



## **Economic Development Committee**

### **Minutes**

**EDC#01-23**

**Tuesday, March 28, 2023, 1:30 p.m.**

**Council Chambers**

**225 East Beaver Creek Road**

**Richmond Hill, Ontario**

An Economic Development Committee meeting was held on Tuesday, March 28, 2023 at 1:30 p.m. in Council Chambers via videoconference.

Committee Members Present in Council Chambers:

Regional and Local Councillor Chan - Chair  
Mayor West – Vice Chair  
Councillor Liu  
Councillor Cui  
Councillor Shiu

Also in attendance and present in Council Chambers:

Councillor Thompson  
Councillor Cilevitz

Also in attendance and present via videoconference:

Regional and Local Councillor DiPaola

Staff Members present in Council Chambers:

D. Joslin, City Manager  
A. Ierullo, Director, Economic Development and Richmond Hill Center  
S. Huycke, Director, Legislative Services/City Clerk  
B. Osler, Senior Economic Development Officer  
M. Logue, Project Manager, Development Partnerships  
A. Horghidan, Senior Economic Development Officer  
J. Svetlitsa, Program Support Administrator  
A. Luk, Small Business Consultant  
P. Ruparel, Small Business Consultant

R. Ban, Deputy City Clerk  
S. Dumont, Council/Committee Coordinator  
C. Connolly, Legislative Services Assistant

Staff Members present via videoconference:

T. Steele, Commissioner of Community Services  
S. Adams, Commissioner of Corporate and Financial Services  
K. Kwan, Commissioner of Planning and Infrastructure

**1. Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

In the absence of a duly appointed Chair and Vice-Chair, Ryan Ban, Deputy City Clerk, called the meeting to order at 1:30 p.m. and called upon members of the Committee to appoint a Chair of the Economic Development Committee for the 2022 to 2026 Term of Office.

Moved by: Councillor Cui

- a) That Regional and Local Councillor Chan of the Economic Development Committee be elected as Chair for the 2022 to 2026 Term of Council;
- b) That Mayor West of the Economic Development Committee be elected as Vice-Chair for the 2022 to 2026 Term of Council.

Carried Unanimously

Regional and Local Councillor Chan assumed the Chair at 1:32 p.m. He thanked his colleagues for their trust, and remarked that it was an honour to serve the City of Richmond Hill.

**2. Adoption of Agenda**

Moved by: Councillor Liu

That the agenda be adopted as distributed by the Clerk.

Carried Unanimously

**3. Disclosures of Pecuniary Interest and General Nature Thereof**

There were no disclosures of pecuniary interest by members of the Committee under the *Municipal Conflict of Interest Act*.

**4. Minutes of Previous Meeting**

- 4.1 Minutes - Economic Development Committee meeting EDC#01-22 held May 16, 2022**

Moved by: Mayor West

a) That the minutes of the Economic Development Committee meeting EDC#01-22 held May 16, 2022, be adopted.

Carried Unanimously

**5. Delegations**

There were no delegations.

**6. Scheduled Business**

**6.1 Economic Development Program Overview - Presentation by Anthony Ierullo, Director, Richmond Hill Centre and Economic Development**

Anthony Ierullo, Director, Richmond Hill Centre and Economic Development, reviewed Richmond Hill's employment trends with respect to annual employment growth, employment growth by sector and vacant employment lands by business park. A. Ierullo outlined how the City drove public and private sector investment in the community, core economic development program areas, and noted the coordinated approach to investment attraction.

Committee members commented on the challenge of having limited vacant employment lands; that they needed to be used to the maximum possible benefit; and that significant economic development was possible along centres, corridors and major transit routes. Committee members commented on strategies to maximize employment lands, importance of promoting living and working locally, and the value of collaborating with post secondary institutions.

Staff responded to queries regarding the methodology used to calculate vacant lands, investment attraction work, and how the City planned to respond to the employment growth trends.

Moved by: Mayor West

a) That the presentation by Anthony Ierullo, Director, Richmond Hill Centre and Economic Development, regarding Economic Development Program Overview, be received and all comments be referred back to staff.

Carried Unanimously

**6.2 Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction Program Overview - Presentation by Brenda Osler, Senior Economic Development Officer and Michael Logue, Project Manager, Development Partnerships**

Brenda Osler, Senior Economic Development Officer, provided details on the importance of the Business Retention and Expansion (BRE) program, and reviewed the program's scope, benefits and successes. B. Osler reviewed the Investment Attraction Strategy, and the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) Aftercare Program component of the Investment Attraction process.

Michael Logue, Project Manager, Development Partnerships, described the Approval Plus program, its benefits, eligibility criteria and program successes.

Staff advised that they will seek direction on which sub-sectors of the four key sectors within the Investment Attraction Strategy to focus on, and noted that a marketing plan and materials would follow, in response to queries on how the City planned to attract businesses. Clarification on whom Council can contact should they find opportunities was also provided.

Staff advised of the land uses permitted on commercial and industrial lands, and clarified that unlike the Federal and Provincial government, at a local level they were prohibited from offering any type of incentive or subsidy to attract opportunities to the City.

Committee members expressed their support of the Approval Plus program, and commented on the economic opportunities that can be linked to culture and sports in Richmond Hill. Staff also provided insight on key players in the investment attraction ecosystem within Ontario, as it pertained to attracting businesses to the City.

Moved by: Councillor Shiu

a) That the presentation by Brenda Osler, Senior Economic Development Officer and Michael Logue, Project Manager, Development Partnerships, regarding Business Retention, Expansion and Attraction Program Overview, be received and all comments be referred back to staff.

Carried Unanimously

**6.3 Richmond Hill Small Business Enterprise Centre Overview - Presentation by Alexandru Horghidan, Senior Economic Development Officer**

Alexandru Horghidan, Senior Economic Development Officer, provided an overview of the Richmond Hill Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC), including how it was funded and services it provides. He reviewed the Starter Company Plus and Summer Company programs, highlighted the support provided by the Centre for Local Innovation and Collaboration, shared alumni testimonials and the key outputs of the SBEC in 2022.

Committee members shared their gratitude for the support and funding provided to young entrepreneurs and noted the significant talent within Richmond Hill. Staff also provided clarification on grant funding dispersed under the Starter Company Plus Program.

In response to a request to re-instate the Business Council, the City Manager advised that staff will look into it and bring any recommendations they may have to the Committee.

Moved by: Councillor Cui

a) That the presentation by Alexandru Horghidan, Senior Economic Development Officer, regarding Richmond Hill Small Business Enterprise Centre Overview, be received and all comments be referred back to staff.

Carried Unanimously

**7. Date of Next Meeting - at the call of the Chair**

**8. Adjournment**

Moved by: Councillor Cui

That the meeting be adjourned.

Carried Unanimously

The meeting was adjourned at 3:24 p.m.