OVER 100 LANGUAGES USED IN RICHMOND
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Question:
Having lived in Canada for so long, not many people would know exactly how many immigrants there are in this country, even though it is known there are a large number of them. For instance, apart from Cantonese, Mandarin and Shanghainese, how many other languages are used in Richmond of Province of British Columbia?

Answer:
"Richmond has 225,000 residents, and currently more than 100 languages are used in the city." This is what was indicated in the presentation submitted by the City of Richmond to Smart Cities Challenge. City's spokesperson Ted Townsend indicated the findings are based on the languages used, which include official languages and dialects, as defined by residents. The City of Richmond's documents indicated there are a number of languages [dialects] under the Chinese language category, including Mandarin, Cantonese, Chiu Chow, Hokkien, Taiwanese, Shanghainese and etc.

Smart Cities Challenge is a program under Infrastructure Canada and opened to large and small towns/municipalities and aboriginal tribes across the country. It objectives are to strengthen the partnership among communities, to take advantage of the concept of smart cities to help them face new issues that arise from the ever-changing environment, and to enhance the quality of living by means of high technology.

The development goals listed out by Richmond Smart Cities Challenge proposal include: how to ensure safety of a city that lies at the estuary, with a low altitude and is linked up by islands; to integrate residents, infrastructure, emergencies data and communications platforms; to eliminate language barriers and to set up a mobile network that reinforces emergency responsiveness.

Currently, Richmond has entered into the final round of Innovation Award with a $10-million prize. The joint submission by both Vancouver and Surrey proposing to build a barrier-free transportation system between the two cities, successfully enters into the final stage of $50-million Innovation Award.

According to the contest rules, local governments enter into the final round must submit a final report by March next year. For this, the City of Richmond is calling on the residents to actively provide their input. To learn more about Richmond's Smart Cities Challenge, please visit the official website: smartcity.richmond.ca. The website for collecting public inputs is www.letstalkrichmond.ca. The joint official website of Vancouver and Surrey is www.smarttogether.ca.