



Mayor David West  
City of Richmond Hill  
225 East Beaver Creek Rd,  
Richmond Hill, ON L4B 3P4

April 1, 2022

Dear Mayor West and Council,

On behalf of the Oak Ridges Soccer Club, I am writing to you regarding our need for an additional Indoor Soccer Facility (or Dome) and Outdoor Artificial Turf Soccer Field. The previous City Plan of adding both is increasingly becoming more necessary. Although COVID-19 has impacted levels of participation over the last two years, we anticipate a considerable increase for the 2022 Outdoor season. With that in mind, as we continue economic reopening, the 2022/2023 Indoor season should see further growth.

The current target is based on our **2019** figure of **1200** participants. The projected number for **2022** is **900** players. With increased development, success at the National level for our Men's and Women's teams and the desire for parents to have their children involved in sports and physical activity, we are entering a perfect storm. The Return to Play movement has begun, hence the potential for larger numbers for the 2022/23 Indoor season. The goal for the Oak Ridges Soccer Club is to keep all Programs within the City of Richmond Hill. Our projection is a minimum increase of **75%** over our current Indoor participation, bringing us back to where we were in **2019/2020** prior to the pandemic. These additional players would need facility time that is currently not available to us this year. We anticipate such an increase based on the expected numbers for the 2022 Outdoor season and the several inquiries received for this year's program that we could not fulfill.

Decreased registration for the **2021/22** Indoor season – totaling **200** players – has allowed us to avoid renting other facilities. Access to only one Dome in Richmond Hill and being the smaller Community Club (next to Richmond Hill Soccer Club) restricts the amount of time available for our teams. Any increase in registration would mean securing time outside of Richmond Hill, as we have done in previous years (2019 and prior).

For the **2021/2022** season, we were permitted **32 hours per week for 24 weeks** (October to April), notwithstanding four weeks in January that we were locked down. As the population in Richmond Hill grows, traffic especially along Yonge St., has become more of an issue. Having another Dome in North Richmond Hill would help our members immensely in terms of travel. It would also allow us to offer more Recreational Programs. Currently, we are operating such programs only on Saturday mornings at the Richmond Green Dome. Generally, this kind of programming is for grassroots age groups (ages 4 to 12). Over the years, the trend has been for such programs to take place during the week (Monday to Thursday).



However, the locations have been in school gymnasiums, which has limited the number of participants we could accept. A Dome in closer proximity to Oak Ridges is a potential way to draw larger enrollment.

We understand that there are other groups vying for indoor facility and outdoor turf time in Richmond Hill. Nonetheless, we are ready and willing to continue collaborating with the Richmond Hill Soccer Club and any other local groups to ensure everyone in our City has a place to play soccer. The Oak Ridges Soccer Club would also be willing and ready to join any initiative through committees or otherwise, in working toward the development and planning of a future indoor facility and/or turf field.

Last and most importantly, soccer is enjoying an exciting time in Canada! Our national Women's team has won a Gold Medal at the Olympics and our national Men's team has qualified for their first World Cup in 36 years. In addition, Canada along with the U.S. and Mexico will be hosting the 2026 World Cup(Men's). We also now have a national men's professional league (CPL) and there is heightened discussion about professional women's soccer starting up. At no time in the history of the game in Canada has there been such enthusiasm! At Community Clubs across the country, we will, no doubt, feel the effects of such excitement. We are convinced more children and adults will want to play the Beautiful Game!

Please help us in our quest to making the game accessible to everyone.

Sincerely,

Sam Foti  
Technical Manager  
Oak Ridges Soccer Club