



# MEMORANDUM

**Date:** October 27, 2020  
**To:** Mary-Anne Dempster, City Manager, City of Richmond Hill  
**From:** Rebecca Sutherns, Sage Solutions  
**Subject:** Council Priorities

When Sage Solutions was hired by the City of Richmond Hill in July, the task was to facilitate a collaborative strategy building process that would result in a comprehensive strategic plan to guide City Council over the remaining two years of its term. However, the project has evolved since then from a strategic plan to a COVID recovery action plan to a list of priority items to guide Council decision-making.

With Council's support, we are recommending that a fulsome strategic plan with community input be developed at the start of the next Council term.

The priority list provided here emerged primarily from individual interviews with each Councillor. It is also informed by a community survey, a Council planning workshop, and conversations with the City Manager. Areas of overlap between what was heard from Council and the community included many things that Richmond Hill is already doing, meaning that a "stay-the-course" plan is appropriate in the short term, including an emphasis on COVID recovery and streamlining of internal processes.

There is agreement that Council should prioritize four areas during the remainder of its term: balancing growth and green, fiscal responsibility, creating a sense of belonging, and getting around the city. While informing decisions over the next two years, existing initiatives in each area can also be showcased, including those shown below:

## Balancing growth and green

This priority area recognizes the critical balance between economic development and environmental protection. It includes stewardship of green spaces such as wetlands, parks and trails and longer-term sustainability planning and climate action initiatives, alongside decisions that promote responsible economic intensification and prosperity.

Ongoing Initiatives	Proposed Initiatives
•	• Streamline and accelerate planning decisions

## Fiscal responsibility

Council will endeavour to keep tax increases below cost of inflation and will avoid unnecessary expenditures in order to emerge from COVID-19 in a strong financial position.

Ongoing Initiatives	Proposed Initiatives
•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Seek alternative ways to generate revenue and reduce costs</li> </ul>

## Strong sense of belonging

This is a placemaking priority that combines a desire for everyone to feel welcome in Richmond Hill and a commitment to community building in places like the downtown core, Lake Wilcox and the Richmond Hill David Dunlap Observatory.

Ongoing Initiatives	Proposed Initiatives
•	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strategy to promote equity, diversity and inclusion</li> </ul>

## Getting around the city

Council will prioritize ease of movement around the city by promoting Richmond Hill's multiple transportation interconnections, being well-positioned for the Yonge subway extension and improving active transportation networks for cyclists and pedestrians.

Ongoing Initiatives	Proposed Initiatives
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