



Staff Report for Council Meeting

Date of Meeting: July 8, 2020

Report Number: SRCM.20.14

Department: Office of the City Manager
Division: Strategy, Innovation and Engagement

Subject: SRCM.20.14 - Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan

Purpose:

The purpose of this report is to seek Council direction on the Draft Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan in response to COVID-19.

Recommendation(s):

- a) That the Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan, attached as Appendix A to SRCM.20.14, be approved.

Contact Person:

Anthony Ierullo, Manager of Economic Innovation and Partnerships

Report Approval:

Submitted by: Meeta Gandhi, Director of Strategy, Innovation and Engagement

Approved by: Mary-Anne Dempster, City Manager

All reports are electronically reviewed and/or approved by the Division Director, Treasurer (as required), City Solicitor (as required), Commissioner, and City Manager. Details of the reports approval are attached.

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Background:

On April 22, 2020, Richmond Hill Council approved the establishment of a Recover Richmond Hill Task Force to help lead the development of the Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan. The Task Force is responsible for providing strategic recommendations to Council on programs and strategies to help Richmond Hill businesses recover from the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Task Force is working with partners (provincial and federal governments, community agencies, educational institutions, business associations and local businesses) to develop and recommend economic recovery programs to Council.

The attached Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan represents the feedback and advice received by local businesses, business associations, other levels of government and stakeholders. Building on the work currently underway at the federal, provincial and regional levels of government, the Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan provides a clear set of activities and actions that the City will undertake with its partners to support local business.

Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan developed to respond to local business needs

The Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan was developed in response to feedback received by the local business community. Since mid-March, the City has been actively engaged with local businesses to provide support during the COVID 19 pandemic. These activities have resulted in hundreds of direct business interactions and significant interface with local businesses that have directly informed the development of the Action Plan.

Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan Vision supported by 3 goals and 10 Actions

The Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan vision is to actively assist Richmond Hill businesses to thrive in the post pandemic economic environment. In order to achieve this vision, the Action Plan identifies a mission statement, guiding principles, goals and action items that further describe the proposed approach and related tactics. The specific goals and action items highlighted in the Plan are summarized below:

Goal: Supporting Investment, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Supporting actions:

1. Launch a Business Support Hotline to assist local businesses to access reopening and recovery programs during predetermined times.
2. Deliver Re-opening Webinar Series, in partnership with the Richmond Hill Board of Trade to assist local businesses to develop reopening plans.

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3. Continue to maintain online resource hub as a resource for local businesses to access information related to available support programs.

Goal: Supporting Investment, Innovation and Entrepreneurship

Supporting Actions:

1. Launch ShopHere, in partnership with Digitalmainstreet.ca to assist businesses to build or optimize their online platform.
2. Launch a Municipal Business Innovation Contest and Innovation Showcase to provide small businesses with the opportunity to partner with the City of Richmond Hill on innovative products and services.
3. Launch a Local Innovation Centre, in partnership with post-secondary partners, to support entrepreneurs, incubate new businesses and accelerate business investment.
4. Deliver Small Business Micro-grants, in partnership with York Region and the province of Ontario, to assist local businesses to implement recovery plans.

Goal: Encouraging Local Residents and Business to Shop Local

Supporting Actions:

1. Permit the temporary creation and/or expansion of outdoor patios and retail areas to support local businesses through recovery.
2. Launch a Shop Safe Downtown Program featuring enhanced cleaning and safety, in partnership with York Region Public Health and York Regional Police, to promote historic downtown as safe shopping destination.
3. Work with the Richmond Hill Board of Trade and Village of Richmond Hill Board of Trade to support a business led Shop Local Marketing Campaign to encourage local residents to support local business.

The draft Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan has been attached to this report as Appendix A.

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

It is anticipated that the proposed Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan will be implemented primarily through existing staff resources. If required, the Recover Richmond Hill Task Force will present any future request for funding to Council for consideration. Enbridge Inc. has donated \$8,000 towards the implementation of the Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan.

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Relationship to the Strategic Plan:

The creation of the Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan in response to the impact of COVID-19 to Richmond Hill's business community supports the Strategic Plan Goal of Stronger Connections by engaging with businesses, agencies and other levels of government to understand the changing needs of the community and identify solutions. It also supports the Goal of A More Vibrant Richmond Hill by delivering actions that support business recovery in Richmond Hill.

Conclusion:

On April 22, 2020, Richmond Hill Council approved the establishment of a Recover Richmond Hill Task Force to help lead the development of the Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan. The Task Force has been working with community partners to develop and recommend the attached Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan for Council consideration. The Action Plan proposes 10 actions organized within 3 goal areas to support local businesses. Staff are recommending that Council approve the attached Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan.

Attachments:

The following attached documents may include scanned images of appendixes, maps and photographs. If you require an alternative format please call the contact person listed in this document.

- Draft Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCM.20.14.docx
Attachments:	- Draft Recover Richmond Hill Action Plan.docx
Final Approval Date:	Jun 25, 2020

This report and all of its attachments were approved and signed as outlined below:

Meeta Gandhi - Jun 25, 2020 - 7:55 AM

MaryAnne Dempster - Jun 25, 2020 - 8:21 AM