

**Amendment 1  
To The Richmond Hill  
Office Development and Downtown  
Local Centre Community  
Improvement Plan**

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(i)

## **Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan Amendment 1**

The attached schedule and explanatory text constitute Amendment No. 1 to the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan.

This amendment was prepared and recommended by the Richmond Hill Council and was adopted by the Council of the Corporation of the City of Richmond Hill by By-law No. 26-23 in accordance with Sections 28 of the Planning Act on the 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February, 2023.

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**David West**  
**Mayor**

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**Ryan Ban**  
**Deputy City Clerk**

(ii)

## The Corporation of The City Of Richmond Hill

### By-Law 26-23

A By-law to Adopt Amendment 1 to the  
Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community  
Improvement Plan

The Council of the Corporation of the City of Richmond Hill, in accordance with provisions of the Planning Act, R.S.O. 1990, hereby enacts as follows:

1. That Amendment 1 to the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan, consisting of the attached Part Two is hereby adopted.
2. This by-law shall come into force and take effect on the day of the final passing thereof.

Passed this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of February, 2023.

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David West  
Mayor

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Ryan Ban  
Deputy City Clerk

# **1 Part One – The Preamble**

## **1.1 Purpose**

The purpose of this Amendment to the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan (CIP) is to update the CIP with changes to the expiry date of the CIP, funding amounts, eligibility, changes requiring Council approval, and minor technical updates.

## **1.2 Location**

The Amendment applies to the Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) which includes Centres and Corridors along Yonge Street and also the Newkirk and Beaver Creek business parks in the City of Richmond Hill.

## **1.3 Basis**

The proposed amendment is considered by Council to be appropriate for the following reasons:

- The amendment provides additional time for landowners and/or business owners to submit grant applications as demand for office space in the City and the desire to improve the exterior aesthetics of properties located in the Village is still expected. Despite changes seen due to COVID-19 during the last few years of the program's initial duration, public investment in private business has resulted in twice the investment from those businesses and spinoff benefits for surrounding businesses and residents in Richmond Hill.
- The amendment provides increased funding to more reasonably represent the cost of certain building renovation and landscaping projects.
- The amendment provides additional information to applicants to further clarify eligibility requirements to help with the approval process.
- The amendment allows for staff to make changes to the CIP related to certain Official Plan Amendments and/or BIA by-law amendments without requiring Council approval to help keep the document more up-to-date.
- The amendment includes updated statistical data and other minor technical updates to better align with other documents.

## **2 Part Two - The Amendment**

### **2.1 Introduction**

All of this part of the document entitled **Part Two – The Amendment**, consisting of the following text in Section 2.2 constitutes Amendment 1 to the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan.

### **2.2 Details of the Amendment**

The Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan is amended as follows:

- 2.2.1 That the title and any references to “Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan” be substituted with “Richmond Hill Office Development and Village Revitalization Community Improvement Plan”.
- 2.2.2 That any references to “Downtown Local Centre” and/or the “Downtown” be substituted with “Village Local Centre” and/or “Village”.
- 2.2.3 That any references to the Façade, Landscape and Signage Improvement Grant be substituted with "Façade, Landscaping and Signage Improvement Grant”.
- 2.2.4 That any references to “Town” of Richmond Hill be substituted with “City” of Richmond Hill.
- 2.2.5 That Section 3.0 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended as follows:
  - i. That the words “as amended” be added after the word “2010” so that it appears as follows:

“The CIPA boundary includes the following areas, as designated in the Official Plan (2010, as amended):”
  - ii. That the words “and lands east of the CN/GO rail corridor and north of Major Mackenzie within the Newkirk Local Centre” be added after the words “Newkirk Employment Area” so that it appears as follows:

“Newkirk Employment Area and lands east of the CN/GO rail corridor and north of Major Mackenzie within the Newkirk Local Centre.”

- iii. That the words “and the East Beaver Creek and Highway 7 Local Centre” be added after the words “Beaver Creek Employment Area” so that it appears as follows:

“Beaver Creek Employment Area and the East Beaver Creek  
and Highway 7 Local Centre”

2.2.6 That Section 4.3 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended as follows:

- i. That the third paragraph be replaced with the following text:

“This TIEG program focuses on net municipal taxation gain associated with new office development, which would otherwise be unrealized if the office development had not occurred. The grant is based on the “Reimbursing Developer” approach. As part of the program, the property owner/developer pays for the full cost of new office development and the resultant increase in property taxes. The program allows the City to grant back to the owner and/or development and/or assigned recipient, on a declining basis, an amount equal to a portion of the municipal portion of the property tax increase over an established “base” assessment. During the grant period, tax assessment growth resulting from an office development is forgone income for the City. However, at the end of the TIEG program, the grant ceases and the City collects the full amount of property taxes, realizing the full benefit of increased property assessment. The City benefits by the resulting revaluation and increase in tax liable on the property over the long term. This program supports the City’s objectives to create jobs and reduce out-commuting of residents who work within the office sectors.”

- ii. That a fourth bullet be added to the fourth paragraph as follows:
  - “In the case of mixed-use developments, the grant would only apply the tax increment applicable to the office portion of a development.”
- iii. That a table and two bullets be added under the fourth paragraph as follows:

“Table 1: Illustrative Annual Grant-Back Share/Amount

- This program does not apply to the portion of the tax rate levied by York Region.
- This program does not apply to the Education portion of the tax rate.”

Duration/ Period	Grant Share	Annual Tax Increment on Municipal	Grant Value Payable	Taxes Retained by City
Year 1	90%	\$50,000	\$45,000	\$5,000
Year 2	80%	\$50,000	\$40,000	\$10,000
Year 3	70%	\$50,000	\$35,000	\$15,000
Year 4	60%	\$50,000	\$30,000	\$20,000
Year 5	50%	\$50,000	\$25,000	\$25,000
Year 6	40%	\$50,000	\$20,000	\$30,000
Year 7	30%	\$50,000	\$15,000	\$35,000
Year 8	20%	\$50,000	\$10,000	\$40,000
Year 9	10%	\$50,000	\$5,000	\$45,000
Year 10	0%	\$50,000	\$0	\$50,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>\$500,000</b>	<b>\$225,000</b>	<b>\$275,00</b>

2.2.7 That Section 4.3.3 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended by deleting the text “Additional provisions regarding this program are set out in Appendix A – Schedule of Program Details” and replacing it with the following text:

**“Approval Process**

The City reimburses the owner or assigned recipient by way of an annual grant equivalent to the agreed Municipal Portion of the increment property tax increase over an established “base” assessment value and **tax liability**. This defined increment is calculated after the reduction of:

- Any phase- in agreements to soften tax increases that may exist through existing policy or programs;
- Or any tax rebates granted to charitable organizations as owners or tenants; and
- Any other rebate which lessens the overall initial (prior to the program) tax liability of the property.

Given the nature of the grant program as achievable only on completion and revaluation of the property, the City of Richmond Hill will enable the approval in principle for accessing this grant subject to necessary conditions. This approval in principle can be provided at the same time as approval for other programs of assistance is provided.

The City of Richmond Hill will determine the existing “base” assessment for the property – this will normally be defined as being either at the time of approval of the application for Tax Increment Equivalent Grant support and is based on the assessment and tax class at that time. The City may, at its discretion, establish an alternate date for purposes of establishing the base assessment and property **tax liability**. Where a project is phased



over several years the grant will be based on the property re- assessment and taxable status of the project in each of the interim years before project completion. At project completion, the grant (as applicable) will be based on the assessed property value provided by the Municipal Property Assessment Corporation (MPAC).

Final approval of grant funding in each year occurs after:

- a. Conditions as stated in the Tax Increment Equivalent Grant Agreement have been fulfilled;
- b. Submission of eligible costs at the time of application;
- c. Receipt of assessed value of the property by MPAC in each year; and
- d. Final approval of amount of grant by Council.

For multi- phase/multi- year projects, approval is based on completion and final costing of each phase, and revaluation in each year by MPAC.

The commencement date for the program (for purposes of calculating the increment) will be at the discretion of the City of Richmond Hill following discussions with the applicant based on the merits of the development project and resulting estimates of tax increment grant created by the development project over time.

### **Target Group**

This grant program is intended for landowners/developers who are actively seeking the rehabilitation, renovation, (re)development or re-use of properties within the Community Improvement Project Area (CIPA) for office and provide:

- i. Site plan/floor plans for rehabilitation, renovation, or (re)development; and
- ii. Estimated costs of renovation, rehabilitation or (re)development.

### **Fiscal Implications**

The potential exists for fiscal impacts to the City arising from what is effectively a deferment of a portion of tax revenues. As such, the City, as part of the application evaluation process, will need to determine whether or not it is in the best interest of the City to approve a grant based on the likely community improvement benefits of a given project.”

2.2.8 That Section 4.4 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended as follows:

- i. That the first and second paragraphs be deleted and replaced with the following text:

“This program is designed to promote the adaptive re-use of existing structures (industrial, commercial or other) for office in the Village Local Centre, Oak Ridges Local Centre, Newkirk Business Park and Beaver Creek Business Park areas of the CIPA. The program is also intended to promote functional improvements, accessibility and upgrades to an older building stock as well as change of use as permitted under zoning (or as may be amended through Zoning By-law Amendment application). Property improvements can include any identified and eligible improvements to the building, its structure, building systems, and major internal fit-up.

This program will support building improvements resulting in higher property assessment(s) and supports the City’s objectives to create jobs and reduce out- commuting of residents who work within the office sectors.

This grant program has the potential to leverage significant private sector investment in interior building renovations and improvement associated with office uses, and help address the costs involved with a range of matters such as:

- Building, fire and other code compliance upgrades linked to the development of office space;
- Expansion/additions for the office;
- Retrofitting space for office (upper and ground floors);
- Interior structural works and upgrades (including electrical, mechanical, HVAC and other building systems.);
- Renovations to a building on the City’s Inventory of Cultural Heritage Resources”

.”

- ii. That the first bullet of the third paragraph (new fourth paragraph) be amended by replacing the word “\$50,000” with the word “\$100,000” so that it appears as follows:

“The grant maximum is \$100,000 per property and the grant minimum is \$10,000 per property;”

- 2.2.9 That Section 4.4.1 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended by replacing the sentence “Renovations to a building on the Town’s Inventory of Architectural and Historical Significance” with the following text:

“Renovations related to the adaptive re-use of a building on the City’s Inventory of Cultural Heritage Resources for any non-residential use.”

2.2.10 That Section 4.4.3 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended by deleting the sentence “Additional provisions regarding this program are set out in Appendix A Schedule of Program Details.” And replacing it with the following text:

“Additional provisions regarding this program are set out below.

### **Approval Process**

Grants are dispersed upon ***Final Completion***; however, Council has the discretion to disperse a portion of the grant in advance of completion, without amendment to this plan.

Conditions of approval will be established by the City and may extend to any reasonable consideration to ensure the interests of the City as funder are upheld. Generally, all approvals under this program will require that construction commence within 6 months of an approved grant application and building permit (if required), and ***Final Completion*** within 18 months. Council may at its discretion adjust these requirements based on the particular circumstances of the construction project which may necessitate approvals from other agencies and/or delays in construction which are not in the control of the applicant to overcome.

Applicants will be required to enter into an agreement as to the above terms and conditions of the grant

### **Other Restrictions**

Other restrictions include the following:

- The City of Richmond Hill has the right to review any and all aspects of the program, including the purpose, form, method of application, evaluation and amount of funding of the program, from time to time, or at any time, for any reason, and at the sole and absolute discretion of the City.
- As necessary, the City may amplify or adjust the application and approval protocols associated with this program.
- The City may refuse an application if it deems project feasibility to be limited or for any other reason, at the discretion of the City.
- If the completed project proves to be inconsistent with the proposed project that was approved and detailed in the application form and supporting documentation, then the City has the right to delay (pending correction of the building works), withhold or cancel the disbursement of funds.

### **Other Government/Non-profit Organization investment**

Applicants who identify other sources of financial assistance for interior building renovations will be given preference in the allocation of funds. The City retains the right to limit funds to reflect impacts of other sources of funding.”

2.2.11 That Section 4.5 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended as follows:

- i. That the words “, in keeping with the design objectives of the Official Plan for the Village Local Centre” be added after the word “effects”.
- ii. That the sentence “A key goal of this program is to support the achievement of the linked system of courtyards” be deleted and replaced with the following text:

“The grant encourages the private sector property owners to implement aesthetic improvements to properties that otherwise may not occur due to cost-related issues. The target group for this grant program are private sector property owners, with an emphasis on commercial, retail, office, and mixed-use properties within the BIA.”
- iii. That a new paragraph be added after the second paragraph (new third paragraph) with the following text:

“The benefits of this program are:

  - Grant supports the enhanced aesthetic appeal of the Village through façade, public realm and signage improvements, as well as street- front redevelopment. This is expected to result in increased visitation and positive economic impacts.
  - Potential to leverage private sector investment in moderate building improvements which have a direct benefit to the architectural quality of the Village Local Centre (VLC) in Richmond Hill.
  - Public and private space design improvements may contribute to job creation in the Village.”
- iv. That Table 2 be amended by deleting the sentence “This includes buildings located on a corner lot (a property with frontage on two municipal streets) or on a lot with access onto the linked system of courtyards.” from the second bullet under the façade grant section.
- v. That Table 2 be amended by replacing the word “\$2,500” with the word “\$5,000” and replacing the word “\$5,000” with the word “\$10,000” under the landscaping grant section so that it appears as follows:

- “Matching grant of up to 50% of **eligible costs** or a maximum grant of \$5,000 per property for a single frontage, whichever is less.
  - For combined street-front and side-lot or rear-lot landscaping improvements: Matching grant of up to 50% of **eligible costs** or a maximum grant of \$10,000 per property, whichever is less. The minimum grant is \$2,000 per property. Project applications including matching assistance of less than \$2,000 will not be considered.”
- vi. That the bullets in Table 2 under the signage grant section be amended by replacing the word “property” with the words “business unit” so that it appears as follows:
- “Matching grant of up to 50% of **eligible costs** or a maximum grant of \$2,500 per business unit, whichever is less.
  - The minimum grant is \$1,000 per business unit. Project applications including matching assistance of less than \$1,000 will not be considered.”

2.2.12 That Section 4.5.1 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended by replacing the sentences “b. Side façade, where the side of a property is facing a public and/or private street and/or public park and/or public gathering space” and “c. Rear façade, where the rear of a property is facing a public and/or private street or public park or public gathering space or parking area that is accessible to the general public.” with the following text:

“b. Side façade or rear façade, where the side or rear of a property is facing a public and/or private street/lane and/or public park and/or public gathering space, and/or parking area that is accessible and/or highly visible to the general public.”

2.2.13 That Section 4.5.2 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended as follows:

- i. That the words “3. New surface materials” be replaced with the following text in item list number 3:

“3. New or updated surface materials, such as awnings”.
- ii. That the words “(e.g. pavers, stamped concrete, trees, plants, bio-swales)” be added after the word “landscaping” in item list number 4.
- iii. That the words “Street front” be deleted from item list number 7.

- iv. That the words “a linked system of courtyards” be deleted and replaced with the words “streetfronts, lanes, and/or parking areas” in item list number 8.

2.2.14 That Section 4.5.3 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended by deleting the words “in Appendix A Schedule of Program Details” and replacing it with the following text:

“below:

### **Approval Process**

Façade, Landscaping and Signage Improvement grants are dispersed upon **Final Completion**; however, Council has the discretion to disperse a portion of the grant in advance of completion, without amendment to this plan.

Conditions of approval will be established by the City and may extend to any reasonable consideration to ensure the interests of the City as funder are upheld. Generally, all approvals under this program will require that construction commence within 6 months of an approved building permit, if applicable, and **Final Completion** within 18 months. Council may at its discretion adjust these requirements based on the particular circumstances of the construction project which may necessitate approvals from other agencies and/or delays in construction which are not in the control of the applicant to overcome.

### **Other Restrictions**

- The City of Richmond Hill has the right to review any and all aspects of the program, including the purpose, form, method of application, evaluation and amount of funding of the program, from time to time, or at any time, for any reason, and at the sole and absolute discretion of the City.
- As necessary, the City may amplify or adjust the application and approval protocols associated with this program.
- The City may refuse an application if it deems project feasibility to be limited or for any other reason, at the sole discretion of the City.
- If the completed project proves to be inconsistent with the proposed project that was approved and detailed in the application form and supporting documentation, the City retains the right to delay (pending correction of building work), withhold or cancel the disbursement of funds.

### **Other Government/Non-Profit Organization Investment**

Applicants who identify other sources of financial assistance for exterior building renovations will be given preference in the allocation of funds. The City of Richmond Hill retains the right to limit funds to reflect impacts of other sources of funding.”

- 2.2.15 That paragraph 3 in Section 6.1 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended by adding the sentence “ This CIP has been extended another five years to 2027.” after the sentence “Council has the right to extend, revise or alter the CIP beyond the initial five year horizon, subject to the objectives of Council.” so that it appears as follows:

“Council has the right to extend, revise or alter the CIP beyond the initial five year horizon, subject to the objectives of Council. This CIP has been extended another five years to 2027.”

- 2.2.16 That Section 6.2.4 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended by replacing the sentence “At no time will financial support be provided on a retroactive basis to projects where eligible costs have been incurred prior to the adoption of the CIP.” with the following text:

“At no time will financial support be provided on a retroactive basis to projects where eligible costs have been incurred prior to the approval of the grant application by Council. City staff will only consider grant applications for proposed projects where no work has commenced and no expenses have incurred in connection with the proposed project.”

- 2.2.17 That Section 7.3 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended by deleting the words “a comprehensive interim review of the CIP in Year 3 of implementation with” after the word “complete” so that it appears as follows:

“Based on monitoring and review, City staff will complete a detailed review in Year 5, to assess the effectiveness of the plan and its programs.”

- 2.2.18 That Section 7.4 of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended by adding the words “, unless the boundary change is a result of an Official Plan amendment or BIA by-law amendment” after the word “CIP” so that it appears as follows:

“1. A significant change to the boundary of the geographic area subject to the CIP, unless the boundary change is a result of an Official Plan amendment or BIA by-law amendment;”

2.2.19 That Appendix A of the Richmond Hill Office Development and Downtown Local Centre Community Improvement Plan be amended by deleting it entirely.