction #1: Intercultural Connections

Richmond is one of the most vibrant and multicultural communities in Canada. While cross-cultural differences are inevitable, creating the conditions for intentional connections and intercultural exchanges can lead to more acceptance and stronger relationships among people of diverse backgrounds. The City's role in fostering intercultural connections includes recognizing and celebrating Richmond's diverse cultures and unique heritage, identifying and recognizing community champions who improve positive relations among people of diverse backgrounds, and supporting programs and events that promote intercultural understanding. The City is committed to promoting intercultural connections and fostering a sense of shared community among Richmond's diverse population.

### Highlighted Achievements

- In 2022, the City recognized Mary Wilson with the Richmond Arts Award for Cultural Leadership for her contributions to the city's cultural development. Mary Wilson organized the first annual Richmond Black History Month celebration in 2016 and continues to showcase the stories, talents and achievements of the city's vibrant Black community every year. She promotes intercultural understanding by improving the awareness and acceptance of Black Canadians and their legacies, as well as their contributions to Richmond's culture and community.
- In 2022, Richmond Museum & Heritage Services conducted a records update and inventory list of Indigenous belongings in its collections in order to provide access to these items to local Indigenous groups. In support of the Canadian Museums Association's *Moved to Action: Activating UNDRIP in Canadian Museums, A Response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Call to Action #67* initiative, the list will be provided to local Indigenous groups upon request in 2024.
- To commemorate the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation on September 30, the Survivors' Flag was displayed at City Hall for the first time in 2023 to honour residential school Survivors and all the lives and communities impacted by the residential school system. The City is committed to advance Truth and Reconciliation in Richmond and has reviewed the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's *94 Calls to Action* and identified opportunities for Richmond to work towards reconciliation.



The Survivors' Flag displayed at Richmond City Hall.

- In 2022 and 2023, the Richmond Public Library, in partnership with the Community Arts Council of Richmond, Islamic Art of British Columbia, and the Welcome Ramadan, Celebrate Eid Organizing Committee, presented the *Islamic Art Experience*, which allowed children and adults to experience the rich and varied Islamic art forms from around the world, fostering cross-cultural exchange among all faiths and cultures. The event, which welcomes over hundreds of visitors each year, also highlighted new artists and performers from the local Muslim community in British Columbia.
- Doors Open Richmond is an annual event that celebrates cultural diversity and raises civic awareness by offering a look inside places of worship, cultural centres, local businesses, museums and heritage sites. For the first time in 2023, the City partnered with Richmond Multicultural Community Services to offer a public art bus tour for newcomers as part of the Doors Open event, engaging new Richmond residents in the city's diverse arts and culture.
- Throughout 2022 and 2023, the Richmond Public Library offered 24 programs that explored Indigenous themes and highlighted Indigenous strength and resilience. In 2023, a powerful and inspiring Indigenous Author Series showcased eight Indigenous authors, artists and illustrators and provided Richmond residents with opportunities for cultural learning, reflection and understanding ahead of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.
- In 2023, the City installed two interpretive signs at King George Park honouring the history of the Sikh community in Richmond and acknowledging the Komagata Maru incident of 1914 which played a pivotal role in the future of Canadian immigration policy. The signs were created in consultation with representatives of the Descendants of the Komagata Maru Society, the India Cultural Centre of Canada (Gurdwara Nanak Niwas) and Nanaksar Gurdwara Gursikh Temple.



Islamic Art Experience at the Richmond Public Library.

## 2

## Strategic Direction #2: Collaboration and Partnerships

Richmond has a strong network of Community Associations and Societies, community service organizations and ethno-cultural and faith-based community groups that play a critical role in meeting the needs of different communities in Richmond. The City continues to participate in joint planning with key partners to increase awareness of current issues, identify gaps in services, and collaborate on shared initiatives such as addressing racism and hate in the community. The City also continues to pursue funding opportunities provided by senior levels of government regarding multiculturalism and anti-racism initiatives and participate in networks that aim to build inclusive communities.

### Highlighted Achievements

- In 2022, the City and Richmond Multicultural Community Services, in partnership with Minoru Seniors Society and City Centre Community Association, were awarded \$92,000 from the Department of Canadian Heritage's Community Support, Multiculturalism and Anti-Racism Initiatives program to bring diverse and multi-generational community members together to engage in dialogue through the arts, reduce barriers to participation in community life, and increase community capacity to address racism and discrimination. The project's final culmination was *Mosaic Firefly: Richmond Edition*, a "guided play" theatrical performance focused on the personal migration stories of Richmond youth and seniors held at the Richmond Cultural Centre Performance Hall on October 15 and 27, 2023.
- In 2022, the City and Richmond RCMP launched a call-to-action for victims and witnesses to report racially motivated incidents directly to the police as they occur, in order to ensure that Richmond continues to be a safe and welcoming community. Richmond RCMP pledged that all reported incidents involving hate-motivated undertones would receive full attention and oversight.
- In 2023, the City became an Employer Partner of the *Canadian Centre for Diversity and Inclusion*, joining a growing network of over 700 organizations across Canada, including over 50 municipalities, that share resources on diversity, equity and inclusion and work towards building inclusive societies.
- In 2023, the City endorsed the *Richmond Community Protocol: Responding to Racism and Hate*, a resource designed to help organizations and community members react promptly and effectively whenever critical incidents of racism, hate crime or hate incidents occur. In addition, the City's website features a new Anti-Racism page that highlights the City's involvement in anti-racism work and resources for community members to respond to incidents of racism and hate.



Mosaic Firefly performance at the Richmond Cultural Centre.

## 3 Strategic Direction #3: Targeted Training and Professional Development



2023 Diversity Symposium speakers.

The City is committed to being a learning organization that equips staff, volunteers and community partners with the knowledge and skills to serve Richmond's increasingly diverse communities. The City recognizes that a workforce that is able to communicate effectively and build meaningful connections with people from various backgrounds contributes to a welcoming and inclusive city. The City also continues to work with key partners and immigrant-serving agencies to help newcomers access volunteer and employment opportunities so they can participate meaningfully in the community.

### Highlighted Achievements

- The City continues to offer the annual Diversity Symposium, a virtual and week-long conference for professionals, volunteers and community members interested in advancing diversity, equity and inclusion in their communities. Over the past two years, the City has broadened the reach of the Diversity Symposium across Canada, attracting professionals and volunteers from outside the Lower Mainland who were interested in learning best practices in diversity and inclusion. Workshop topics in 2022 and 2023 included anti-racism response training, equity in the digital age, and anti-oppression principles in program design.
- In 2022, an online Anti-Indigenous Racism Circle workshop was available to City staff to explore their understanding of anti-Indigenous racism and work towards reconciling relationships within the workplace and community.
- In 2023, the Richmond Public Library partnered with diverse cultural, ethnic and faith organizations to help reduce employment barriers faced by newcomers and equity-deserving groups through targeted employment outreach and skills development programs. One example is the Library's partnership with the Richmond Women's Resource Centre to deliver English classes for newcomer women, helping them improve English literacy skills and build community connections. A total of 129 English classes were offered, supporting over 1,500 women in Richmond.

## 4 Strategic Direction #4: Communication and Community Engagement

Community engagement is an important part in promoting cultural harmony because it allows Richmond residents, regardless of their length of time in Canada, to have a say on issues that concern them. With over 100 languages spoken by Richmond residents, the City is committed to improving language access to City information and raising awareness of supports and services available in the community. In the past two years, the City has actively engaged with harder-to-reach groups and sought to reduce barriers to participation by providing multilingual translation and interpretation services, as well as other services. The City continues to provide viable options for newcomers and multilingual communities to access City-related information through the use of different communication methods so that all Richmond residents, regardless of cultural background or language ability, are able to access key City information and meaningfully participate in the community.

### Highlighted Achievements

- The Richmond Arts Centre developed a Visual Accessibility Guide for users to navigate the physical space of the Arts Centre building. The guide includes images and simple information regarding common areas, studios, busy periods, accessibility features and washrooms, enhancing accessibility for all users regardless of their experience, knowledge or language skills.
- In 2022, the City launched the *Newcomers Video Series*, which featured five videos showcasing newcomer stories, the many ways that newcomers can experience Richmond, and the resources available to those newly settled in Richmond. The video series complements the *Newcomer's Guide to Richmond* (2020) and is available with English, Simplified and Traditional Chinese, Farsi, Arabic, Ukrainian, Punjabi, and Korean captions to ensure that City-related information is accessible to Richmond residents of diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds.
- In 2023, as part of the City's website redesign, a translation tool was integrated into the website offering a selection of 58 languages, many of them commonly spoken within the community, allowing users to access City content in their preferred languages.
- The 2023 Edition of the *Access Richmond Guide* was released in English, Traditional and Simplified Chinese. The guide was developed in collaboration with community service organizations, Richmond Public Library, Richmond School District and provincial government agencies, and highlighted a range of City and community resources that support individuals and families living in Richmond. The purpose of the guide is to reduce barriers that vulnerable populations, including newcomers, immigrants and refugees, may experience when accessing services by increasing awareness of the types of supports and resources available.



Richmond residents featured in the Newcomers Video Series.

## 5 Strategic Direction #5: Programs and Services



Building Connections through Physical Activity for Newcomers 55+ program at the Minoru Centre for Active Living.

Programs and services that reflect the needs and priorities of Richmond’s diverse population promote a sense of well-being and belonging. They also bring people of diverse backgrounds together and allow intercultural exchange and connections to take place. The City partners with immigrant-serving agencies and cultural organizations to provide culturally appropriate and accessible programs and services that allow Richmond’s diverse communities to participate in social, recreational and cultural activities. The City also continues to develop and implement tools that allow staff and volunteers to ensure the equitable participation of Richmond community members in all aspects of community life.

### Highlighted Achievements

- In 2022, the Richmond Public Library introduced an Inter-Faith Prayer and Meditation space at the Brighthouse branch in response to requests from library users for a quiet and introspective space to pray or meditate.
- In 2023, Minoru Seniors Society partnered with S.U.C.C.E.S.S. to offer the *Building Connections through Physical Activity for Newcomers 55+* program to remove barriers and increase physical activity and sport participation and retention for equity-deserving groups. Every week for a month, a different group of 55+ new immigrants, volunteers and staff translators from S.U.C.C.E.S.S. participated in a free field trip to Minoru Centre for Active Living, which included a guided facility tour, lunch and social, and a specialized 55+ fitness class. A total of 48 Japanese, Cantonese, Mandarin and Ukrainian speaking seniors attended the program.
- In 2023, the City developed an Equity Lens Toolkit to support recreation staff in promoting equitable access to community recreation facilities, programs and services. The toolkit includes an Equity Lens for Recreation Reflective Guide, Resource List, and Evaluation Plan to assist staff with identifying actions and initiatives that foster equity and inclusion.
- In 2023, the Richmond Public Library’s Brighthouse branch hosted a Human Library® event where readers can borrow human beings serving as open books and have conversations they would not normally have access to. These conversations provided a safe space for dialogue where topics were discussed openly between human books and their readers, and challenged stigma and stereotypes, as well as bridged differences across social, cultural and religious divides. Nine human books and 26 readers participated in 50 reading sessions.

# CONCLUSION

The 2019-2029 *Cultural Harmony Plan* demonstrates the City's ongoing commitment to achieve its vision "that Richmond residents recognize and respect diversity in the community and enable each individual's contributions in all aspects of community life." As outlined in this update, the City has made notable strides over the past two years in fostering cultural harmony in the community. The City, in partnership with Richmond Multicultural Community Services, brought together multi-cultural and multi-generational community members through an anti-racism art project that increases community capacity to address racism and discrimination. The City also endorsed the *Richmond Community Protocol* to help organizations and community members respond effectively to incidents of racism and hate. In 2023, the City displayed the Survivors' Flag at City Hall for the first time on the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation to honour Survivors of residential schools, as well as their families and communities. These initiatives demonstrate the various ways the City can play a role in building a welcoming and inclusive Richmond.

As Richmond's population continues to grow and as the city welcomes more immigrants from all over the world, it is imperative that the unique characteristics, interests and needs of various segments of the population be recognized and addressed, and that City policies, programs and services be reflective of the needs and priorities of Richmond's diverse communities. The City will continue to work closely and collaboratively with community partners to strengthen intercultural connections among Richmond residents, provide programs and services that address the needs of the city's diverse population, and remove barriers to participation for Richmond community members. As the City continues to implement actions outlined in the Plan, it will also continue to monitor trends and emerging developments related to cultural harmony so that it can adapt its approach to the changing needs of Richmond community members and fulfill its mandate of building a city that values and celebrates its diversity.





## City of Richmond

6911 No. 3 Road, Richmond, BC V6Y 2C1

Telephone: 604-276-4000

[www.richmond.ca](http://www.richmond.ca)