

CHALLENGE #5

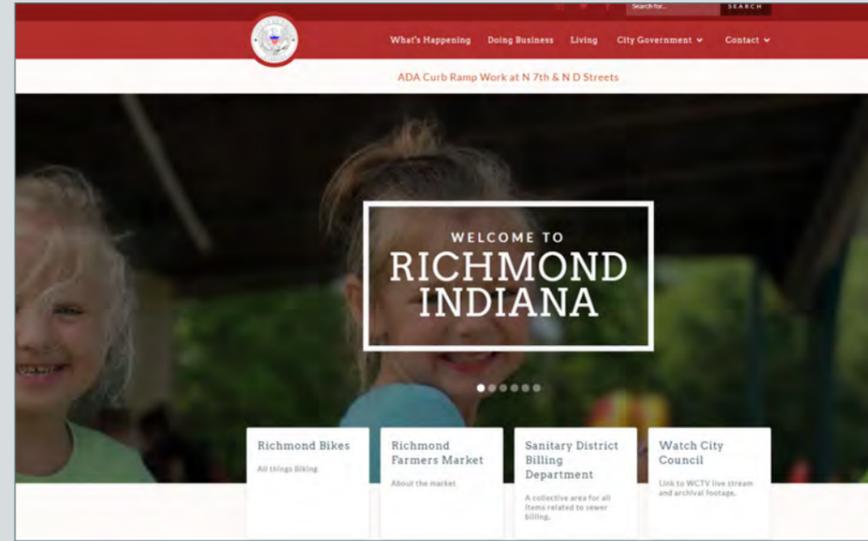
Richmond should always be working to improve communication and collaboration among its citizens, organizations, and various bodies of government.

Providing streamlined processes, transparent decision-making, and efficient use of City resources are all key components to any successful community. Providing this level of transparency between City leaders and the public builds trust and collaboration and creates a shared vision and sense of community. A common concern expressed during the engagement phase of the Richmond Rising process revealed that citizens feel that they aren't always included in the decision-making process.

Each of the components listed above originate under much broader terms such as communication and collaboration. Although defined differently, the two words are directly related. Simply put, communication is defined as sharing information while collaboration requires working together to create something. Within a community, there can be several individuals, businesses, organizations, and levels of government working toward a relatively similar goal. At the same time, these individuals or organizations may have conflicting interests about something else. Additionally, to further complicate this challenge, community leaders are constantly coming and going, each bringing their own methods and priorities in how they approach issues. Because of this, the City of Richmond should always be working to improve communication and collaboration among its citizens, organizations, and various bodies of government.

The challenges around communication and collaboration are not unique to Richmond; almost all communities face similar problems. Several concerns were expressed during the engagement phase that helped identify this topic as a top challenge such as:

- Citizens feeling that they aren't always included in the decision-making process.
- Information and resources weren't always being shared, leading to duplicate and/or conflicting efforts.
- Existing government processes and procedures aren't efficient for residents, businesses, and/or developers.



In recognition of this challenge, the City of Richmond has been working to improve transparency and streamline processes. The most recent effort involves transitioning from a paper application process for permits to an online portal.

Whether these are real or perceived challenges within Richmond, it is essential for the City to have a good communications strategy because it will aid in relationship building and establish trust among various individuals, organizations, and levels of government. The City has the opportunity to lead by example. Sharing timely updates about upcoming events, current initiatives, new programs or policies, celebrations of success, or changes in leadership would likely jumpstart improvements in communication and collaboration for the rest of the community.

In order to improve communication and collaboration, Richmond must **CELEBRATE...**

- Progress and accomplishments by sharing regular updates with the community.
- Various organizations and entities working together through coordination of efforts and efficient use of resources.
- Modern technology by using digital, online systems.

Community Survey Results

I WANT TO IMPROVE...

"Communication between government and citizens."

"City-wide Interdepartmental Efficiency."

"Communication and input from citizens. The ability to reach out into the worst of the worst neighborhoods and develop trust. Inspiring more people to get involved and feel that they can make a difference."

WHAT DO YOU WISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT VALUED?

"I wish that Richmond's city government could bridge the gap of communication between their departments. It seems that so many are in "silos" with their departments."

"Cooperation between different organizations with the government and student involvement in the process of development."

WE NEED TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT...

"Bringing worker bees and visionaries together, form a plan, and have those who support these plans to finish."

"The negative attitude of residents about the community engaging with everyone in a positive way."