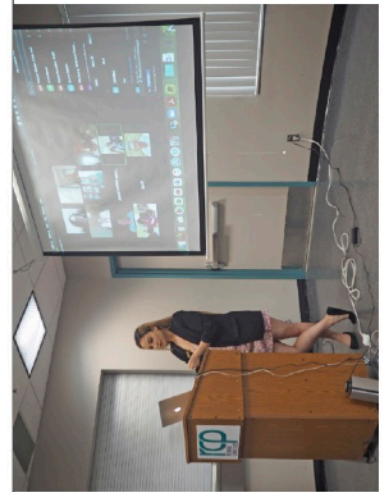




RASC participants and others at Volunteers are Stars awards ceremony

Richmond Advocacy & Support Committee (RASC) participants completed over 50 hours of skills development as well as 109 personal interviews during the Vision Zero Project



Athena Estremadura makes a presentation concerning RASC at the 2022 AGM



Achievements:

- AGM 2022 - Bylaw amendment approved by members to align with charitable status within income tax act
- Recognized as Canadian charity - June 2022
- City of Richmond Community Poverty Reduction and Prevention Table formed and RPRC is member of the steering committee

Accomplishments achieved through:

- 1 AGM
- 10 board meetings
- 8 network meetings
- 5 housing committee meetings
- Renters' roundtable
- Housing panel discussion



Participants in the June 2022 AGM, both in person and on Zoom

Advocated for:

- More affordable housing
- Improved Low End Market Rental (LEMR) program
- Prioritizing the building of non-market housing
- Rent freeze extension until the end of the pandemic
- Increased Income Assistance and Persons With Disability payments matching cost of living



RPRC meeting during Covid times

Richmond Poverty Reduction Coalition - Report for 2022

Third Annual General Meeting Held Thursday, June 1, 2023

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE - DE WHALEN

Thank you all for being here this evening, in person and on Zoom! I am honoured to represent the Richmond Poverty Reduction Coalition (RPRC) in the community and ensure our collective voice is heard at the local, provincial and federal level.

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

We are pleased to announce the RPRC gained **charitable status** in June 2022. This means we can provide charitable tax receipts for your donations and increases our ability to apply for grant funding to conduct research and projects around poverty reduction initiatives.

Our focus is advocacy. Our capacity is modest. But our research and projects show how a committed group of Richmonders can contribute mightily, by encouraging positive change for people on low incomes as well as the community at large.

In early 2022, the RPRC led several conversation circles on anti-racism and anti-discrimination to aid the provincial government in developing an **Anti-Racism Data Act**. The RPRC also endorsed the **Richmond Community Protocol** at our 2022 AGM, a living document that gives us effective tools to deal with racism and discrimination on the ground.

In 2022, the RPRC supported a Vantage Point report to the **Provincial government**, seeking recognition of the vital work that non-profits do. As a result, the government established a Parliamentary Secretary for Non-Profits, the first such office in any Canadian government.

The RPRC also advocated to the **Provincial government** in 2022 to make changes in policies to extend the rent freeze until the pandemic is over; increase Income Assistance (IA) and Persons With Disabilities (PWD) payments, and eliminate EI claw backs from PWD recipients.

The RPRC is on the steering committee of the **City of Richmond** Community Poverty Reduction and Prevention Table where we provide guidance and advice on the City's collaborative action plan. The focus areas in 2022 was community wellness, food security and outreach.

In 2022, the RPRC Housing Committee launched the **RENT campaign**, or 'Richmond Electors Needing Tenancy.' The Housing Committee had spent a year investigating City policies and strategies around non-market housing and presented their findings and recommendations to the Coalition.

Thus, the RPRC's submission and **delegation to City Council** on July 11, 2022 became the central focus of the RENT campaign. Our report urged the City to undertake three initiatives:

- actively pursue and secure federal, provincial, and any other accepted sources of funding to develop non-market housing and shelter using city-owned land,
- order a full LEMR (Low End Market Rental) Review, and develop a LEMR Housing Registry and wait list for all LEMR units, and
- reduce the number of Richmond residents on the BC Housing wait list by 50% within five years (2027) by using rental tenure zoning and innovative partnerships to build sufficient housing for Richmond residents on the wait list.

In June, the RENT campaign held a **Renters' Roundtable** and in August, a Zoom **Panel Discussion** with four experts in non-market housing. The last action of RENT is to meet with all City Councillors and the Mayor regarding our three initiatives.

The RPRC takes on one **Project** at a time. In 2022 we initiated the project, *"Improving Pedestrian Safety in Richmond through Vision Zero Strategies."* The project has two aims:

- to support and train our network of lived experience folks, the RASC (Richmond Advocacy & Support Committee) in self-advocacy and leadership skills through hands-on work in the project, and
- to develop and administer a pedestrian safety survey to people who walk and roll in Richmond, with a final report and recommendations for City Council in 2023.

Thank you all, for your dedication to the Coalition. Let us continue to work together to make Richmond a better place for everyone!

Respectfully submitted,
Deirdre Whalen

Membership - Deb Turner

By the end of 2022, RPRC had a total of 29 members including: 4 board; 14 individual and 11 organizations. This represents an increase of 1 organization member compared to 2021. We have one non-voting Permanent Observer that provides advice and shares information as described in the Network Terms of Reference. In addition to my participation in board meetings and decisions, I continue to assist with RPRC policy development.

Presentation of certificates to RASC participants included a reading by the author of the following poem, written for this occasion. Participants had completed the Vision Zero Project - Phase 1 where they developed skills to carry out a survey about pedestrian safety. Then survey findings were presented to several groups including project funders, Vancouver Coastal Health and Literacy Richmond; as well as City of Richmond Council. The project's ultimate goal is to improve pedestrian safety in Richmond through Vision Zero Strategies.

Our Voices Matter – Words for the RASC

By Alan Hill, June 2023

It was the Beatles who said it
"why don't we do it in the road".
You may have missed it
it was on the album Saba Road

so we did do it in the road, often
with just our minds, imaginations

bravery to stand in traffic
be noticed
to dig up concrete through thought
cut it to squares
re lay it in friendly shapes, smaller
as more walkable, safer space

we used our voices, every well, broken part of us
to capture the eye of the impaired
distracted, speed obsessed, phone holding
to helps them from their metal cocoons
coffin shaped tombs of individuality
their four wheeled being
to see the other, us, who we are

we live here as well
my legs are Maserati's
my wheelchair wheels my Ferrari
my walker Rolls Royce
with the eco friendly , low emission bodies
of ourselves, all built by hand, crafted
connected to our city, land.

Recyclable us
regularly top us up with coffee, Timbits
ready to role at the word poverty, loss
to fight the way forward through guile, cunning
the risen voice of us, collective, come down through
the mountains, forest, muscled in from the ocean
from beyond all known transportation

we are little fish, in combination, union
to surround the big.
We are not your enemy,

we want you to know we exist
are of equal value, regardless of income, age, ethnicity
that there are consequences to you having more
taking more, moving faster, past us, away from us.

It will not be long before we are all electric
the car the bus, wheelchair, scooter , bicycle
we will drinking from the same socket
represented by the same plug
we will come together, down number 3 in harmony
the long, not winding, road,

So here comes the sun, our sun , for all of us
watched safely with those that will now not be dead, injured
that are here now, with us, completing us.

All you need is love, well maybe not
All you need is unity, belief that you belong, are seen, heard
Here we are, work with us, let it be.

