Strategic Pillar 1: An Accessible Community

When accessibility is integrated into the foundation of a community, everyone benefits. An accessible community fosters inclusivity, increased connections and barrier-free participation so that everyone can access the physical, economic, social and cultural aspects of a community. Taking a holistic approach through ongoing collaboration between community organizations, public-sector agencies, the private sector and senior levels of government is essential to effectively remove and prevent barriers across all aspects of community life. Accessible opportunities to participate in civic engagement processes support the increased choice and self-determination of people with disabilities as they are able to engage in matters that are important to them and that affect their lives. When all community members have the ability to contribute to civic life, it enhances the overall sense of belonging and inclusion in the community.

Recommended Actions

1.1 Enable equitable engagement of people with disabilities by identifying, removing and preventing barriers to participation in civic engagement processes and initiatives. Examples include Richmond's municipal elections, City Council meetings, community consultation opportunities, City Advisory Committees and the Richmond Public Library Board. ~ Short-term

1.2 Implement new initiatives related to stigma reduction and awareness campaigns that demonstrate that the community values the contributions and participation of people with disabilities. ~ Short-term

1.3 Collaborate with people with disabilities, non-profit organizations, public-sector agencies, the private sector and senior levels of government to explore opportunities to align approaches and create greater impact in furthering accessibility and inclusion throughout the community. ~ Ongoing

1.4 Identify new opportunities to participate in and share accessibility-related information among networks that advance Richmond as an accessible community. ~ Medium-term

1.5 Advocate to senior levels of government regarding the need for increasing resources to respond to the needs of Richmond residents with disabilities. ~ Ongoing

