



MEMBER MOTION

Section 5.4.4 (b) of Procedure By-law

Meeting:	Council
Meeting Date:	September 14, 2022
Subject/Title:	Richmond Hill Village Core
Submitted by:	Councillor Raika Sheppard

WHEREAS, the “Village Core” is the historic downtown of Richmond Hill, with a rich history, which hosts several iconic new and old buildings, and which functions as a cultural hub for the area, supporting and providing services such as: the Richmond Hill Centre for Performing Arts, the Central Library, the Sports Hall of Fame and Elgin Barrow Arena, the Richmond Hill Heritage Centre, Town Park, the McConaghy Centre, the Wave Pool, shops, restaurants, social and community services, housing, and more; and

WHEREAS, the City is undertaking a variety of initiatives to continue to add to the range of services and attractions and to bring more vitality to this area, such as:

- a) The Office and Downtown Revitalization Community Improvement Plan (CIP) update (anticipated completion December 2022) which is proposed to be extended for another 5 years and would, at a minimum, increase funding for renovation grants from a maximum of \$50K to \$100K, per Council’s direction in May 2022;
- b) The Official Plan Update – Village Area specific Official Plan Amendment (anticipated adoption in May 2023) which will provide more detailed planning for the Village area in accordance with direction endorsed by Council in February 2022 identified in the City Plan 2041 Key Directions report;
- c) Updated planning for the City owned Civic Precinct Lands (at Major Mackenzie Drive and Yonge Street) via the Official Plan Update, Investment Attraction Strategy, Parks Plan, and other initiatives:
 - i. Official Plan Update (anticipated OPA adoption for Civic Precinct lands as part of the broader Major Transit Station and Corridors OPA - May 2023), which will provide policy direction regarding permitted uses and density of development for these lands;
 - ii. Investment Attraction Study (approved by Council in June 2022, implementation in process), which recommends exploring public-private partnership(s) to use these lands as “community-based office and culture industry-focused location;”

iii. The Parks Plan (approved by Council in June 2022) which acknowledges that some of these City owned lands along with surrounding civic facilities should be recognized as a Destination Park to host City events, and connect with the Wave Pool and Central Library; and

iv. A Council Resolution (passed in October 2021) to name the square in front of the Central Library as the Dave Barrow Square, in honour of our former Mayor, (to be formally unveiled on September 15, 2022);

d) Comprehensive Zoning Update (anticipated adoption 2024) which would comprehensively update zoning standards and permissions in conformity with the Official Plan, thereby creating development certainty and facilitating new development within the Village area that is compliant with the updated Official Plan;

e) Sustainable development and Affordable Housing Community Improvement Plan (“CIP”) (anticipated adoption 2024) – through Council’s capital budget approval to prepare the background work and a CIP, the ensuing CIP would incentivize new and existing development in the Village area to be more resilient to climate change, and, in the case of residential buildings, more affordable. Implementation of the CIP would attract new, and retain existing businesses, and residents, within the area;

f) Town Park Revitalization Master Plan – (draft Master Plan anticipated in early 2023 for public/Council comment) which will propose park improvements to meet current and future park needs; and

g) City of Richmond Hill’s “Approvals Plus” Service – (in effect) which can be used to facilitate the development application approval process for office development within the Village.

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

Council directs staff to prepare a report for a Council meeting in Q1 2023, in consultation with the Village of Richmond Hill Business Improvement Area Committee (BIA), and other stakeholders, to identify supplementary actions the City could undertake on its own and/or in partnership with the BIA and/or other community partners, in order to enhance and improve the “Village Core”.

This staff report should provide options for possible initiatives, along with associated timing, budgets, and required resources, for Council’s consideration.

These initiatives could include matters such as:

1. Developing a Public Realm Master Plan to guide implementation of public realm improvements that could include: sidewalk/pedestrian path improvements, provisions for more public amenities (including but not limited to benches, larger planters, park features, way finding signage, landscaping), provisions for public art, etc.;
2. Updating in effect by-laws, such as the sign by-law, to be more responsive to market/business operator needs;

3. Identifying new or reinstating previous City events (e.g. farmers' market, holiday parade, jazz festival, etc.);
4. Piloting landscaping improvements in partnership with landowners/third parties; and
5. Upon council approval of potential initiatives, establishing a sub-committee (consisting of BIA members and City staff) to ensure implementation of actions related to this initiative, that are within the purview of the BIA, (e.g. the improvement, beautification and maintenance of municipally owned land buildings and structures, beyond normal City standards, and the promotion of the BIA as a business and shopping area, in accordance with Article 2 of by-law 170-08, etc.)”.

Moved by: Councillor Sheppard

Seconded by: