

RICHMOND SPORT HOSTING

Sport Hosting Strategy

2026-2031

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:

RICHMOND OLYMPIC OVAL

tourism Richmond

Richmond

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STRATEGY OVERVIEW:
RICHMOND SPORT HOSTING STRATEGY (2026-2031)

INTRODUCTION

Richmond is well positioned to strengthen its role as a leading sport hosting destination in Canada—one that supports local sport participation and athlete, coach and official development, builds community vibrancy and pride, and delivers meaningful economic activity through sport hosting activities.

The City of Richmond Sport Hosting office was established in 2009 and serves to attract and support local, provincial, national, and international sporting events, competitions, conferences, and camps so as to drive Richmond's visitor economy. Created in advance of the 2010 Winter Olympics, when Richmond proudly served as an official competition venue city, the office has grown into one of the Games' enduring legacies, helping position Richmond as a leading sport tourism destination in Canada. With a highly accessible location, quality sport infrastructure, established partnership model, and a strong accommodation base, Richmond is well-positioned to grow its sport tourism sector. At the centre of this opportunity is sport hosting—the coordinated effort to attract and deliver events that bring visitors to the community.

The Richmond Sport Hosting Strategy sets a clear direction for the next five years: building on Richmond's proven track record in sport hosting to further strengthen coordination, alignment, and long-term community and economic benefit. It emphasizes alignment across partners, thoughtful use of existing sport and recreation assets, and a commitment to delivering sport event experiences that benefit residents, local sport organizations, community partners and the visitor economy alike.



WHAT IS SPORT HOSTING?

Sport hosting is the process of attracting and delivering events within a community. Sport tourism is the outcome of sport hosting. Sport tourism occurs when people travel outside their home community to participate in or attend organized sport activities. This includes athletes, coaches, officials, spectators, and families who contribute to the local economy through accommodations, dining, transportation, or other services.

Categories of sport hosting include sport competitions, training and evaluation camps, community sport events and sport-related festivals, sport business events (e.g., AGMs), and hosting semi-professional, professional or national team programs in Richmond.

What makes sport hosting distinct is its structure and reliability. Events are scheduled well in advance, participation is confirmed early, and travel and accommodations are often coordinated as groups. Sport hosting creates predictable demand and allows destinations to plan, prepare, and deliver with a high degree of confidence.

Beyond economic activity, sport tourism contributes to community vibrancy and leaves lasting benefits through stronger local sport organizations, enhanced facilities, and increased opportunities for residents to participate. It supports local sport development and fosters a sense of pride and connection. When managed thoughtfully, it enhances both the visitor experience and the day-to-day quality of life for those who call Richmond home. As a result, sport tourism is widely recognized by municipalities and provinces as a high-value investment that delivers both economic impact and community benefit.

SPORT HOSTING IN RICHMOND

Sport tourism is a high-value outcome of effective sport hosting—bringing athletes, teams, officials, and spectators into destinations that can deliver well-run, reliable event experiences.

Richmond is already well-established in this segment, hosting more than 75 sport events annually. Since 2019, the city has welcomed events across 57 sports—including 12 parasports—demonstrating both the breadth and inclusivity of its hosting portfolio.

In 2025 alone, Richmond hosted 89 sport events, across 11 venues, generating over 20,000 room nights and $79.6 million in total economic impact.

These results reflect a highly efficient and mature sport hosting system. As the home of Vancouver International Airport, Richmond offers unmatched connectivity, complemented by strong hotel capacity and high-quality sport facilities.



THE OPPORTUNITY

The sport hosting landscape has become increasingly competitive. Event organizers are more selective, costs are rising, and municipalities across Canada are competing for event attraction. Demand for suitable sport hosting cities remains strong—particularly for multi-day youth sport events, multi-venue tournaments, and sport-related business gatherings.

Sport hosting aligns directly with the Richmond Tourism Master Plan, which identifies sport tourism as a key driver of visitation and economic activity. The Tourism Master Plan also emphasizes the importance of leveraging Richmond's accommodation capacity, city-wide accessibility, and event infrastructure to attract high-value, year-round demand.

Local sport organizations in Richmond are also highly supportive of sport hosting, highlighting sport hosting as a catalyst for increasing participation, strengthening community connections, and building the local sport system.

For Richmond, the opportunity is to focus on the events it is best equipped to host and deliver reliably—through strong coordination, efficient use of facilities, and a consistent, high-quality experience for participants, coaches, spectators, and organizers alike.

RICHMOND'S POSITION

Richmond is well positioned as a gateway and hub within Metro Vancouver, offering:

- The Vancouver International Airport
- A concentrated and diverse hotel inventory
- A connected network of sport venues
- Experience hosting provincial, national, and international events

This enables Richmond to deliver efficient, high-quality events and serve as a base for both competition and sport-related business activity.



RICHMOND'S APPROACH TO SPORT HOSTING

This strategy identifies a refreshed and focused approach to sport hosting—grounded in input from residents, local sport organizations, accommodation providers, and key partners across Richmond. It moves Richmond toward a model that is:

Focused > Targeting events that align with facilities and capacity.

Selective > Prioritizing opportunities that fit hosting capabilities and deliver results.

Coordinated > Aligning partners to improve planning and delivery.

Balanced > Managing event activity alongside community use.

Legacy-minded > Ensuring hosting contributes to long-term benefits for residents and local sport.



STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

Richmond will concentrate its efforts on seven strategic directions:

1. **Define sports and events best aligned with Richmond's sport hosting strengths**
2. **Position Richmond as Canada's "Sport Business Capital"**
3. **Leverage hotels and meeting spaces for sport events**
4. **Establish Richmond as a leading host for accessible and parasport events**
5. **Attract and anchor sport organizations and training environments**
6. **Explore opportunities for facility investment and sport hosting partnerships**
7. **Enhance coordination and delivery across the sport hosting system**

Together, these directions reflect a shift toward a more deliberate, coordinated, and performance-driven approach to sport hosting—focused on where Richmond can compete most effectively and deliver the greatest overall benefit.

WHAT SUCCESS WILL LOOK LIKE

Success will be defined by hosting events that align with Richmond's strengths, can be delivered within the capacity of local facilities and hotel inventory, and create meaningful value for the community.

By 2031, success will be demonstrated through:

- A more focused and aligned event portfolio
- Growth in sport business and non-traditional events
- Stronger, more predictable year-round demand for local hotels, restaurants, and businesses
- A distinctive position in accessible and parasport hosting
- More opportunities and supports for local athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers to participant in and/or host sport events at all levels (e.g., regional through international)
- A more coordinated and predictable sport hosting experience for organizers and participants
- Support for targeted facility investments and partnerships
- Continued positive sentiment from residents and local sport organizations regarding sport hosting
- An enhanced reputation as a reliable and well-run sport hosting destination



RICHMOND

SPORT HOSTING

STRATEGY

2026-2031

SPORT HOSTING VISION

Sport hosting in Richmond is a strategic driver of sport development, community vibrancy, and economic activity. As the sport hosting sector continues to grow, Richmond is focused on delivering an intentional, high-impact approach to event attraction and hosting.

OUR VISION

Richmond is a leading Canadian sport hosting destination that delivers a high-impact, curated portfolio of events—leveraging its strategic location, diverse facilities, and strong partner alignment to enhance quality of life, support community sport, and strengthen the visitor economy.

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

This strategy prioritizes events that align with Richmond's strengths, deliver measurable outcomes, and contribute to long-term community and economic value.

It recognizes that success will not come from pursuing all opportunities, but from making clear choices about where Richmond can be most competitive and where hosting will deliver the greatest impact.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES

These guiding principles reflect input from Richmond residents, Richmond Sports Council, local sport organizations, Community Associations and Societies, Richmond School District #38 and other key partners including Tourism Richmond and the Richmond Hotel Association and are grounded in a commitment to ensuring sport hosting delivers meaningful benefits for the community.



1. **Prioritize Where Richmond Can Win >** Focus on events that align with Richmond's facilities, capacity, and competitive strengths.
2. **Deliver Clear and Measurable Value >** Generate economic activity, strengthen local sport, and deliver tangible benefits for Richmond residents and communities.
3. **Build Lasting Community Benefit and Legacy Through Hosting >** Ensure sport hosting leaves a positive and lasting legacy—strengthening local sport, supporting community use of facilities, and delivering benefits that extend beyond the event itself.
4. **Strengthen Community Vibrancy and Identity >** Ensure sport hosting contributes to a vibrant and connected community—bringing people together, supporting local sport, and reflecting Richmond's diversity—while respecting community use of facilities and day-to-day life.



5. **Advance Inclusive and Accessible Hosting >** Create welcoming environments that reflect Richmond's diversity and support participation across all communities.
6. **Maximizing Existing Community Infrastructure and Assets >** Optimize current facilities, scheduling, infrastructure, and partnerships before pursuing expansion.
7. **Support Sustainable and Year-Round Hosting >** Leverage sport events to encourage year-round tourism demand while respecting community, volunteer, and system capacity.
8. **Strengthen Coordination Across the System >** Improve alignment, communication, and role clarity across partners involved in hosting.

WHAT IS SPORT HOSTING?

Sport hosting is the catalyst that brings events to a destination, creating the conditions for sport tourism, which is the intersection of sport and travel. Sport tourism is the outcome of that activity, occurring when participants, coaches, officials, spectators, and their families travel and stay overnight in another community for organized sport activities. These activities range from training camps and tournaments to provincial, national, and international competitions, as well as sport-related meetings and events.

What distinguishes sport tourism from other forms of tourism is its purpose, structure, and predictability. Sport-related meetings and events are scheduled, participants commit to attend well in advance, and travel is typically group-based, generating reliable demand for accommodations providers, venues, and supporting businesses. Sport tourism contributes to community vibrancy and plays a pivotal role in driving economic activity, supporting local sport development, contributing to community prosperity, and enhancing overall quality of life and civic pride.



CATEGORIES OF SPORT HOSTING ACTIVITY

There are eight distinct categories of sport hosting activity, each requiring different levels of partner support, facility alignment, and local sport organization engagement. The categories include:

1. **SPORT COMPETITIONS:** Organized events sanctioned by sport governing bodies, ranging from regional tournaments to national championships.
2. **TRAINING AND EVALUATION CAMPS:** Short-term training stays where teams and athletes prepare for competition or undergo assessment.
3. **OPEN-REGISTRATION / COMMUNITY EVENTS:** Open-registration events available to anyone who wishes to enter, such as 5km or 10km runs, charity cycling event, and open recreational tournaments and competitions (e.g., dragon boat or pickleball) that attract broad participation and family travel.
4. **ANCILLARY EVENTS AND SPORT BUSINESS MEETINGS:** Conferences, annual general meetings, and industry gatherings that leverage Richmond's hotel and meeting infrastructure.
5. **SPORT FESTIVALS:** Multi-day events that combine sport with cultural, food, and entertainment experiences to enhance visitor appeal.
6. **HIGH-PERFORMANCE TRAINING RESIDENCIES:** Ongoing or seasonal use of facilities by elite athletes and teams, particularly within specialized training environments.
7. **SPORT ORGANIZATION RELOCATION OR PRESENCE:** The establishment of provincial or national sport organization offices, contributing to sustained economic and sector activity.
8. **PROFESSIONAL AND SEMI-PROFESSIONAL TEAMS:** Resident teams that generate regular attendance, visibility, and year-round community engagement.

Sport tourism in Richmond is not one-size-fits-all. It spans a range of activities and event types—each with its own requirements, impacts, and opportunities. Recognizing these distinctive categories allows Richmond to take a targeted and strategic approach to event attraction and delivery, ensuring resources are focused where they will generate the greatest value for the community.

BENEFITS OF SPORT HOSTING IN RICHMOND

Sport tourism delivers a range of community, social, and economic benefits that are widely recognized across leading destinations in Canada and internationally. When aligned with Richmond's facilities, capacity, and community priorities, sport hosting generates consistent value for residents, local businesses and sport organizations, and the broader visitor economy.

Economic Activity and Local Business Growth > Sport events generate direct spending across hotels, restaurants, transportation, and retail—supporting businesses, sustaining employment, and contributing to Richmond's overall economic vitality.

Year-Round Visitation and Demand Stability > Since sport events are scheduled in advance and occur throughout the year, they help stabilize visitation, improve hotel occupancy, and create more consistent demand across the tourism sector in Richmond—particularly during shoulder and off-peak periods.

Efficient Use of Existing Infrastructure and Assets > Sport hosting helps optimize the use of existing facilities and infrastructure—supporting strong returns on community investments. Sport hosting can act as a catalyst to identify and inform future capital development requirements to meet evolving community and sport needs.

Sport Development, Youth Engagement, and Participation > Hosting events creates opportunities for local athletes—particularly youth—to compete at higher levels, while supporting the development of coaches, officials, and local sport leaders in Richmond, enhancing participation pathways, strengthening local technical sport knowledge, and contributing to an increasingly vibrant and sustainable local sport system.

Volunteer Development and Community Capacity > Events—from local tournaments to World Championships—rely on volunteers. Sport hosting provides meaningful opportunities for residents to gain experience, develop skills, and contribute to their community—strengthening both local sport hosting capacity and broader civic engagement.

Community Vibrancy, Inclusion, and Civic Pride > Sport events bring energy into the community, creating shared experiences that foster pride, strengthen social connection, and reflect and celebrate Richmond's diversity.

Enhanced Destination Profile and Competitiveness > Sport event hosting increases Richmond's visibility as a destination for sport, tourism, and business activity—strengthening its reputation within the provincial, national, and international sport systems, supporting future event attraction, and contributing to broader economic development and investment goals.

These benefits are well established across leading destinations and supported by national and global data. The following section provides context on the scale, growth, and economic contribution of sport tourism.

ALIGNMENT WITH COMMUNITY, SPORT, AND TOURISM PRIORITIES

The Richmond Sport Hosting Strategy does not exist in isolation. It reflects and supports a broader set of municipal, provincial, and national priorities related to sport development, community wellness, accessibility, tourism, inclusion, and economic development.
This strategy aligns with key City of Richmond plans and policies, as well as broader Canadian sport system priorities that emphasize participation, accessibility, community benefit, reconciliation, sustainability, and long-term sport development. Together, these frameworks reinforce Richmond's role as a leading and forward-looking sport hosting destination that balances visitor economy growth with community wellbeing and resident quality of life.

Municipal Alignment:

Richmond Recreation and Sport Strategy: This strategy aligns with Richmond's broader recreation and sport priorities by supporting participation, community vibrancy, facility optimization, and the continued development of local sport organizations that appeal to all ages and a broad demographic. It also reinforces the importance of balancing community access with event hosting activity.

Community Wellness Strategy: Sport hosting contributes to broader community wellness outcomes by encouraging active living, social connection, volunteerism, civic pride, and inclusive community experiences. Sport events can support mental wellbeing, a sense of belonging, and intergenerational engagement across Richmond's diverse population.

Richmond Tourism Master Plan: This strategy directly supports Richmond's Tourism Master Plan by strengthening year-round visitation, increasing hotel demand during shoulder and off-peak periods, and leveraging Richmond's accessibility, accommodation inventory, and event infrastructure to attract high-value visitors and sport-related business activity.

Richmond Accessibility Plan 2023–2033: The strategy aligns with the Richmond Accessibility Plan 2023–2033 by supporting more inclusive, accessible, and welcoming sport hosting environments across facilities, accommodations, transportation systems, and event experiences. The strategy's focus on accessible hosting and parasport development reinforces Richmond's commitment to reducing barriers to participation and enhancing accessibility throughout the community.

Cultural Harmony Plan 2019–2029: The strategy supports the Cultural Harmony Plan 2019–2029 by recognizing and celebrating Richmond's cultural diversity through sport and community events. Sport hosting provides opportunities to foster connection, shared experiences, intercultural understanding, and community pride while reflecting the diverse identities and cultures that shape Richmond.

ALIGNMENT WITH COMMUNITY, SPORT, AND TOURISM PRIORITIES

National Alignment:

Canadian Sport Policy: The strategy aligns with the Canadian Sport Policy, refreshed in 2025, that focuses on participation, excellence, inclusion, safe and accessible sport environments, and strengthening the sport system through collaboration and community development.

National Aboriginal Sport Strategy: The strategy recognizes the importance of advancing inclusive and culturally respectful sport environments and supports opportunities to strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities and sport organizations, Indigenous athletes, and Indigenous-led sport initiatives in Richmond and across BC.

Future of Sport in Canada Commission: In 2026, the Future of Sport in Canada Commission released its Final Report, outlining 98 Calls to Action related to safe sport, governance, accessibility, inclusion, funding alignment, and participant wellbeing across the Canadian sport system. The Richmond Sport Hosting Strategy reflects many of these broader themes through its focus on accessible hosting, participant experience, community benefit, collaboration, sustainability, and strengthened coordination across the sport system.

Government of Canada and Sport Canada Investment Priorities: In 2026, the Government of Canada announced approximately $755 million in new sport system investments over five years, including $50 million dedicated to sport hosting initiatives and event attraction across Canada. While funding streams, eligibility criteria, and allocation mechanisms have not yet been fully defined, the Richmond Sport Hosting Strategy is well aligned with many of the broader priorities identified through these national investments, including accessibility, community participation, inclusive sport environments, and strengthening Canada's sport hosting capacity.

Sport for Life / Long-Term Development Principles: The Canadian Sport Policy and broader Canadian sport system have historically been informed by Sport for Life and Long-Term Athlete Development (LTAD) principles, which emphasize quality sport experiences, participant wellbeing, and age- and stage-appropriate participation. While local sport organizations in Richmond operate independently, this strategy reflects many of these broader principles through its focus on participant experience, accessible and inclusive sport environments, athlete, coach and volunteer development, community-based sport pathways, and attracting events across all ages and stages of development.

Together, these alignments position Richmond's sport hosting strategy within the broader evolution of the Canadian sport and tourism landscape—supporting a coordinated, community-centered, and economically impactful approach to sport hosting that reflects both local priorities and broader sector direction.

RICHMOND AT A GLANCE

RICHMOND'S POSITIONING IN THE BC SPORT TOURISM SECTOR

British Columbia's sport tourism sector is entering a period of accelerated growth, driven by major international hosting opportunities and sustained investment in destination development.

Within this broader context, Richmond stands out as a key driver and facilitator for the region's visitor economy. Serving as a primary gateway, the city consistently draws exceptional demand, with hotel occupancy rates frequently surpassing the national average.

Sport hosting contributes meaningfully to this performance. In 2025, Richmond supported over 85+ sport events across 11 facilities, generating more than 20,000 room nights annually. It is understood that there are a number of events taking place in Richmond throughout the year that are not yet tracked. This volume of events creates a consistent stream of visitation that supports demand throughout the year, including during shoulder and off-peak periods. This positions sport tourism as a stable and high-yield segment within the broader visitor economy, aligned with Richmond's infrastructure, accessibility, and accommodation strengths.

Between 2019 and 2025, the Richmond Sport Hosting Program attracted 446 sporting events to Richmond across multiple public and private facilities. These events supported local sport development and community participation, resulting in over 100,000 room night bookings by visitors, and generating nearly $275 million CAD in economic impact for Richmond.

Realizing this opportunity depends on the strength of Richmond's local system. The following section outlines the partners, assets, and infrastructure that collectively enable sport hosting in the city.



RICHMOND'S SPORT HOSTING ECOSYSTEM

Sport hosting in Richmond is enabled through a coordinated network of partners that collectively support event attraction, planning, and delivery. Each partner contributes distinct capabilities, ranging from venue operations and destination marketing to technical sport expertise and event delivery. This ecosystem includes the Richmond Sport Hosting office, Tourism Richmond, the City of Richmond, the Richmond Olympic Oval, the Richmond Sports Council, Richmond Hotel Association (RHA), Richmond Hotel Destination Association (RHDA), local sport organizations, sport venue owners / operators, accommodation providers, among others.

Since 2019, 57 different sports have hosted events in Richmond, including 12 parasports.



The Richmond Sport Hosting (RSH) Office serves as a central point of coordination within this system. It provides event organizers with support across the hosting lifecycle, including bid development, grant funding administration, venue alignment, securing accommodations with hotel partners, interest holder coordination, and local logistics and event experience. This function is supported through the Municipal and Regional District Tax (MRDT) program—a visitor-based accommodation tax applied to short-term stays and collected through local hotels. These funds are reinvested locally, in partnership with the accommodation sector, enabling a structured and proactive approach to event attraction.

This coordinated approach has supported a consistent pipeline of events across a range of sports and competition levels—demonstrating Richmond's ability to attract, deliver, and sustain sport hosting activity over time.

Building on this foundation, the next phase of this strategy considers how sport hosting is experienced across the community and where there is opportunity to strengthen alignment, coordination, and overall impact.

RICHMOND'S SPORT VENUE INVENTORY

Richmond is home to a wide array of sport venues that position the city as a competitive and attractive destination for sport hosting in British Columbia and across Canada. This diverse infrastructure supports Richmond's capacity to host regional, provincial, national and select international-level events.

RICHMOND SPORT FACILITIES & VENUES

- 10 multi-sport facilities (i.e., recreation / community centres)
- 70+ multi-purpose fields
- 50+ gymnasiums
- 40+ outdoor tennis courts and 2 indoor tennis facilities
- 4 privately-owned indoor tennis facilities
- 9 outdoor pickleball courts
- 4 privately-owned pickleball facilities – with 28 courts total
- 10 privately-owned indoor badminton facilities – with 100 courts total
- 1 indoor table tennis facility
- 1 privately-owned indoor table tennis facility
- 1 indoor competition climbing facility
- 100+ outdoor basketball courts
- 10 ice pads – with one six-pad complex
- 1 curling rink – with 8 sheets of ice
- 13 outdoor artificial turf fields with lights
- 13 softball diamonds
- 6 baseball diamonds
- 7 privately-owned golf courses
- 2 outdoor beach volleyball courts
- 1 privately-owned indoor beach volleyball facility – with 5 courts
- 4 aquatic facilities – with 2 indoor pools and 2 outdoor pools (3 x 25m pools / 1 x 50m competition pool)
- 1 50m competition pool
- 1 outdoor synthetic 400m track
- 1 indoor synthetic 200m track

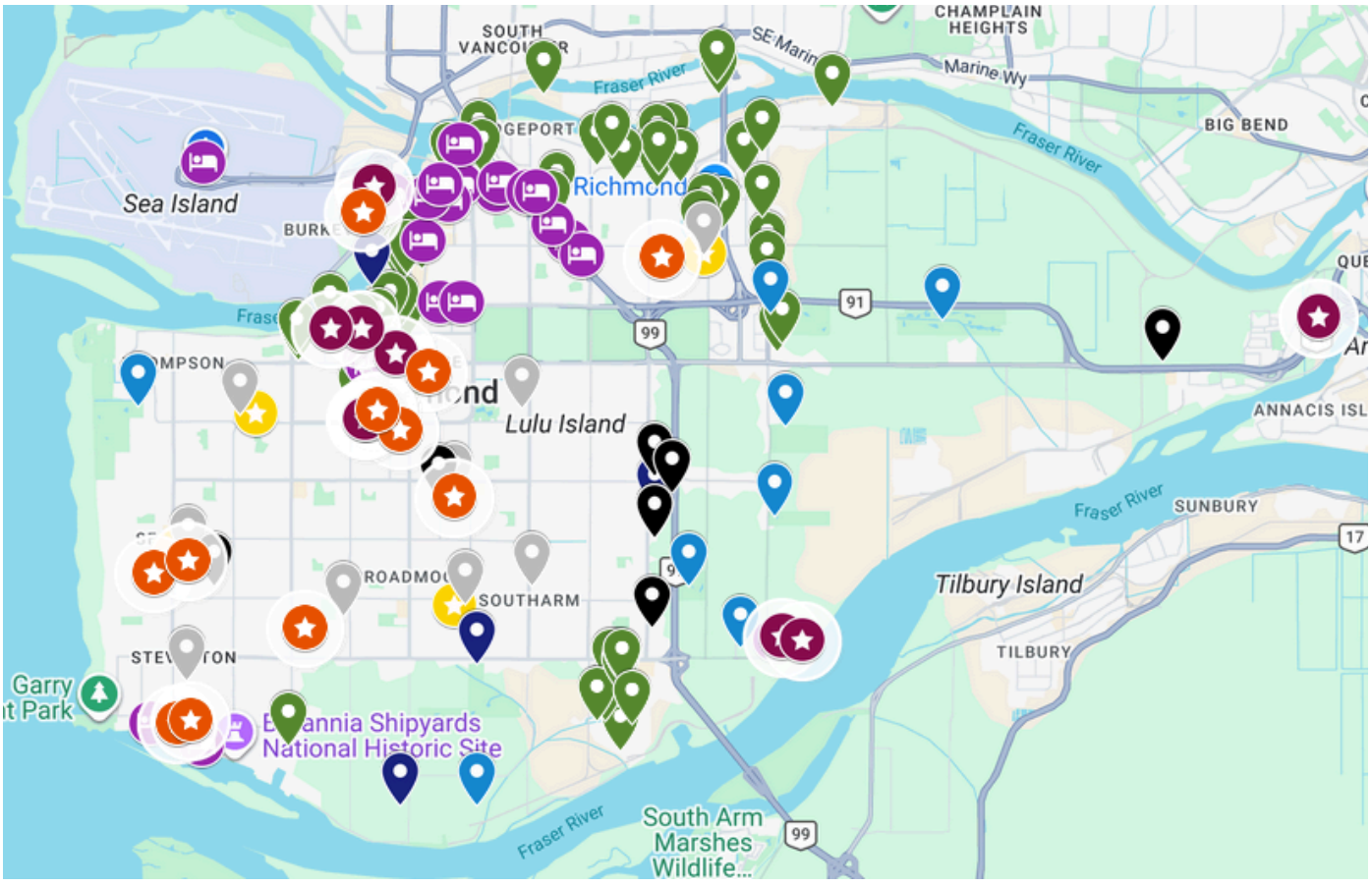


RICHMOND SPORT HOSTING MAP

This custom Google Map is a collaborative planning and visualization tool centered on the City of Richmond, designed to support strategic decision-making around sport tourism.

The map is divided into nine (9) layers:

- City-Owned, Indoor
- City-Owned, Outdoor
- City-Owned, Indoor + Outdoor
- Privately-Owned, Indoor
- Privately-Owned, Outdoor
- Privately-Owned, Indoor + Outdoor
- Accommodations Providers
- Public Schools
- Private Schools



WHAT WE HEARD

Community engagement took place between November 2025 and March 2026 and included input from Richmond residents, local sport organizations, community associations and societies, accommodation providers, facility owners / operators, and key partners across Richmond's sport hosting system.

SCOPE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

15 accommodation providers	**298 community survey respondents**	**15 key partner interviews**
53 sport leaders across 37 sports	**30 local sport organizations through workshops**	**representing 44,500+ athletes, coaches, officials and volunteers**
All age categories were represented	**Single and multi-sport activities**	**Competitive and recreational sport**

WHAT WE HEARD MOST CLEARLY

Sport hosting is valued - but expectations are rising > Residents and partners see sport hosting as a positive part of Richmond's identity, contributing to community pride, youth development, and economic activity. However, support depends on how well events are planned, communicated, and delivered.

Growth should be focused, not volume-driven > There was no call to simply host more events. The strongest signal was to prioritize specific sports and events—those that align with Richmond's facilities, operational capacity, and community priorities.

Capacity - not demand - is the constraint > With a wide array of quality sport and recreation facilities Richmond is well positioned to attract events, but facility allocation, volunteer capacity, and rising costs are factors that must be considered to support sport hosting success.

The experience extends beyond the field of play > Parking, traffic, transit access, wayfinding, and amenities were consistently identified as critical to both resident satisfaction and visitor experience. Event success is shaped as much by logistics as by competition.

Local sport organizations need practical support > Clubs are willing to host events but face real barriers, including volunteer capacity, financial risk, and administrative burden. Financial support, coordination assistance, and clearer processes would enable greater participation in hosting.

Accommodation plays a critical role in competitiveness > Hotel availability, pricing, and coordination influence Richmond's ability to secure events. Accommodation providers expressed strong interest in increased coordination and planning, particularly to support shoulder- and off-peak demand.

Stronger coordination would improve delivery > While the system is viewed as capable, there is an opportunity to improve how partners work together. Clearer roles, earlier communication, and more consistent processes across bidding, booking, and delivery would strengthen outcomes.

Community support depends on how impacts are managed > Residents are generally supportive of sport hosting when impacts—such as traffic, congestion, and facility access—are well managed and clearly communicated. Predictability and transparency are key to maintaining trust and support.

WHAT THIS MEANS

Richmond is seen as a strong and credible sport hosting community with a solid foundation to build from. The opportunity ahead is to continue to be increasingly deliberate—focusing on the events that fit Richmond's current strengths, enhancing coordination across partners, and supporting the people and organizations delivering events on the ground.



Continued success will depend on balancing event activity with community access, volunteer capacity, and rising costs with the improvement of the overall event experience, and making clear, consistent choices about where Richmond can compete most effectively.

The message from the community is clear: Richmond's approach to sport hosting should continue to build off its strong foundation—focusing on events, delivered in a way that strengthens the community experience and respects how residents live, play, and access their city.

KEY TRENDS SHAPING SPORT HOSTING IN CANADA

Sport hosting is evolving quickly, shaped by changes in how events are designed, how participants travel, and how destinations compete to host them. Across Canada and globally, communities are taking a more targeted approach—focusing on the sport events they can best support, how they deliver them, and the value they generate for residents.



Sport hosting expectations are rising. Event organizers are seeking destinations that offer not only state-of-the-art facilities, but also coordinated delivery, seasoned leadership teams, accessible accommodations, competitive pricing, and a strong overall participant and spectator experience.

Costs are increasing, financial incentives are playing a greater role in event selection, and competition between host communities is intensifying—particularly as municipalities invest in new infrastructure, create permanent positions for professional event delivery staff, and expand local hosting capacity.

For Richmond, these shifts are not incremental—they are redefining what it takes to compete. Understanding these trends is essential to making informed choices about where to focus, how to invest, and how to position the city to attract and deliver events that generate meaningful and measurable value. Among 100+ current industry trends, here are the top ten of note for Richmond:

1. **Continued Growth of Participant-Driven Sport Travel:** Amateur, youth, and club-based sport travel continues to dominate the sport tourism landscape, driven by frequent competitions, team-based travel, and strong family involvement.

   Opportunity for Richmond: This segment offers consistent volume and repeat visitation, supported by clear prioritization and capacity management to ensure alignment with facility availability and community use.

2. **Increasing Reliance on Financial Incentives and Bid Contributions:** Event hosting success is increasingly influenced by the level of financial support offered by host communities. This includes direct bid fees, hosting grants, facility subsidies, and in-kind contributions, particularly in the face of rising event costs. For many high-profile and even mid-tier events, the selection process has shifted toward competitive bidding environments where financial packages play a decisive role.

   Opportunity for Richmond: Event attraction is increasingly influenced by financial competitiveness, reinforcing the need for a clear, aligned funding approach to remain competitive with communities willing to invest.

3 **Greater Emphasis on Accommodation Availability and Affordability:** Event organizers are placing increased importance on access to room blocks, pricing alignment, and proximity between accommodations and venues.

Opportunity for Richmond: Richmond's strong accommodation base supports a strategic approach to managing seasonal and peak-period demand, including a greater focus on attracting events during shoulder and off-peak periods.

4 **Expansion of Sport-Related Meetings and Business Events:** Sport tourism is extending beyond competition to include conferences, annual meetings, training summits, and governance gatherings tied to the sport sector.

Opportunity for Richmond: This represents a high-value, underleveraged segment that Richmond is well positioned to capture through a targeted and deliberate approach to attraction.

5 **Increasing Expectations for Inclusive and Accessible Hosting:** Accessibility, inclusion, and equitable sport event planning and delivery are becoming an expectation to maximize participant and spectator experience and comfort.

Opportunity for Richmond: Accessibility is now a baseline expectation—destinations that consistently deliver inclusive environments, supported by strong policy and funding, are well positioned to win bids and deliver successful events.

6 **Intensifying Competition Among Host Communities:** More municipalities and regions are investing in sport hosting strategies, facilities and infrastructure, enhanced amenities and event delivery capabilities, increasing competition for events at all levels.

Opportunity for Richmond: As other municipalities invest in new and enhanced facilities and strengthen their hosting strategies, maintaining competitiveness will require Richmond to continue evolving its approach—including targeted investment in facilities and infrastructure that support long-term hosting capacity, and sports and events that best align with Richmond's strengths.

7 **Growing Demand for Measurable Economic and Community Impact:** Funders, partners, and governments are increasingly expecting destinations to demonstrate the economic, social, and community outcomes of sport hosting.

Opportunity for Richmond: Richmond will need to continue to prioritize data collection and reporting that demonstrates the value of sport hosting.

8 **Shift Toward Experience-Driven Sport Events:** Participants and spectators are seeking more than competition, with growing interest in events that incorporate cultural, culinary, and community experiences.

Opportunity for Richmond: Event experience is becoming a competitive factor, with integrated cultural and community elements supporting longer stays and increased visitor spend.

9 **Increasing Pressure on Facility Capacity and Scheduling:** As demand increases, municipalities can face a direct trade-off between event hosting and community access—requiring clear decisions about which events to prioritize to avoid displacing local users and overextending facility capacity.

Opportunity for Richmond: Capacity constraints are shaping how events are prioritized and scheduled, reinforcing the need for coordinated planning, clear prioritization, and a long-term approach to managing and expanding capacity.

10 **Shift Toward Regional Collaboration in Event Hosting:** There is a growing trend toward collaborative, multi-jurisdictional approaches to hosting, where neighbouring communities work together to attract and deliver events.

Opportunity for Richmond: Collaboration creates access to larger and more complex events and reinforces the importance of clear positioning and defined roles to ensure Richmond can lead where it is best positioned.

These trends are actively shaping the opportunities and constraints facing communities across Canada, making it essential to understand Richmond's position within an increasingly competitive and evolving sport hosting landscape.



SWOT ANALYSIS

The following analysis provides a snapshot of Richmond's sport hosting landscape—highlighting key strengths to build on and areas that may influence future growth and competitiveness.

STRENGTHS

- Strategic gateway location; home to Vancouver International Airport (YVR)
- Well-connected geography with clustered venues, hotels, attractions, and services
- Olympic legacy infrastructure and strong credibility within the sport system
- High-quality sport facilities anchored by the Richmond Olympic Oval
- Proven track record of hosting provincial, national, and international sport events
- Strong alignment across municipal, tourism, business, and sport partners
- Diverse accommodation inventory supporting a range of event types
- Multicultural, engaged community supporting sport participation and visitation
- Perceived community safety relative to other municipalities across Canada

WEAKNESSES

- Capacity pressures across select sport venues
- Limited mid-sized spectator venues (1500+ spectators)
- No large-sized spectator venues (2500+ spectators)
- No meeting / conference space for more than 800 participants
- Traffic, parking, transit connections, and logistics constraints at high-demand venues
- Short funding and planning cycles can limit long-term event attraction strategies
- Funding structure and strategy has not been updated since 2016
- Volunteer capacity and availability vary across sports and event cycles

OPPORTUNITIES

- Increased global and regional visibility driven by major events (e.g., 2023 CARHA)
- Growing demand for participant-driven, youth, and amateur sport events
- Opportunity to better align event attraction with shoulder and off-peak demand periods
- Evolving expectations for inclusive, accessible, and diverse sport hosting environments
- Advancements in data, measurement, and reporting to demonstrate event impact
- Potential to strengthen regional collaboration across Metro Vancouver destinations
- Opportunity to optimize and maximize use of existing facilities and infrastructure
- Growing interest in experiential and community-integrated sport events
- Continued investment in sport hosting infrastructure
- Enhanced event experiences supports longer stays and greater visitor engagement
- Increased investment and evolving sport event funding approaches across Canada

THREATS

- Rapidly increasing competition from sport host communities across Canada
- Communities investing in state-of-the-art sport facilities
- Rising costs across labour, accommodation, logistics, and event delivery
- Increasing expectations for competitive accommodation pricing and overall value
- Capacity ceilings limiting ability to scale event volume
- Volunteer fatigue and long-term sustainability challenges
- Community sensitivity to event-related impacts (traffic, disruption)
- Economic uncertainty affecting travel, participation, and sponsorship
- Climate variability impacting reliability of outdoor events

SWOT INSIGHT: Richmond's sport hosting ecosystem is well-established, coordinated, and competitively positioned. Continued success will depend on prioritization by sport and by event, coordinated planning between partners, maintaining local resident support, and managing capacity and cost pressures within a growing and competitive marketplace.



WHY NOW?

KEY FACTS ABOUT SPORT TOURISM

Sport tourism is one of the fastest growing and most resilient segments of the global tourism industry, consistently rebounding faster than leisure or corporate travel following disruptions. (*UNWTO, 2024)*

Globally, sport tourism represents approximately 10–12% of total tourism spending, with the market projected to reach USD $1.3–$1.8 trillion by 2030–2032. *(UNWTO; Allied Market Research, 2024–2025)*

Tourism contributes approximately $60-$70 billion annually to Canada's GDP when including total economic impacts. Sport tourism spending in Canada is higher than the global average, estimated to be approximately 17% of total tourism spending (~$11.5B), a significant jump from the conservative estimate of $7.4 billion annually. *(Statistics Canada; Conference Board of Canada; Destination Canada)*

Major sport events in Canada generate over $1 billion CAD annually in economic impact, driven by national and international competitions.

Sport tourists spend 2–3 times more per trip than typical leisure tourists, reflecting longer stays, team travel, and higher per-visit expenditures. *(UNWTO; Destination Canada, 2024)*

Amateur and youth sport events account for over 70% of sport events in Canada, providing consistent, year-round visitation across communities. *(Sport Tourism Canada, 2023–2024)*

STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

FOCUSED PRIORITIES TO GUIDE SPORT HOSTING IN RICHMOND

The strategic directions defined in the following pages illustrate how Richmond can strengthen its approach to sport hosting—focusing effort, aligning partners, and supporting how events are attracted and delivered. Together, they build on Richmond's strong foundation and advance a coordinated and performance-driven approach.

1. **Define sports and events best aligned with Richmond's sport hosting strengths**
2. **Position Richmond as "Canada's Sport Business Capital"**
3. **Leverage hotels and meeting spaces for sport events**
4. **Establish Richmond as a leading host for accessible and parasport events**
5. **Attract and anchor sport organizations and training environments**
6. **Explore opportunities for facility investment and sport hosting partnerships**
7. **Enhance coordination and delivery across the sport hosting system**

The following section highlights the details of each strategic direction, including a detailed description of the strategic direction, why the strategic direction matters in Richmond, as well as short-term actions Richmond can take to kick start this strategy.

A full action plan inclusive of short-term, mid-term, and long-term actions can be found in *Appendix 1: Action Plan*.



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1

DEFINE SPORTS AND EVENTS BEST ALIGNED WITH RICHMOND'S SPORT HOSTING STRENGTHS

OVERVIEW

Establish clear and consistent sport hosting priorities for sports and event types best aligned with Richmond's facilities, infrastructure, and delivery strengths. This includes concentrating on high-participation and facility-aligned sports with a strong local participation base or demographic alignment—racquet sports, indoor court sports, field sports (e.g., soccer, rugby, ultimate, etc.), diamond sports, as examples.

This prioritization allows Richmond to also target event formats—such as mid-sized, multi-site tournaments or small multi-sport games—that can be delivered effectively and generate strong community and economic benefits. This approach supports more consistent decision-making and ensures that hosting efforts are directed toward opportunities where Richmond can deliver strong community and economic outcomes.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

- Prioritize sport categories aligned with Richmond's facilities and participation base: *Concentrate on racquet sports, indoor court sports, field sports, diamond sports, arena sports, aquatic sports, and other activities that align with existing infrastructure and local demand.*
- Target event formats suited to Richmond's venue network: *Emphasize mid-sized, multi-site tournaments, league-based competitions, and small multi-sport games that can be delivered effectively across multiple facilities.*
- Apply a consistent "fit" lens to event attraction and selection: *Assess opportunities based on alignment with facilities, facility capacity, accommodation availability, event duration, and overall community impact.*
- Align partners around shared sport and event priorities: *Establish a common understanding across the City, Richmond Sport Hosting, facility operators, and local sport organizations to guide decision-making.*
- Establish a more structured and forward-looking event pipeline: *Improve visibility into upcoming opportunities through shared planning tools, coordinated calendars, and earlier engagement with event rights holders.*

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR RICHMOND

- Responds directly to input from local sport organizations seeking clearer direction on which events Richmond is pursuing and supporting
- Strengthens alignment between event activity and Richmond's existing facility base, helping manage capacity and scheduling pressures
- Supports more consistent and predictable event opportunities for local sport organizations and partners
- Improves the quality and fit of events, leading to stronger delivery experiences for participants and organizers
- Reinforces Richmond's credibility with event rights holders by demonstrating a clear and consistent hosting approach

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

- Confirm and formalize priority sport categories and event formats
- Develop and implement a consistent event "fit" framework
- Audit existing event portfolio to identify "high fit" events to retain or grow
- Strengthen relationships with sport organizations and event rights holders in priority sports
- Communicate priorities to event organizers and partners
- Establish a shared event calendar



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2

POSITION RICHMOND AS "CANADA'S SPORT BUSINESS CAPITAL"

OVERVIEW

Position Richmond as a national hub for sport-related business activity by leveraging its position as home to the Vancouver International Airport, strong hotel and meeting space inventory, established sport infrastructure, and network of ancillary suppliers and services. This includes attracting sport organization meetings, conferences, and leadership gatherings, as well as industry events.

This approach complements Richmond's sport hosting activity by expanding its role within the sport system—supporting a broader mix of year-round tourism activity. This approach raises Richmond's visibility and credibility within the sport sector, and strengthening relationships with national and international sport event rights holders.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

- Target sport-related meetings and industry events aligned with Richmond's strengths: *Focus on national and provincial sport organization meetings, annual general meetings, technical conferences, and leadership gatherings that benefit from accessibility and hotel-based venues.*
- Leverage hotel and meeting infrastructure as primary hosting assets: *Position Richmond's concentrated hotel inventory and meeting spaces as a competitive advantage for sport business events requiring integrated accommodation and function space.*
- Strengthen Richmond's visibility within the sport system: *Proactively engage with sport governing bodies, event rights holders, and industry networks to position Richmond as a preferred host for sport business activity.*
- Align partners around a consistent positioning and value proposition: *Coordinate messaging and outreach across Richmond Sport Hosting and sector partners.*
- Integrate sport business activity into broader destination development efforts: *Align sport business attraction with tourism, economic development, and major event strategies to support year-round activity.*
- Establish a pipeline of recurring and repeatable sport business events: *Prioritize opportunities that can return on a regular basis and build longer-term relationships within the sport sector.*

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR RICHMOND

- Builds on Richmond's strong hotel inventory and position as home to the Vancouver International Airport—key advantages identified through engagement
- Responds to interest in attracting more year-round activity beyond competition-based events
- Creates additional opportunities for accommodation providers and local businesses, particularly during off-peak periods
- Strengthens relationships with provincial and national sport organizations, supporting future event attraction
- Expands Richmond's role within the sport system beyond hosting competitions

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

- Refine Richmond's value proposition as "Canada's Sport Business Capital"
- Identify priority sport organizations and industry events aligned with Richmond's value proposition
- Align partners on messaging, roles and approach to attracting sport business activity
- Initiate targeted outreach to key sport organizations, rights holders, and sector partners
- Integrate sport business activity into broader tourism planning and marketing



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #3

LEVERAGE HOTELS AND MEETING SPACES FOR SPORT EVENTS

OVERVIEW

Position hotels and conference spaces as active sport hosting venues by targeting events that can be delivered in flexible, non-traditional environments. Build on Richmond's concentration of accommodation and meeting space to attract competitions, tournaments, and sport-related gatherings that generate room nights and support local businesses.

This approach builds on Richmond's hotel infrastructure to support a broader mix of event formats and more consistent, year-round hosting activity.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

- Target event types suited to hotel and flexible environments: *Focus on competitions and gatherings such as combat sports, racquet sports, dance and performance-based events, and sport-related showcases that can be delivered in ballroom and multi-purpose spaces.*
- Position hotels as active hosting venues, not just accommodation: Work with hotel partners to identify, pursue, and support events that can be fully or partially delivered within hotel-based settings.
- Align event timing with hotel availability: *Prioritize opportunities that fit within shoulder and off-peak periods to better utilize available room inventory and function space.*
- Strengthen coordination between hotels and sport partners: *Improve alignment between accommodation providers, event organizers, and Richmond Sport Hosting to support integrated event delivery.*
- Incorporate hotel-based hosting into Richmond's event attraction approach: *Consistently position hotel and meeting space capacity as part of Richmond's overall sport hosting offering.*



WHY THIS MATTERS FOR RICHMOND

- Builds on Richmond's strong hotel inventory and meeting space capacity—identified as a key competitive advantage
- Responds to opportunities to better utilize underused capacity during shoulder and off-peak periods
- Expands the range of events Richmond can host without requiring additional sport-specific infrastructure
- Creates additional opportunities for accommodation providers and local businesses
- Strengthens alignment between the tourism sector and sport hosting activity

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

- Identify event types suited to hotel and flexible venue environments
- Engage hotel partners to confirm interest, capacity, and alignment
- Align event timing with hotel availability and demand patterns
- Establish coordination mechanisms between hotels and sport partners
- Integrate hotel-based hosting into event attraction and positioning



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #4

ESTABLISH RICHMOND AS A LEADING HOST FOR ACCESSIBLE AND PARASPORT EVENTS

OVERVIEW

Position Richmond as a leading destination for accessible and parasport events by building on its existing facilities, infrastructure, and experience in inclusive sport delivery. This includes attracting regional, provincial, and national parasport competitions, as well as small multi-sport games—such as Special Olympics and other inclusive sport events—that align with Richmond's venue network, including ice facilities and the Richmond Olympic Oval.

This approach builds on the City's broader commitment to equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA), aligning sport hosting with EDIA priorities while leveraging Richmond's climate, accessibility, and geography to support inclusive participation and event delivery. This strategic direction also links to the Richmond Tourism Master Plan's strategic goal "to enhance connectivity and provide barrier-free access for all ages and abilities".

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

- Target parasport events and inclusive multi-sport games aligned with Richmond's strengths: *Focus on regional, provincial, and national parasport competitions and small multi-sport games that can be delivered across venues such as the Richmond Olympic Oval and local ice facilities.*
- Leverage key facilities to support accessible event delivery: *Position the Olympic Oval, ice venues, and multi-use facilities as core assets for hosting inclusive and parasport events.*
- Align venues, accommodations, and services to promote enhanced access: *Ensure event planning considers accessibility across facilities, hotels, transportation, and participant services.*
- Strengthen relationships within the parasport system: *Engage with parasport organizations, provincial and national bodies, and inclusive sport networks to support event attraction and delivery.*
- Build awareness and capacity across partners for inclusive hosting: *Support knowledge-sharing, training, and alignment to strengthen the delivery of accessible sport events.*



WHY THIS MATTERS FOR RICHMOND

- Builds on input from partners highlighting Richmond's strengths in accessibility, facilities, and inclusive community planning
- Aligns directly with the City's equity, diversity, inclusion, and accessibility (EDIA) priorities and broader commitment to inclusion
- Responds to interest in expanding inclusive and accessible sport opportunities across the community
- Establishes a distinctive position within the sport hosting landscape
- Strengthens relationships with parasport organizations and inclusive sport partners
- Reflects Richmond's diverse population and interest in inclusive programming and events

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

- Identify priority parasport events and multi-sport opportunities aligned with Richmond's facilities and hosting capabilities
- Assess accessibility across venues, accommodations, and transportation to identify key strengths and gaps
- Engage parasport organizations and partners to support event attraction
- Align partners on a coordinated approach to accessible and inclusive event hosting
- Integrate accessibility considerations into event planning, evaluation, and delivery processes



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #5

ATTRACT AND ANCHOR SPORT ORGANIZATIONS AND TRAINING ENVIRONMENTS

OVERVIEW

Position Richmond to attract and support provincial and national sport organizations (PSOs and NSOs), as well as training environments aligned with its priority sport categories and facility strengths. This includes enabling opportunities for administrative presence, recurring training activity, and high-performance environments that can be sustained through Richmond's accessibility, accommodation base, and venue network.

While there is a near-term opportunity to advance indoor court and field-based sport environments at scale, Richmond will remain open to opportunities across a broader range of sports that align with its infrastructure, community priorities, and overall sport hosting strategy. This direction represents a longer-term strategic choice—working with partners to create the conditions for sustained sport system presence in Richmond, including alignment across partners, services, and existing and emerging facility opportunities that support growth over time.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

- Target PSOs and NSOs aligned with Richmond's priority sport categories: *Focus on organizations whose programming, events, and training needs align with the sport categories identified in Direction #1.*
- Support administrative presence and recurring training activity: *Pursue opportunities for organizations to establish a regular presence through training programs, camps, and administrative functions.*
- Leverage existing facilities to support training and development: *Utilize the Richmond Olympic Oval, ice facilities, and multi-use venues as anchors for ongoing sport activity.*
- Advance opportunities with long-term potential for system presence: *Work with partners to explore opportunities—particularly in court and field-based sports—that support sustained engagement over time.*
- Integrate organizational presence into the broader hosting strategy: *Align training, administration, and sport system activity with event attraction and delivery.*

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR RICHMOND

- Responds to interest from sport organizations exploring training, programming, and administrative presence
- Builds on Richmond's accessibility, accommodation base, and existing facilities as a foundation for year-round sport activity
- Supports more consistent utilization of facilities beyond event-based hosting
- Strengthens Richmond's role within the provincial and national sport system
- Positions Richmond as a location for both competition and preparation

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

- Identify priority sport partners and training opportunities aligned with Richmond's facilities
- Assess facility availability to support training and residency opportunities
- Align partners on a coordinated approach to supporting long-term presence
- Engage provincial / national sport organizations to assess interest in "anchoring" in Richmond



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #6

EXPLORE OPPORTUNITIES FOR FACILITY INVESTMENT AND SPORT HOSTING PARTNERSHIPS

OVERVIEW

Enable and support a coordinated and partnership-driven approach to facility investment that expands Richmond's capacity to support sport hosting and year-round sport activity. This includes working with community partners and sport organization to explore opportunities for facility development and investment that support community needs and sport hosting opportunities.

This direction represents a long-term strategic choice to work with private, community, and sport partners to deliver facility solutions that complement existing public infrastructure. This includes exploring shared-use models, privately led developments, and the conversion of large-format spaces to support high-participation sport and event hosting at scale.

This opportunity is further strengthened by a series of upcoming global sport events in North America—including the FIFA World Cup 2026, the 2028 Summer Olympics, and future Rugby World Cups—which are expected to increase demand for training environments, acclimatization locations, event-ready facilities, and regional hosting capacity across the West Coast.

This strategic direction also links to the Tourism Richmond Masterplan's strategic goal to enhance connectivity and accessibility by creating a seamlessly connected destination that prioritizes multi-model, barrier-free access and sustainable transportation.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

- Signal priority facility needs aligned with sport hosting demand: *Identify and communicate gaps in sport infrastructure and flexible event space aligned with the sports and formats identified in Strategic Direction #1.*
- Advance scalable indoor and outdoor facility opportunities: *Support the development of large-format environments that can accommodate tournaments, training, and concurrent events.*
- Enable private sector and partner-led facility development: *Work with developers, operators, and sport organizations to explore and advance shared-use, revenue-generating, and privately led facility models.*
- Facilitate coordination across partners and opportunities: *Connect municipal, sport, tourism, and private sector stakeholders to support aligned planning, investment, and delivery.*
- Integrate new and partner-led facilities into the sport hosting system*: Ensure emerging infrastructure—whether publicly or privately delivered—is aligned with event attraction, scheduling, and long-term hosting priorities.*

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR RICHMOND

- Responds to identified facility capacity constraints and increasing demand for court, field and flexible event space
- Builds on interest from private, sport, and development partners in advancing new facility opportunities
- Positions Richmond to capture regional demand associated with amjor international events and related training activity
- Expands Richmond's ability to host larger, concurrent, and more complext events
- Supports long-term growth in sport hosting without relying solely on public investment

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

- Identify near-term facility improvements and operational enhancements to strengthen event delivery and participant experience
- Identify and prioritize facility gaps aligned with sport hosting and community sport needs
- Inform facility development planning processes with sport hosting needs and considerations
- Signal priority areas for facility investment to partners, operators and developers
- Engage private sector, community, and sport partners to explore investment, partnership and shared-use opportunities
- Establish clear processes to evaluate and advance facility investment and partnership opportunities



STRATEGIC DIRECTION #7

ENHANCE COORDINATION AND DELIVERY ACROSS THE SPORT HOSTING SYSTEM

OVERVIEW

Enhance how Richmond's sport hosting system operates by strengthening coordination across partners, clarifying roles and responsibilities, and aligning the processes that support event attraction and delivery.

This direction strengthens Richmond Sport Hosting's role as a primary point of entry and focuses on how the system functions as a whole—ensuring that communication, decision-making, facility access, and funding mechanisms are well aligned across organizations. This includes evaluating existing sport hosting funding and grant programs to ensure they are aligned, clearly defined, and effectively support event attraction and delivery across the system.

WHAT THIS LOOKS LIKE IN PRACTICE

- Strengthen a consistent entry point into the sport hosting system: *Build on Richmond Sport Hosting's role as a central interface for event organizers and enhance visibility across the event pipeline.*
- Enhance coordination and information sharing across partners: *Support early alignment on opportunities and improve visibility across sport, tourism, and accommodation partners.*
- Align timelines and decision-making across the system: *Improve coordination between funding, facility scheduling, and event planning to support timely and effective delivery.*
- Improve consistency in facility access and allocation: *Work collaboratively with facility operators, associations, and partners to support a more coordinated approach to space allocation.*
- Strengthen support for local sport organizations: *Enhance access to shared resources, coordination support, and aligned funding to support event delivery.*
- Continue to evolve funding and grant programs: *Improve clarity, alignment, and competitiveness of funding tools to support priority events and maximize impact.*

WHY THIS MATTERS FOR RICHMOND

- Builds on feedback from local sport organizations and partners seeking continued alignment and coordination across the system
- Supports more efficient and consistent event attraction and delivery
- Enhances visibility and coordination across partners and opportunities
- Improves the experience for event organizers working within Richmond's hosting environment
- Strengthens Richmond's reputation as a well-coordinated and reliable host community
- Supports the continued evolution of funding programs to remain competitive and impactful

SHORT-TERM ACTIONS

- Review program governance and clarify roles and responsibilities across Richmond Sport Hosting, City of Richmond, Tourism Richmond, facility operators, and hotel partners
- Review and update funding model and sport hosting incentive grant program
- Launch a shared event calendar across local sport organizations, facilities, and key partners
- Strengthen Richmond Sport Hosting's role as a primary entry point for event organizers with clear intake, triage and referral processes
- Explore opportunities to align facility allocation processes across all City facilities
- Provide local sport organizations with shared tools, templates, and coordination support to deliver events
- Establish a coordinated process for tracking and reporting out on sport hosting outcomes including visitation, participation, and economic impact metrics.



CONCLUSION

Richmond is well positioned to strengthen its role as a leading sport hosting destination. With its facilities, accessibility, strong accommodation base, and experienced partners, the city has the foundation to attract and deliver a wide range of events that benefit both residents and visitors.

This strategy sets a clear direction—focusing on the sports, events, and opportunities that align with Richmond's strengths, while further strengthening coordination and clarity in how events are selected and delivered. It also reflects a commitment to balancing community access with event activity, ensuring that sport hosting continues to enhance quality of life across the city.

Looking ahead, success will depend on continued collaboration, clear priorities, and a shared commitment to delivering high-quality experiences. By building on what already exists and focusing on where it can lead, Richmond can grow its sport hosting activity in a way that is sustainable, inclusive, and aligned with its long-term vision.



PARTICIPATING COMMUNITY GROUPS AND LEADERS:

We would like to thank the organizations and local sport leaders who generously donated their time to participate in interviews / surveys, and generously shared their insights, which helped inform the development of this strategy, including:

- BC Fencing Association
- BC Soccer
- BC Wheelchair Sports Association
- Bhullar Wresting Club
- City Centre Community Association
- Connaught Figure Skating
- Defy Gravity Dance Company Inc
- Dolphin Classic
- Drive Basketball
- East Richmond Community Association
- Fusion FC
- Hamilton Community Association
- JM SportHorse
- Kajaks Track & Field Club
- KidSport
- Kigoos Swim Club
- Minoru Seniors Society
- Nation's Cup
- Pinnacle Cheer
- Raincity Boxing & Fitness
- Richmond Air Attack Volleyball Club
- Richmond Aquatics Advisory Board
- Richmond Arenas Community Association
- Richmond (Vancouver) Ultimate
- Richmond Ball Hockey Association
- Richmond Chess Champions
- Richmond City Baseball
- Richmond Cricket Club
- Richmond Dragon Boat
- Richmond Golf & Tennis Country Club
- Richmond Gymnastics Association
- Richmond Hotel Destination Association
- Richmond Jets Minor Hockey Association
- Richmond Lacrosse
- Richmond Lawn Bowling
- Richmond Olympic Oval
- Richmond Pickleball Association
- Richmond Raiders Football
- Richmond Rapids Swim Club
- Richmond Ravens Female Hockey Association
- Richmond Ringette
- Richmond Rockets
- Richmond Rod & Gun Club
- Richmond Rugby Football Club
- Richmond School District #38
- Richmond Sockeyes Junior A Hockey Club
- Richmond Softball Association
- Richmond Sport Hosting
- Richmond Sports Council
- Richmond United FC
- Richmond Winter Club
- Sea Island Community Association
- South Arm Community Association
- Split Second Basketball
- Steveston Community Society
- Supra Soccer
- Tennis BC
- The Dugout Club
- Thompson Community Association
- TSS Football Club
- Vancouver Airport Marriott
- Volleyball BC
- West Richmond Community Association
- Wings Badminton Club

APPENDIX 1

ACTION PLAN

ACTION PLAN

To support implementation, the following action plan provides a snapshot to advancing the strategic directions across short-, medium-, and long-term horizons. This structure is designed to prioritize early wins, build organizational capacity, and guide sustained investment over time. Short-term actions focus on foundational initiatives and immediate opportunities, medium-term actions advance key priorities and partnerships, and long-term actions position Richmond for continued growth and competitiveness in sport hosting.

Strategic Direction #1: Define Sports and Events Best Aligned with Richmond's Sport Hosting Strengths	
Short-Term Actions (0-12 months)	• Confirm and formalize priority sport categories and event formats • Develop and implement a consistent event "fit" framework • Audit existing event portfolio to identify "high fit" events to retain or grow • Strengthen relationships with sport organizations and event rights holders in priority sports • Communicate priorities to event organizers and partners
Mid-Term Actions (1-3 Years)	• Apply the event evaluation framework consistently across all event attraction and hosting decisions • Track and assess event performance across economic, facility use, and community impact metrics • Refine priority sports and event formats based on performance, demand, and system capacity • Build a multi-year pipeline of repeat and returning events aligned with priority areas • Align facility scheduling and allocation practices with priority events and hosting windows
Long-Term Actions (4-5+ Years)	• Regularly review and update priority sports and event focus areas to reflect evolving market conditions and community priorities • Work to position and establish Richmond as a preferred sport host destination for select sports and event formats • Integrate sport and event priorities into long-term facility planning and investment decisions • Expand into new sports or event types where Richmond develops a competitive advantage • Use performance data to continuously refine event selection and maximize overall impact • Create and embed a criteria-based approach to event attraction across all partners / decision-makers

Strategic Direction #2: Position Richmond as "Canada's Sport Business Capital"	
Short-Term Actions (0-12 months)	• Refine Richmond's value proposition as "Canada's Sport Business Capital" • Identify priority sport organizations and industry events aligned with Richmond's value proposition • Align partners on messaging, roles and approach to attracting sport business activity • Initiate targeted outreach to key sport organizations, rights holders, and sector partners • Integrate sport business activity into broader tourism planning and marketing
Mid-Term Actions (1-3 Years)	• Attract and secure sport organization meetings, conferences, and leadership events • Build a multi-year pipeline of recurring sport business events and gatherings • Strengthen relationships with national and provincial sport organizations and sector leaders • Refine positioning and value proposition based on market response and performance • Align hotel, venue, and partner offerings to better support sport business activity • Increase visibility of Richmond within the sport sector through consistent presence and promotion
Long-Term Actions (4-5+ Years)	• Establish Richmond as a recognized destination for sport business activity within Canada • Attract high-profile, national-level sport conferences and industry events • Sustain a consistent calendar of annual and repeat sport business events • Integrate sport business activity as a core component of Richmond's visitor economy • Expand partnerships across the sport, tourism, and business sectors to support continued growth • Embed sport business positioning into long-term tourism strategies

Strategic Direction #3: Leverage Hotels and Meeting Spaces for Sport Events	
Short-Term Actions (0-12 months)	• Identify event types suited to hotel and flexible venue environments • Engage hotel partners to confirm interest, capacity, and alignment • Align event timing with hotel availability and demand patterns • Establish coordination mechanisms between hotels and sport partners • Integrate hotel-based hosting into event attraction and positioning
Mid-Term Actions (1-3 Years)	• Attract and secure events aligned with hotel and meeting space capabilities • Refine and standardize coordination between hotel partners and the sport hosting system • Expand the range and volume of events delivered in hotel-based environments • Develop integrated hosting approaches that align accommodations, venues, and services • Strengthen alignment between event timing and hotel availability across the calendar • Promote successful hotel-based events to build credibility and attract similar opportunities
Long-Term Actions (4-5+ Years)	• Establish hotel and meeting spaces as a core and recognized component of Richmond's hosting model • Sustain a consistent pipeline of events aligned with accommodation-based delivery • Through collaboration with sport hosting partners, work to increase competitiveness for flexible-format and non-traditional sport events • Collaborate and enhance communication processes to maximize utilization of hotel infrastructure across peak and non-peak periods • Integrate hotel-based hosting into long-term sport tourism and destination strategies • Continuously refine event selection and delivery approaches based on performance and demand

Strategic Direction #4: Establish Richmond as a Leading Host for Accessible and Parasport Events	
Short-Term Actions (0-12 months)	• Identify priority parasport events and multi-sport opportunities aligned with Richmond's facilities and hosting capabilities • Assess accessibility across venues, accommodations, and transportation to identify key strengths and gaps • Engage parasport organizations and partners to support event attraction • Align partners on a coordinated approach to accessible and inclusive event hosting • Integrate accessibility considerations into event planning, evaluation, and delivery processes
Mid-Term Actions (1-3 Years)	• Inform facility improvement planning processes to address priority accessibility gaps across venues and accommodations where feasible • Actively attract and host regional and provincial parasport events • Strengthen partnerships with parasport organizations and governing bodies • Build capacity among staff, volunteers, and partners to support inclusive event delivery • Refine coordination across venues, accommodations, and services to improve accessibility outcomes • Promote Richmond's accessibility strengths to support event attraction and positioning
Long-Term Actions (4-5+ Years)	• Continue to work to establish Richmond as a recognized destination for accessible and parasport events • Attract national-level parasport competitions and high-profile inclusive events • Advocate for accessibility standards as a minimum baseline across all sport hosting activities • Sustain strong relationships within the parasport system to support ongoing event attraction • Continuously improve accessibility across facilities, accommodations, and services • Integrate accessibility and inclusion into long-term sport hosting and community development strategies

Strategic Direction #5: Attract and Anchor Sport Organizations and Training Environments	
Short-Term Actions (0-12 months)	• Identify priority sport partners and training opportunities aligned with Richmond's facilities • Assess facility availability to support training and residency opportunities • Align partners on a coordinated approach to supporting long-term presence • Engage provincial / national sport organizations to assess interest in "anchoring" in Richmond
Mid-Term Actions (1-3 Years)	• Attract and secure training camps, seasonal residencies, and partial organizational presence • Strengthen relationships with key sport organizations and governing bodies • Align facilities, accommodations, and services to better support training environments • Refine + promote Richmond's offering based on successful training + residency experiences • Increase utilization of facilities through year-round training and organizational activity • Support coordination across partners to deliver consistent + effective training environments
Long-Term Actions (4-5+ Years)	• Establish sustained presence of select sport organizations + training environments in Richmond • Position Richmond as a preferred location for both competition and preparation within the sport system • Expand year-round sport activity through ongoing training, camps, + organizational presence • Strengthen Richmond's role within provincial and national sport systems • Integrate training and organizational presence into long-term facility and hosting planning • Sustain and grow partnerships that support ongoing sport system engagement and activity

Strategic Direction #6: Explore Opportunities for Facility Investment and Sport Hosting Partnerships	
Short-Term Actions (0-12 months)	• Identify near-term facility improvements and operational enhancements to strengthen event delivery and participant experience • Identify and prioritize facility gaps aligned with sport hosting and community sport needs • Inform facility development planning processes with sport hosting needs and considerations • Signal priority areas for facility investment to partners, operators and the development community • Engage private sector, community, and sport partners to explore investment, partnership and shared-use opportunities • Establish clear processes to evaluate and advance facility investment and partnership opportunities
Mid-Term Actions (1-3 Years)	• Advocate for the advancement of priority facility enhancement and modernization projects that strengthen hosting capabilities and community use • Support partnership-based facility developments across public, private, non-profit, and education sectors where feasible • Collaborate to identify, communicate and support opportunities to improve hosting readiness and efficiencies through improvements to accessibility, technology, athlete services and spectator experience • Better integrate schools, hotels, and privately operated venues into Richmond's hosting ecosystem
Long-Term Actions (4-5+ Years)	• Work to expand overall sport hosting capacity by informing partner-led facility development and shared-use models that facilitate increased hosting possibilities • Collaborate with partners within the Sport Hosting Ecosystem to enable the attraction and delivery of larger and concurrent events through increased infrastructure readiness • Collaborate to identify and maintain a diversified and adaptable mix of facilities aligned with evolving sport, event, and community needs • Strengthen Richmond's ability to attract recurring events, training environments, and sport organization presence • Continuously assess and identify facility gaps related to hosting to inform future facility planning

Strategic Direction #7: Enhance Coordination and Delivery Across the Sport Hosting System	
Short-Term Actions (0-12 months)	• Review program governance and clarify roles and responsibilities across Richmond Sport Hosting, City of Richmond, Tourism Richmond, facility operators, and hotel partners • Review and update funding model and sport hosting incentive grant program • Launch a shared event calendar across local sport organizations, facilities, and key partners • Strengthen Richmond Sport Hosting's role as a primary entry point for event organizers with clear intake, triage and referral processes • Explore opportunities to align facility allocation processes across all City facilities • Provide local sport organizations with shared tools, templates, and coordination support to deliver events • Establish a coordinated process for tracking and reporting out on sport hosting outcomes including visitation, participation, and economic impact metrics.
Mid-Term Actions (1-3 Years)	• Implement a coordinated event planning and delivery model across all system partners • Develop shared bid templates, operational playbooks, and hosting tools for consistent delivery • Integrate facility booking systems with event planning timelines and partner coordination • Strengthen hotel alignment through improved understanding of sport event needs and timing • Expand LSO support through shared staffing models, volunteer coordination, and services • Establish regular partner forums to coordinate upcoming events and resolve delivery challenges
Long-Term Actions (4-5+ Years)	• Operate a fully integrated sport hosting system across RSH, City, facilities, and partners • Enable faster, more competitive bid responses through aligned decisions, funding, and access • Use data to track event performance, system capacity, and economic and community impact • Position RSH as a recognized leader and convenor in regional and national hosting • Sustain strong hotel alignment to support repeat events and optimize occupancy • Continuously refine funding, processes, and coordination to meet evolving event demands • Balance high-quality event delivery with community access and resident experience