



Richmond PRC Newsletter

Spring 2014

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And more!

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Affordable housing gets go-ahead

There are plenty of subsidized rental housing units on the way for vulnerable individuals, families and seniors following recent approval of financial contributions totalling \$19.8 million by the City of Richmond as part of an affordable housing strategy.

For instance, construction is already underway for the Kiwanis Senior Citizens Housing Society development at 6251 Minoru Blvd., which will see two 15-storey towers built by spring 2015 adding 296 units of affordable rental housing for seniors.

Then there is another city-owned project in the planning stages, dubbed the KFC lands, at 8111 Granville Ave./8080 Anderson Road that will offer approximately 129 affordable rental units and programmed community amenity space.

A joint initiative between the city and BC Housing, Atira Women's Resource Society, Coast Mental Health, S.U.C.C.E.S.S. Affordable Housing Society, Tikva Housing Society and Turning Point Housing Society, Richmond Mayor Malcom Brodie said in a news release that the respective groups will work together to ensure basic rents will not exceed \$850 per month.

For more information on these projects and others, visit www.richmond.ca/plandev/socialplan/housing/strategy.htm.

Rental Connect upcoming workshops: Tenant-Landlord Relations

Richmond Caring Place (7000 Minoru Blvd. Room 345/50)

- Tue, May 13 from 7 to 9 p.m.
- Wed. July 16 from 7 to 9 p.m.
- Tue. Sept. 16 from 7 to 9 p.m.

Doors open at 6:30. Email info@richmondrentalconnect.ca or call 604-205-5700 to register.

Richmond Poverty Response Newsletter

Homelessness and mental illness

While homelessness has stayed a constant in Richmond for a long time, Rajan Paul, supervisor at the Salvation Army Richmond House men's emergency shelter for the past 24 years, says he has noticed a shifting pattern among his clients.

"There has been a trend towards mental illness," says Paul. "When I started working, the men coming here were mostly guys from back east, people deported from the States. There were husbands whose wives had kicked them out."

Now, out of 10 people currently staying at the shelter, six have "severe" mental illness, often stemming from childhood, which he says renders them unable to do hold a job or maintain relationships.

"I often ask 'How did you end up where you are?' and it always comes back to abuse, or drugs, things like that."

He estimates there is a success rate of less than one per cent for clients passing through the shelter to get out of homelessness. The majority are "circuit workers," or people that start out on Vancouver Island and frequent every shelter in the Lower Mainland before moving onto Alberta. Then, they make their way back west and start all over again.

Paul says things are only getting worse, citing a lack of responsibility on the government's part.

"The big issue here is the government has no idea how to stop this problem. It's a really, really difficult problem that should have been dealt with decades ago, properly," — Benjamin Yong, Richmond PRC



PRC Poverty fast facts

- Full-time employment in the province dropped from 1,814,100 in October 2013 to 1,802,700 in February 2014.
- B.C.'s child poverty rate is 18.6 per cent — the highest in Canada and 5.3 per cent above the national average.
- One out of five kids in B.C. (153,000) lives below Statistic Canada's low-income cutoff.
- B.C. has Canada's most unequal distribution of income among rich and poor families with children: the richest 10 per cent have 12.6 times the income of the poorest 10 per cent.
- In 2010, in Metro Vancouver, over three in five senior women had a total income of less than \$25,000.
- There were 58 homeless seniors living in Metro Vancouver in 2011.

Upcoming events in 2014

Here are some important dates to mark on your calendar:

April: National Volunteer Month

May: Child Care Month

June 2 to 8: Seniors Week

October: Women's History Month

Oct. 16: World Food Day

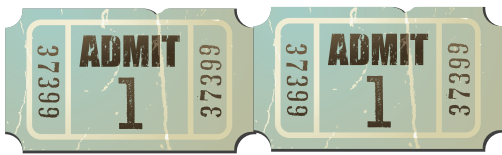
Oct. 17: International Day for the Eradication of Poverty

Nov. 20: National Child Day (release of annual Child Poverty Report)

Nov. 22: National Housing Day

PRC Facebook contest

Have you checked out our Facebook page (www.facebook.com/RichmondPRC) lately? To raise awareness about poverty and to spread our message to as many people as possible, we are running a Facebook contest From April 7 to April 21 where two winners will be selected to win a \$75 gift card to Future Shop, or a pair of passes to the VanDusen Botanical Garden!



There is a currently post on our Facebook wall asking the question: "What do you think the biggest myth surrounding poverty in Richmond is" To enter, simply LIKE both Richmond Poverty Response Committee AND the post and then give your best answer in a few short words. If you need some help, have a look over at www.bcpovertyreduction.ca — hint, the fact sheet under the Toolkit section has a lot of good info! Check back on our page or our website (www.richmondprc.org) on April 22 where we will announce the winners. Good luck!



Richmond Food Security Society name game

The Richmond Food Security Society (RFSS), a non-profit organization dedicated to creating fair and sustainable food systems that support the community's well-being, is looking for a new name.

If you can think of a moniker that better communicates the organization, represents Richmond's diversity, and inspires the community to get involved, go to

www.richmondfoodsecurity.org/2014/rfss-renaming-contest and send along your idea by April 30.

The new name will be picked by the board of directors at the RFSS annual general meeting in May 2014. One lucky winner will receive a \$100 gift certificate to Nirvana Organics! Other prizes will be available. All those who enter will be notified of the results and invited for a tour of the Terra Nova Rural Gardens in June 2014.

Transportation Task Force update

The Transportation Task Force is compiling a report on Richmond's progress towards the transportation goals of the Official Community Plan, and will present the report at a panel discussion in Spring/Summer 2014.

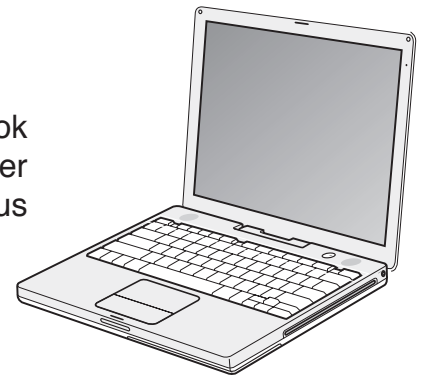
We are also organizing an all-day workshop on the possibility of free public transit and what it would mean for our transportation system. The workshop is expected to be held in Autumn 2014.

The Transportation Task Force continues to advocate the City of Richmond and Translink for better transportation options for low-income Richmond residents. If you are interested in helping us achieve its goal of a better, more sustainable transportation system for all, please contact info@richmondprc.org. — Alex Nixon, Transportation Task Force co-chair



Richmond free computer access listing

If you need to type up a resume or send an email (or enter our Facebook contest — see inside page), numerous places in Richmond offer free computer and Internet access. Know of any others missing from this list? Please email us at info@richmondprc.org and we'll add it to the directory!



Richmond Public Library:

- Brighthouse Branch (100-7700 Minoru Gate, 604-231-6413)
- Cambie Branch (150-11590 Cambie Rd., 604-273-2223)
- Ironwood Branch (11688 Steveston Hwy., 604-231-6468)
- Steveston Branch (4111 Moncton St., 604-274-2012)

Richmond Women's Resource Centre (110-7000 Minoru Blvd., 604-279-7060)

Richmond Centre for Disability (100-5671 No. 3 Rd., 604-232-2404)

St. Alban Anglican Church Drop-in Centre (7260 St. Albans Rd., 604-278-2770)

Avia Employment Services (290-3631 No. 3 Rd., 778-732-0285/110-6651 Elmbridge Way, 778-732--0290)



.... a coalition of Richmond residents and agencies working together to reduce poverty and the impacts of poverty with research, projects and public education.

The Richmond Poverty Response Committee has a strong track record of identifying gaps in services to the poor in our community, and partnering with suitable agencies to implement effective solutions. We have many ongoing and new projects that need your support.

VOLUNTEER: The RPRC welcomes the participation of all members of the community. There are regular meetings on the first Thursday of each month at 4:30 p.m. at the Richmond Caring Place. We also always need help at events, doing outreach, and putting together our newsletters.

DONATE: As a non-profit organization, the RPRC depends upon generous donors like you. Your tax-deductible gift will help support our research, education, and projects.

To get involved: Phone: 604.205.4700 or email info@richmondprc.org.

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