



# Richmond Hill Winter Carnival

Winter Carnival 2026: Feb 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> | Mill Pond Park, Mill & Trench Streets, Richmond Hill

October 26 2025

City of Richmond Hill Mayor, Councillors, City Staff, and members of the community:

We write to request your support for our 57th annual celebration, scheduled to take place at Mill Pond Park February 7-8, 2026.

Since its inception 57 years ago, the Richmond Hill Winter Carnival has grown from a modest local gathering into the most anticipated community lead winter event in our City. The Carnival was established in 1969. Over the decades, the festival has faithfully reflected the evolving spirit of our community, providing a platform for multicultural expression, local music, dynamic performances, and family-friendly activities.

Organizing an event of this scope requires significant resources to ensure an exciting and engaging experience for all participants. Our committee works year-round and relies on the dedication of over 150 volunteers. We are committed to keeping the Carnival fun and free to the public. We believe that everyone, regardless of financial means, should have access to community celebrations that honour our shared heritage.

The Richmond Hill Winter Carnival is more than a two-day event—it is a catalyst for lasting relationships and civic pride. Past festivals have generated a measurable boost for local enterprises, fostered intercultural dialogue, and inspired countless volunteers to take on leadership roles in our community.

The Carnival stage has been the centre piece of the Carnival since the beginning. The stage is the heart and soul of Carnival. It's the centre hub from which all events and activities radiate out. It provides the 'Carnival soundtrack' of live music that is enjoyed throughout the park. During Carnival it hosts entertainers, musicians, and educational presenters who share their joy with Carnival guests.

There have been four stages though the lifetime of the Carnival. The latest is referred to as the BC stage as it was built in the province of British Columbia. The BC stage was designed with significant input from the Carnival Committee. Carnival contributed financially to the BC stage build-out in 2010. We funded the electrical installation and heaters. The stage includes features required for the Carnival such as:

- Insulated walls

- Hinged stage surface to allow the stage to be secured at night

- 150 amp quick connect to electrical supply

- Armored electrical feed cable to allow the electrical supply to be laid on the ground safely

- Large overhead radiant heaters

- Large electrical receptacles for on-site first aid

The 12,000 watts of radiant heat enable musicians to perform in sub zero temperatures. Without this heat they cannot perform.

Carnival's involvement with the stage goes as far as having our stage manager trained by Parks Supervisor Bucky McLarty on the operation of the hinged stage surface.

After the 2025 Winter Carnival, the Carnival committee was told by the City that the stage is no longer available to Carnival as it has been removed from the list of items available to support community events. We're told it's only to be

used at City events. As Carnival has been a part of the Richmond Hill community since 1969 and was intimately involved with the design and procurement of the stage, we believe this is a short-sighted decision that does not respect our heritage event.

In summary, for the Carnival Committee to deliver the best Carnival to our community, we request use of the BC stage and it be located across Mill Street again this year.

Thank you for your support,

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