



Staff Report for Council Meeting

Date of Meeting: December 7, 2022

Report Number: SRCS.22.18

Department: Community Services
Division: Recreation and Culture Services

Subject: SRCS.22.18 Recreation and Culture Plan

Purpose:

To present a 2022 Recreation and Culture Plan, which will guide the provision of recreation and culture facilities and services to 2032, for Council approval.

Recommendations:

- a) That Staff Report SRCS.22.18 regarding the Recreation and Culture Plan be received; and,
- b) That the 2022 Recreation and Culture Plan, attached as Appendix A to SRCS 22.18, be approved.

Contact Person:

Donald Hearn, Director, Recreation and Culture, extension 2503

Report Approval:

Submitted by: Tracey Steele, Acting Commissioner of Community Services

Approved by: Darlene Joslin, Interim 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:

In 2021, the City initiated a review of the Parks Plan, Recreation Plan and Culture Plan. The primary objectives of the Recreation and Culture Plan are to:

- Understand the recreation and culture needs of current and future Richmond Hill residents through a review of community demographics, relevant trends, public consultation and needs assessments.
- Provide recommendations for the provision of recreation and culture facilities programs and services in Richmond Hill.
- Develop strategic directions for the City to consider as it implements recommendations to meet community needs in an effective and financially sustainable manner.

The initial stages of the Recreation and Culture Plan were conducted simultaneously, and in tandem with, the initial stages of work associated with the City's Park Plan. While the Parks Plan addresses the parkland and outdoor recreation facility needs, the Recreation and Culture Plan focuses on the provision of indoor recreation facilities, recreation and culture program and service delivery and cultural opportunities.

The City retained a team of consultants, led by Monteith Brown Planning Consultants, to assist in the development of the Parks, Recreation and Culture Plans. The team completed the background research component of the two plans, which included community engagement, compilation of a demographic profile of the community, and detailed analysis of current trends. The public consultation resulted in input from over 1,160 residents, as well as sports leagues, community groups, artists and arts and cultural organizations.

The findings and results of the background work were presented to Council on January 20, 2022 in the Parks Plan and Recreation and Culture Plan Review – Key Findings and Directions (SRPI.22.021). Council endorsed the document on March 9, 2022. The final Parks Plan document was completed by staff and approved by Council in June, 2022 (SRPI.22.083 Parks Plan). The consultants continued to work on the final 2022 Recreation and Culture Plan, which is attached to this report as Appendix A.

Recreation

The Recreation and Culture Plan makes recommendations for the City's indoor recreation facility provision and recreation service delivery over the next ten years.

Some of the most significant facility development recommendations of the recreation component of the Plan include:

- Provide an indoor aquatics facility, gymnasium and fitness centre and up to four new multi-purpose spaces at the future North Leslie Community Centre.
- Undertake an arena analysis to confirm ice pad needs and timing prior to moving forward with constructing the North Leslie Community Centre.

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- Undertake a study to determine the City's precise seasonal, locational and time allocation needs related to indoor artificial turf fields.
- Address the need for youth and adults 55+ programming space within current and future community centres, including the repurposing of the Bayview Hill fitness studio into a multi-purpose space for youth and / or adult 55+ programming.
- Evaluate and monitor community needs to determine the future requirements for recreation facilities in the High Tech Transit-Oriented Community (Richmond Hill Centre).
- Continue to monitor the demand for indoor tennis and pickleball courts to inform an update to the 2016 Tennis Strategy.

The Plan makes the following significant recommendations regarding the delivery of recreation services and programs:

- Work in concert with the Corporate Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Committee to ensure that Recreation and Culture programs and services include and represent the service priorities of under-represented groups in Richmond Hill.
- Reposition the Youth Action Committee as an advisory committee to the Recreation and Culture Division.
- Implement the strategies related to recreation and culture opportunities for adults 55+ as identified in the Age-Friendly Community Strategy.
- Develop a "Try It" pass to allow residents a range of drop in choices at one harmonized fee.

Culture

The Recreation and Culture Plan summarizes trends, current best practices and strategy directions that will inform how Richmond Hill will approach cultural planning in the next ten years to ensure the City continues to meet current and future needs.

The Recreation and Culture Plan makes the following significant recommendations to support the cultural resources in Richmond Hill and contribute to the vibrancy of the community:

- Undertake research to determine how to foster and maintain cultural districts (including the Downtown area) and their programming.
- Investigate the merits of combining existing cultural uses into multi-purpose buildings including City facilities and park spaces.
- Consider tactical urbanism, public arts and pop-up projects in underutilized spaces and areas.
- Update the Festival and Events Strategy to provide a refreshed vision for the arts and culture sector.
- Conduct a review to identify opportunities to improve and revitalize of the Community and Cultural Grant Program.

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- Revisit the Cultural Leadership Council's Terms of Reference to reflect the outcomes of Richmond Hill's Recreation and Culture Plan.
- Together with the York Region Arts Council, examine a partnership with the Business/Arts community to introduce the artsvest program.

The Recreation and Culture Plan also includes an Implementation Strategy that provides recommendations for prioritizing and scheduling the various recommendations of the plans over the short, medium and long term.

Financial/Staffing/Other Implications:

The 2022 Recreation and Culture Plan attached as Appendix A to Staff Report SRCS.22.18 will be used to inform the City's Capital Forecast and the annual Capital Budget process. There are no immediate staffing or financial implications associated with this report.

Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities 2020-2022:

The Recreation and Culture Plan direction provides short, medium and long term recommendations to ensure that planning and construction of recreation and culture facilities, and development of recreation and culture programs and service, is undertaking in a fiscally responsible manner.

The Recreation and Culture Plan contributes to facilitating a sense of belonging by providing opportunities for the community to gather and participate in a variety of programs, events and services in City venues.

Conclusion:

The 2022 Recreation and Culture Plan provides a ten year vision for recreation facility development, recreation service delivery and cultural growth in Richmond Hill. The Plan reflects the community input from over 1,160 residents, as well as sports leagues, community groups and artists and arts and cultural organizations.

It is recommended that Council approve the 2022 Recreation and Culture Plan (Appendix A).

Attachments:

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

Appendix A – Richmond Hill's Recreation and Culture Plan

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Report Approval Details

Document Title:	SRCS.22.18 Recreation and Culture Plan.docx
Attachments:	- Recreation and Culture Plan FINAL.pdf
Final Approval Date:	Nov 26, 2022

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

Donald Hearn - Nov 25, 2022 - 11:54 AM

Tracey Steele - Nov 25, 2022 - 12:55 PM

Darlene Joslin - Nov 26, 2022 - 9:46 AM