

2019 Provincial Library Grant Report – Richmond Public Library

INTRODUCTION

Richmond Public Library acknowledges the Libraries Branch at the Ministry of Education for the provincial support we receive, allowing us to deliver on our mandate of providing essential resources for the education and empowerment of our community members. Serving all our residents with a focus on families, youth, seniors, new Canadians, job seekers and the tech-curious, and ensuring that they have the educational and literacy tools to thrive, will guarantee a brighter future not only for our community but for our province as well. We work collaboratively with other libraries and community partners to leverage shared resources and offer high quality services. By providing excellent print and digital resources as well as cutting edge technologies, and facilitating community building and collaborative learning, the library continues to provide value to support the changing needs of our community. Richmond Public Library appreciates the continued support from the Libraries Branch to realize these goals and is proud to support the Provincial Strategic Plan – *Inspiring Libraries, Connecting Communities: a vision for public library service in BC*.

DESCRIPTION OF RICHMOND

Richmond is a unique and ethnically diverse community with a large immigrant population, many of whom place a very high value on education and learning. Many people who come to settle in Richmond are interested in starting a local business, expanding their current business, or exploring development opportunities in Richmond. Transformed from a rural community to an international city, Richmond continues to develop its downtown core and waterfront areas. Even with the rapid changes Richmond has seen, the community continues to place a high priority on protecting the natural environment and preserving its heritage.

RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY: THE COMMUNITY HUB

Richmond Public Library is a leader in offering creative, customer-driven and customer-led services for residents of all ages. Our focus is on providing innovative opportunities for lifelong learning, and easy access to services. Library members can enjoy books, eBooks, digital resources, movies, downloadable newspapers, magazines and music at our four branches and from our two book dispensers, seven days a week. We have a comprehensive suite of digital tools and services available and interested members can request free one-on-one training. With a broad range of programs for all ages, reading lounges and collaborative study space for students, Richmond Public Library is one of the city's busiest community facilities, welcoming over 4,000 people to our library branches daily! The library's commitment to diversity is strong, and we are a recognized leader in the area of community-based services for immigrants, in particular, the large Asian community.

DEMOGRAPHICS OF RICHMOND

As a dynamic, multi-ethnic community with a current (2019) estimated population of 224,889 ¹, Richmond is a thriving urban centre. According to the National Household Survey from Statistics Canada (2016), 75% of Richmond's population is of Asian origin ². Newcomers have contributed significantly to the diversity and vibrancy of the City of Richmond.

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¹ City of Richmond, Population Hot Facts

https://www.richmond.ca/_shared/assets/Population_Hot_Facts6248.pdf

² Statistics Canada, National Household Survey for Richmond, BC

<https://www12.statcan.gc.ca/census-recensement/2016/dp-pd/prof/details/page.cfm?Lang=E&Geo1=CSD&Code1=5915015&Geo2=PR&Code2=59&SearchText=Richmond&SearchType=Begins&SearchPR=01&B1=Ethnic%20origin&TABID=1&type=0>

CHALLENGES FACED BY RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY AND OUR COMMUNITY

The biggest challenges the library faces are:

- refocusing traditional library services and collections to meet the needs of 21st century users;
- keeping up with library users' increasing digital needs;
- transforming the library into a learning hub as well as providing a creative space for collaborative learning and teaching;
- meeting library users' increasing demands for study and work spaces;
- ensuring that the library remains a community gathering place;
- meeting the multicultural needs of our diverse community;
- all while preserving the fundamental value of literacy.

STRATEGIC PLAN

Following the 2018 Public Consultation, the library created a three-year Strategic Plan. Based on the information our community provided to us in 2018, a strategic vision for library services in Richmond emerged around **five Strategic Goals** that the library aims to meet. The implementation of the 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan is now underway.

The library's success is being measured as it relates to the five new strategic goals: Community, Marketing, Resources, Core Services and Space. More information about library's new vision and mission statement, plus the priorities related to each of the five strategic goals in the 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan can be viewed at http://rpl.yourlibrary.ca/account/about_rpl/strategic_plan

RICHMOND PUBLIC LIBRARY'S 2019 – 2021 STRATEGIC GOALS

1. Community – Build and Grow our Community

- Ensure every child has a library card
- Respond to community needs
- Reach out to vulnerable populations
- Engage our volunteers

2. Core Services – Expand Access to Programs, Services and Collections

- Grow collections with our community
- Lead in technology access and education
- Enhance library experiences
- Take the library to where the community gathers

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3. Resources – Develop and Leverage our Resources

- Invest in staff
- Broaden and deepen civic relations
- Explore options for revenue generation
- Establish new metrics for measuring impact

4. Marketing – Communicate Who We Are and What We Do

- Develop our brand
- Deliver meaningful information
- Help customers find their way
- Maximize promotional opportunities

5. Space – Reimagine Space for our Community

- Understand evolving needs
- Optimize use of existing space
- Investigate innovative options
- Partner to realize new opportunities

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PROGRESS MADE IN 2019

2019 was the first year of the library's new three-year Strategic Plan.

The library implemented and achieved several key initiatives and programs that enhanced, improved or expanded on the programs, services and collections that we offer to the community of Richmond.

1. The library introduced a new adult summer reading program, centred on the book *The Life of Pi*. This program featured an online forum, providing opportunities for Richmond readers to engage with readers in two cities in China, as well as in-branch activities and an event with the internationally recognized, award-winning author Yann Martel.
2. The library supported the Truth and Reconciliation *94 Calls to Action* by offering a six-month series of hands-on, interactive and engaging public workshops, led by local Musqueam First Nations artists and by founding the Richmond Indigenous Collaborative Table. The library is also expanding its Indigenous collections.
3. The library is committed to ensuring that every child in Richmond has a library card, and worked directly with schools to offer Grade 1 and Grade 8 students and their families the opportunity to register for a card through their school.
4. The library is exploring ways to collect more meaningful data to truly measure the impact of library programs qualitatively and quantitatively.

These programs and initiatives are in direct support of the four Government strategies identified in *Inspiring Libraries, Connecting Communities*.

Library Board Chair Robin Leung notes that the library is well on its way to implementing the strategic goals as outlined in the library's 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan.

"In 2019, we made tremendous progress in achieving on some key initiatives that the community asked for," says Leung. "With innovative new programming, new partnerships and a commitment to listening to our community, we are well on our way to delivering what our community asked for through the 2018 public consultation. Visit us soon to see how you too can learn and connect at the library!"

PROVINCIAL STRATEGY 1

1. **Fostering Connected Communities:** advancing access to information and resources.

Library programs and / or services that align with this strategy:

Library Goal that supports Provincial Strategy # 1:

Richmond Public Library's goal of Building and Growing our Community aligns to this Provincial Strategy.

LIBRARY INITIATIVE: SUMMER READING FOR ADULTS WITH ONE BOOK, THREE CITIES

While the 2019 program is complete, this initiative is ongoing as preparations are underway to expand the program in 2020 and beyond.

Public library programs are accessible and promote literacy. In an increasingly digital world, the library aims to bridge the divide between traditional library readers and those committed to eBooks and other digital reading services.

In partnership with the City of Richmond's Sister City Advisory Committee, in 2019, the library introduced One Book, Three Cities as its overarching adult summer reading program, centering around the popular book **The Life of Pi** by Yann Martel. This program offered a unique twist on a traditional book club, connecting Richmond readers to readers in China via an online discussion forum moderated by library staff and the Sister Cities Advisory Committee that included opportunities to interact with author Yann Martel, as well as in-person adult book clubs and special events. A highlight of the program was the author event at the library's main Brighthouse branch which had over **140 registrants**.

One Book, Three Cities inspired significant interest in an award-winning work. Over the summer, **1,120 copies** of the book circulated and **388 adults** participated in the online forum and library events.

"It's nice to have the opportunity to meet you virtually through this activity... Thank you for answering my question online, and teaching me how to write a successful novel."

The author event, combined with the online forum participation, demonstrated that there is high interest in community reading programming featuring well known authors and online discussion.

The library is pleased to continue working with the Sister Cities Advisory Committee to expand the program to five cities in 2020. The selection process is underway for the 2020 book and the library looks forward to sharing more information about the 2020 programs in the coming months.

Partnerships that support this strategy:

- The Sister Cities Advisory Committee collaborated with library staff as well as with their counterpart Advisory Committees in Xiamen and Qingdao, China, and contributed financial support to the programs held at Richmond Public Library.
- The library collaborated with the communities of Xiamen and Qingdao, China to bring readers together to discuss and enjoy the book **The Life of Pi**, despite being separated geographically.

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- Penguin Random House Publishers facilitated the author visit with Yann Martel and Indigo Books promoted and supported the author event with copies of Yann’s book available for purchase.

Positive outcomes of this initiative:

- One Book, Three Cities offered Richmond residents a way to interact online with residents in Xiamen and Qingdao, China in a safe, fun and engaging way.
- One Book, Three Cities provided Richmond residents with the opportunity to connect with an award-winning author at an event where they could learn from his experiences, ask questions and interact face-to-face.

PROVINCIAL STRATEGY 2

2. Building Capacity: enabling inspiration and innovation.

Library programs and / or services that align with this strategy:

Library Goal that supports Provincial Strategy # 2:

Richmond Public Library's goals of Building and Growing our Community and Expanding Access to Programs, Services and Collections align to this Provincial Strategy.

LIBRARY INITIATIVE: MUSQUEAM ARTIST WORKSHOPS AND OTHER STEPS IN RESPONSE TO CALLS TO ACTION

The Musqueam Artist Workshops are complete and, based on their success, the library is scheduling a new series entitled Musqueam Siem-In-Residence in 2020, featuring Musqueam heads of households. Collection development is also ongoing.

The report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) in Canada contains *94 Calls to Action*. As an educational institution, Richmond Public Library is committed to the process of reconciliation and recognizes its integral role in terms of supporting the introduction of dialogue and conversation to citizens and newcomers.

In 2019, Richmond Public Library took a number of steps to respond to the *94 Calls to Action*. As outlined in the library's Indigenous Services Draft Plan, the library is not only increasing collections and programming that have Indian Residential Schools as a topic, but is building stronger relationships with Indigenous peoples in a way that supports education and reconciliation more broadly.

- From January to June 2019, the library partnered with the City of Richmond Public Art to offer a series of hands-on, interactive and engaging public workshops and presentations, led by local Musqueam artists.
- The library also created new collections to responsibly represent Indigenous culture, history and issues. This includes the creation of special learning kits that support inquiry-based learning about specific Indigenous people groups; increasing the findability of Indigenous perspectives materials in our library catalogue; and the creation of a permanent Indigenous perspectives displays in both adult and children's areas.
- Finally, the library, working with Musqueam Band representatives, City of Richmond, School District 38 and various non-profit organizations, founded the Richmond Indigenous Collaborative Table. The purpose of this Table is to build relationships with Indigenous communities while integrating Indigenous arts, artists, cultural and heritage practices into the activities of Richmond-based community amenities and programs.

The high demand workshops quickly filled to capacity, demonstrating the significant community interest in Indigenous-inspired programming. The artist series culminated with a Celebration of Musqueam Expression, featuring a display of original works by the artists and traditional Indigenous music and food.

"Enjoyed the workshop...Indigenous culture needs to be recognized in our community. Looking forward to similar programming from the RPL."

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In 2020, the library is building on the interest shown by the community in Indigenous-inspired programming and is inviting local Musqueam Siems to lead a series of talks with the community, sharing stories of their history, culture and personal experiences. Funding for this new programming is being provided by the Friends of Richmond Library.

Partnerships that support this strategy:

- The library partnered with the City of Richmond Public Art to offer the Musqueam Artist workshops.
- The library developed relationships with local Musqueam First Nation members and continues to foster those relationships.
- The library partners with Musqueam Band representatives, City of Richmond, School District 38 and various non-profit organizations to discuss future opportunities for collaboration.
- The library will partner with the Friends of the Richmond Library to offer the Musqueam Siem-In-Residence series.

Positive outcomes of this initiative:

The library is actively taking steps to respond to the *94 Calls to Action*:

- Introducing the community to Indigenous cultures and perspectives, and providing hands-on opportunities to explore traditional Indigenous art forms while interacting with local artists.
- Expanding its collections of Indigenous materials to offer a more diverse range of books and kits to educate and inform the community.

PROVINCIAL STRATEGY 3

3. Working Together: creating lasting and sustainable partnerships.

Library Goal that supports Strategy # 3:

Richmond Public Library's goals of Building and Growing our Community and Expanding Access to Programs, Services and Collections align to this Provincial Strategy.

Library programs and / or services that align with this priority:

LIBRARY INITIATIVE: ENSURING EVERY CHILD HAS A LIBRARY CARD WITH THE LAUNCH OF THE INSPIRE CURIOSITY CAMPAIGN

This initiative is ongoing for the three-year duration of the library's 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan.

Committed to a partnership with Richmond School District 38 (SD38), and in support of the library's strategic priority of ensuring that every child in Richmond has a library card, the library kicked off a card enrollment campaign in January 2019. The first phase of the Inspire Curiosity campaign encouraged all Grade 1 and Grade 8 students and their families in SD38 to sign up for a free library card.

This campaign is being offered in direct partnership with SD38, and is an excellent example of creating new opportunities for collaboration. Each student received a letter and application form offering a simple and convenient way to sign up for a library card for their child directly through their school. Card applications are processed by library staff and returned to the school for distribution. As part of the distribution process, classes are invited to visit any of the library's four branches, or have library staff visit their school.

During this campaign, **close to 900 Grade 1 and Grade 8 students** signed up for library cards in 2019.

The second phase of the campaign will include Grade 4 students and will expand to include private and non-traditional school students in 2020. This campaign will run annually through 2021, reaching all Grade 1, 4 and 8 students in Richmond.

Partnerships that support this strategy:

- The library partnered with Richmond School District 38 to connect with students and their families to provide a simple and convenient way to apply for a free library card.
- The library is partnering with private and non-traditional schools to connect with their students and families to provide the same access to applying for a library card as was offered in 2019 to the public schools.
- SD38 invited library staff into the schools and arranged for library tours to introduce students to the many programs and services available at the library.

Positive outcomes of this program:

- The library reaches Richmond students and their families who are not currently library card holders and educates them on the many library resources, programs and services available.
- The library strengthens its existing relationships with Richmond School District 38.

PROVINCIAL STRATEGY 4

4. Sustaining Our Success: enhancing governance and demonstrating impact.

Library Goal that supports Strategy # 4:

Richmond Public Library's goal of Developing and Leveraging our Resources aligns to this Provincial Strategy.

Library programs and / or services that align with this strategy:

LIBRARY INITIATIVE: CREATING AN IN-HOUSE DATA COLLECTION TOOLS TO ENHANCE PROGRAM PLANNING AND EXPLORING SYNERGIES WITH THE CITY OF RICHMOND

This initiative is ongoing as the library is continuously looking at ways to enhance its metrics.

Currently, the majority of the library's measures are quantitative: circulation, visits, and program attendance and participation. This data provides valuable information but is limited in its ability to provide greater insight into the value of a program experienced by participants, or tangible feedback about what was learned at that program that could be used to influence and shape future library programs.

Library staff created an in-house, online collection tool that captures, collates and aggregates impact-based program feedback data. This tool was used to collect feedback from participants in most adult programs offered at the library in 2019. The questions asked on the program evaluation form were carefully structured to collect data about the impact of the program, such as what the participant learned and how they foresee using that information.

The data on each submitted program evaluation form is reviewed by programming staff during the data entry process, which assists them with program planning, and the tool generates aggregated reports that offer summary data about program value, program expectations and if participant outcomes were achieved, in addition to the usual demographic data.

In 2019, out of **337 forms completed** by seniors participating in library programs, **334 participants** indicated they learned new information or skills at the program they attended, and **227 participants** indicated they would tell friends and family about library programs after attending.

Moving forward and building on conversations in 2019, the library is also collaborating with City of Richmond staff to explore possible synergies with metrics and reporting. The City is looking to implement an overarching conceptual framework to link measurement of all plans and strategies. By exploring outcome evaluation mechanisms and working with the City to align to a broad impact-based framework using shared language, the library would be better equipped to extract and transform data collection into stories of impact.

Partnerships that support this strategy:

- The library is partnering with the City of Richmond to explore synergies with regards to how performance measures are tracked.

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Positive outcomes of this initiative:

- The library leveraged in-house skills to create a way to obtain more valuable data from participants in its adult programs.
- The library looks to benefit from synergies with the City of Richmond that will lead to greater tracking of measures that truly represent the value of library programs as reported by program participants.

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SUMMARY

2019 was the first year of the library's three-year Strategic Plan. Throughout the past year, we achieved and celebrated many new initiatives and programs that were in direct support of the five Strategic Goals as outlined in our 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan.

Our primary focus in 2020 will be continuing to execute on our work plans in support of the five goals in our new 2019 – 2021 Strategic Plan, in the areas of community, marketing, resources, core services and space. Moving to a three-year plan has allowed the library to be more agile and will enable the library to more quickly leverage the input of our members to meet the ever-changing and growing needs of the community.

The library is building on the success of the One Book, Three Cities program by expanding to five cities and introducing a new book for 2020.

The library is supporting the Truth and Reconciliation *94 Calls to Action* with the introduction of Indigenous Siem-in-Residence workshops featuring local respected Musqueam Siems.

The library is expanding its Inspire Curiosity campaign to include Grade 4 students and to reach students in private and non-traditional schools.

The library is exploring a possible new synergy with the City of Richmond whereby metrics collection can be standardized under a broad, shared data collection tool.