



2024 - 2027
Strategic Plan

**Richmond Hill Strategic Plan
2025 Annual Report**

Richmond **Hill**



MESSAGE FROM THE MAYOR

On behalf of the City of Richmond Hill and Members of Council, I am pleased to present the Strategic Plan 2025 Annual Report.

As we look back on this past year, I am proud of the progress we've achieved together under the City's 2024–2027 Strategic Plan. Throughout 2025, we continued to advance our shared vision of creating a vibrant, inclusive city of neighbours. Our priorities—sustainability, economic growth, and enhancing quality of life—have remained at the heart of every decision and initiative.

This progress would not be possible without the dedication and collaboration of our residents, businesses, Council, and staff. Thank you for your commitment to building a stronger community. Together, we are shaping a city that not only thrives today but sets the foundation for generations to come.

MESSAGE FROM THE CITY MANAGER

In 2025, we have made great strides around our Strategic Plan's three Pillars: building a livable and sustainable community, focusing on people, and strengthening our foundations. The successes in this report reflect the hard work and commitment of our staff, and together, we are setting the course for a vibrant future. Every milestone reached this year is the result of our commitment to excellence and service to our community. In a world of constant change—driven by new legislation, emerging priorities, and growth—we embrace innovation and continuous improvement to stay resilient and responsive.

In the pages that follow, you will see more details on our achievements as well as information about our future plans. Together, we are building a stronger foundation for Richmond Hill as we continue to support and lead a vibrant city for all who call it home.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

“We are gathering on lands that have been home to First Nations Peoples from time immemorial. We acknowledge that what we now call Richmond Hill is on the Treaty Lands and Territory of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation and the Mississauga and Chippewa Nations of the Williams Treaty. We also recognize that we are on part of the traditional territories of the Haudenosaunee and the Huron Wendat.

We would also like to acknowledge all First Nation, Inuit and Métis peoples from across North America, also known as Turtle Island, who now reside in the City of Richmond Hill. We are committed to rebuilding constructive and cooperative relationships.”

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OVERVIEW OF THE 2024-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

In February 2024, Council approved [Richmond Hill’s 2024-2027 Strategic Plan](#), which set out a vision for “a vibrant and inclusive City of neighbours.” What does this mean? It sets out that we are, and aspire to be, vibrant and inclusive by being a welcoming community with a sense of place, thriving businesses and valued cultural and natural heritage. This vision also recognizes that we are a growing city, but we want to maintain and support a sense of connectedness and care we have for our neighbours.

The Plan is structured around [three Pillars, each with priorities and priority actions](#) to guide our work towards realizing this vision: Growing a Livable, Sustainable Community; Focusing on People; and Strengthening our Foundations.

The Strategic Plan reflects the feedback from residents, businesses, staff, and Council, gathered through an extensive engagement process in the spring and summer of 2023. Over 1,300 individuals from various stakeholder groups were engaged as part of the strategic planning process, including Council, approximately 400+ staff and 900+ community members. This work to understand our collective ambitions for Richmond Hill facilitate the alignment of the City’s priorities to those of the larger community.

With two years of work under the plan now complete, this report is intended to provide an overview of the progress the City has made in 2025, as well as outline what is planned for 2026 and 2027 as we continue this journey.



PILLAR 1

Growing a Livable, Sustainable Community

One of Richmond Hill’s key challenges is balancing growth and development with the diverse needs of its community. The City strives to provide more housing options, improved connectivity and a healthy natural environment while protecting its unique identity as a welcoming community.

To achieve this, the City is guided by its Official Plan vision of being the centrepiece of York Region and one of the most prominent, complete communities in the Greater Toronto Area. Our priorities include increasing housing choices, enhancing transit systems and preserving natural spaces, while supporting local businesses and strengthening community connections. These efforts aim to ensure that Richmond Hill grows sustainably, offering opportunities for current and future residents while preserving its character and charm.

PRIORITY 1:

Manage growth in a way that enables choice and connection for the city, its residents and businesses now and in the future.



Richmond Hill was successful in our application for the federal government’s [Housing Accelerator Fund \(HAF\)](#) and received \$7.8M in 2025 to accelerate the creation of housing in our community. Nine initiatives were underway to build policies and programs to create more local housing faster.

33/34
milestones completed with the federal government

Over the last two years, the City has completed 33 out of the 34 milestones identified in the agreement with the federal government and is on track to complete the remaining milestone in 2026. To enable diverse unit types and housing options across the City, 2,642 net new residential units were approved through building permit review.

The City launched the [Community Improvement Plan for the Affordable Housing and Sustainable Design Program](#) and accepted applications for the 2025 intake. The City awarded incentive funds, valued up to \$20 million to three projects representing up to 209 new affordable rental units to be built in Richmond Hill.

\$20M
in incentive funds to be awarded



With a streamlined review process and standardized operating procedures established, Richmond Hill approved a total of 5,663 new residential dwelling units through planning applications throughout 2024 and 2025.

5,663
new residential units approved 2024-2025

The City completed its first Comprehensive Zoning By-law, which consolidated 44 parent zoning by-laws and satisfied four of the City’s nine HAF initiatives. This by-law reflects current development practices with updated planning rules in strategic areas in the city, to allow more housing options by minimizing the planning approvals required.

Launched in November 2025, [the Affordable Housing Concierge Pilot Program](#) provides a centralized point of contact for developers interested in building affordable housing in Richmond Hill. Through this program, the City has established a dedicated staff team to respond to inquiries and offer guidance on affordable housing incentive programs and development requirements. Eligible projects can access enhanced support through the Affordable Housing Concierge Service, including prioritized processing of development applications and assistance with intergovernmental coordination.

PRIORITY 1:

Continued

Traffic calming measures introduced in 2025 through the City's Traffic Safety and Operations Strategy (TSOS) are enhancing road safety for both motorists and pedestrians. Initiatives included the creation of 86 new Community Safety Zones, installation of 30 pole-mounted radar boards, and piloting "slow down" signs at six locations across the City. Additional efforts involved traffic calming measures at 18 sites using signage, bollards, pavement markings, and speed cushions, along with the implementation of speed limit reductions in key areas.



Slow Down Signs on Bantry Avenue

Support from Richmond Hill's Small Business Enterprise Centre (SBEC) directly resulted in the creation of 72 jobs and 60 businesses from January-December 2025.

Since 2024, 31 Richmond Hill companies have graduated from the City's Centre for Local Innovation and Collaboration (CLIC) Program. Partnering with Richmond Hill's SBEC and OCAD University, CLIC helps businesses refine offerings and models through design thinking, uncover market insights, and access local research and development opportunities via government funding. Its mission is to drive innovation and create new products, services, and partnerships.

Diversifying trade and attracting foreign investment in Europe

In spring 2025, the City led a trade mission to Germany, attending Hannover Messe, the world's leading industrial technology and transformation trade show. Richmond Hill partnered with York Region, NGen, the Trade Commission Service, Innovation, Science and Economic Development Canada, and Global Affairs Canada to promote and attract international trade and investment. The Mayor and staff held dozens of successful engagements, including meetings with 15 European businesses, delivering opening remarks at four panel discussions showcasing Richmond Hill and York Region, and identifying eight additional European companies to pursue opportunities with following the mission.



Mayor West, City and Canadian officials with representatives from BMW during the Hannover Messe Conference in Germany.



Proposed Station rendering of the Yonge North Subway Extension. Photo courtesy of Metrolinx.

The first contract for the Yonge North Subway Extension's advanced tunnelling project was awarded in 2025, marking a major step toward bringing rapid transit to Richmond Hill. Locally, work continues to advance the complete communities vision, with the Richmond Hill Centre Secondary Plan approved on schedule. These milestones demonstrate steady progress toward a connected, transit-oriented urban centre that aligns with the City's long-term growth objectives.



In 2025, Council approved the Concept Plan for Dave Barrow Civic Square Park, setting in motion the building of Richmond Hill's newest destination park. The park, to be located in the heart of the city near the Central Library at Yonge Street and Major Mackenzie Drive, will feature an amphitheatre and spacious open grounds for performances and events, a seasonal skating rink, ample green space, an educational garden, and many other amenities that will bring our vibrant and growing community together.



[Richmond Hill's Electric Vehicle \(EV\) Charging Strategy](#) was approved by Council in December 2025. The Strategy sets out a practical, cost-efficient, and scalable plan to expand Richmond Hill's EV charge station network in step with local EV adoption and evolving community needs.



The City's first [Micromobility Strategy](#) was approved in September 2025 to regulate the use of micromobility devices, such as e-bikes and e-scooters. The Strategy permits personal e-scooter use on City roads, bike lanes, cycle tracks, and in-boulevard multi-use paths, while establishing rules and regulations, promoting public education and enforcement (with a campaign initiated in fall 2025), ensuring year-round infrastructure maintenance, and exploring shared micromobility options in future.

PRIORITY 2:

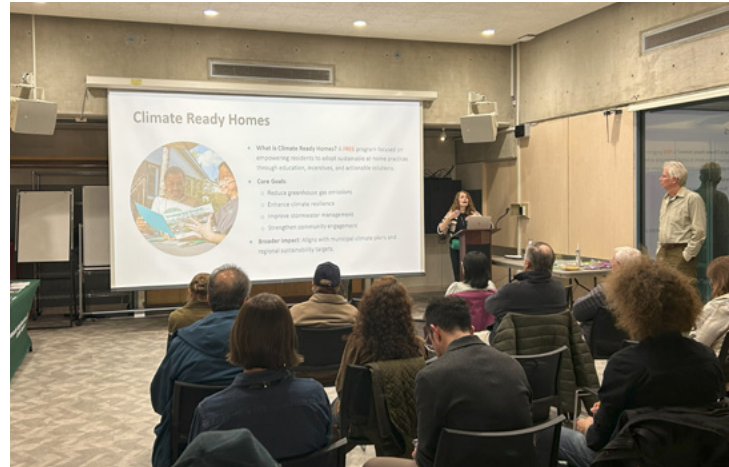
Implement environmental sustainability practices in our work in collaboration with the community, including planning for climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Improvements made through the City’s Corporate Energy Plan in 2025 included mechanical, electrical, and refrigeration system upgrades and heat pump replacements, yielding over 115,856 kWh in energy savings and over \$18,000 in cost savings.

In 2025, the City initiated a partnership with Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) to deliver the Climate Ready Homes program, which offers workshops and free one-on-one consultations for Richmond Hill residents that empower them to improve the climate resiliency of their home and property, increase comfort, and reduce costs.

To cut down on single-use plastic waste at internal gatherings, the City introduced a “dish library” for staff, an innovative program that encourages the use of reusable plates, cups, mugs, and cutlery. In 2025, nearly 2,250 items were borrowed – a 41% increase over 2024 that demonstrates the City’s continued commitment to waste reduction. City staff were also recognized with a Silver Promotion and Education award from the Municipal Waste Association for this unique initiative.

In 2025, staff enhanced processes and resources to support the implementation of Richmond Hill’s Bird-Safe Design Standards, helping to ensure future development in Richmond Hill is designed to protect birds from window collisions.



Climate Ready Homes Program



Energy and Waste Section staff receive an award for the City’s innovative efforts to reduce the use of single-use plastics by staff.

PRIORITY 3:

Make decisions that meet the needs of today’s residents without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.



In 2025, 1,780 trees were planted at the Richmond Hill David Dunlap Observatory (RHDDO) Park as part of the City’s long-term ecological restoration efforts. 13,206 trees were planted in Richmond Hill overall in 2025.



In April 2025, the City updated its Tree Preservation By-law to better protect trees on private property, contributing to the enhancement of Richmond Hill’s tree canopy and urban forest.



The City designated 12 properties as having cultural heritage significance in Richmond Hill in 2025, preserving a deeper understanding of our past while guiding the community toward the future.



PILLAR 2

Focusing on People

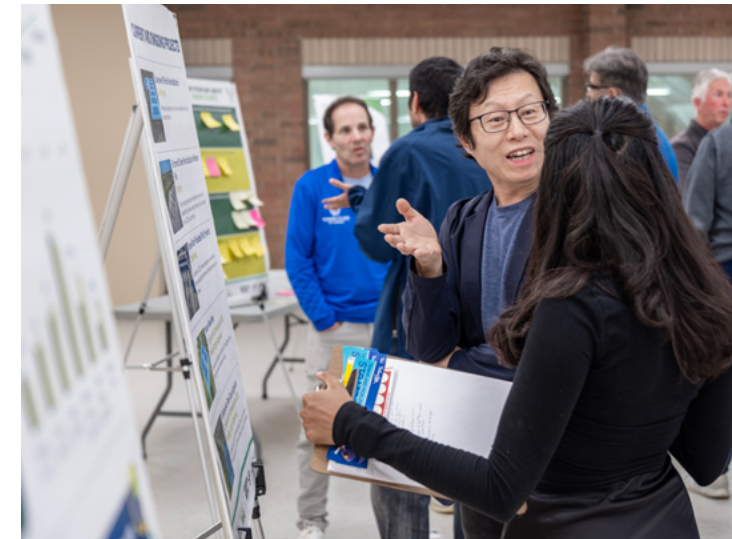
An important part of the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan is about focusing on people: those who live and work in Richmond Hill and the quality of their experience of the city, as well as the people that make up the City’s workforce, who provide the expertise and skills to ensure service delivery and continuity in an ever-changing municipal environment.

The priorities and priority actions under this Pillar are about quality programming and events that promote connection and resilience, building a workforce for tomorrow, meaningful community engagement, inclusion and working toward Truth and Reconciliation with the city’s First Nations Treaty Partners and Indigenous Peoples.



PRIORITY 1:

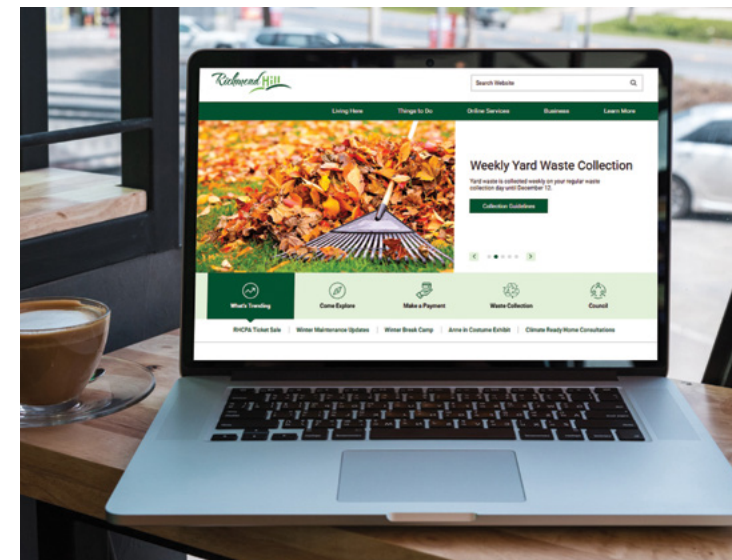
Engage the community, stakeholders and City staff to support informed participation and to ensure that all voices can contribute toward effective decision-making.



Tennis and Pickleball Strategy Public Consultation Session

Richmond Hill continues to engage the community on important issues for the City, welcoming 7,000+ participants to provide input on matters such as parks redevelopment and design, business support, increasing housing options, electric vehicles and micromobility, and recreation opportunities such as pickleball.

7,000+
participants in
City’s engagement
activities.



In 2024, the City’s homepage was refreshed to better serve our residents and customers, enabling them to better understand what they can expect from our services and reach out to us. Visits to RichmondHill.ca increased by 6% (2.3M vs 2.2M) and page views grew 1.7% to nearly 5 million compared to the same period following launch. This means more visitors came to the website and explored more pages—showing stronger traffic and more engagement.

Visits to
RichmondHill.ca
increased to
2.3M

PRIORITY 1:

Continued

In 2025, the City undertook several actions to continue building relationships with Richmond Hill's Treaty Partners and urban Indigenous community:



The City partnered with Sarah Loretta Schuster of [Miskwaadesi Studio](#) to create five Indigenous medicine gardens that will serve as living classrooms, cultural gathering spaces and help increase local access to Indigenous medicines.

The City held a ceremony to raise the "Every Child Matters" flag for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, which included participation from representatives of the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN) and Sarah Loretta Schuster.



The City unveiled new waterway signs in the City's parks to identify the Don, Rouge and Humber Rivers in Ojibway. The City worked with MCFN, who provided the Ojibway translations of the three waterways. The signs also feature artwork of three common fish species which were created by Indigenous artist, Tracey Anthony.

Truth and Reconciliation - Building Relationships with Treaty Partners

Richmond Hill is located on lands covered by Treaty 13 (the Toronto Purchase) and the Williams Treaties.

In commemoration of National Indigenous History Month, Richmond Hill had the privilege of hosting the Minwaa Niinwind Dabaadjimowan: Our Story Continues Art Exhibit from May 28 to July 2, at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts. The exhibit was a partnership with the Mississaugas of the Credit First Nation (MCFN), one of Richmond Hill's Treaty Partners, and showcased work by MCFN artists that celebrated their vibrant history and culture. Approximately 9,000 visitors toured the exhibit.



PRIORITY 2:

Support Richmond Hill's unique character and sense of community through programs, services, and events.

The City offered a total of 9,771 recreation and culture programs totaling 96,183 hours of program time, involving 67,386 participants with an overall 2025 fill rate of 78.7%.



Moonlight Movies at Central Library

The City hosted over 23 events, including Doors Open and Studio Tour, Canada Day, Earth Day events and a Seniors Christmas Celebration, which in total drew over 90,374 attendees.

In 2025, the Community and Cultural Grant Program supported 25 projects with a record \$96,178, empowering local community groups, cultural groups, and individual artists to strengthen Richmond Hill's cultural scene. Successful applicants included the York South Family Network's Holiday Disability Market which supports disability-positive entrepreneurs and Inventor Academy who will offer free hands-on workshops in 3D printing, laser cutting, and woodworking for seniors to build digital literacy and reduce isolation.

In spring 2025, 10,800 Richmond Hill residents, businesses, community groups, and schools took part in 212 events during the City's annual Clean Up, Green Up weeks, working together to clear litter in parks, streets, and pathways.

Richmond Hill Opens New Cultural Centre in Heart of the City



Located at 10184 Yonge Street, the new Cultural Centre is housed in one of Richmond Hill's most historic buildings – originally built in 1936 as the town's first purpose-built post office.

The Cultural Centre reimagines this historic site as a space for creative connection, offering studios and flexible areas for artistic work and longer-term use by local

cultural groups helping the Centre grow into a vibrant hub where stories are shared, ideas sparked, and creativity celebrated.

PRIORITY 3:

Build a workforce for tomorrow to ensure that expertise and continuity is in place to deliver on the city's aspirations for the future.

More than 700 employees participated in over 33 learning opportunities spanning key areas including Leadership and People Management, Professional Growth and Development, Health, Safety and Wellness, Belonging and Inclusion, and Continuous Improvement and Innovation.

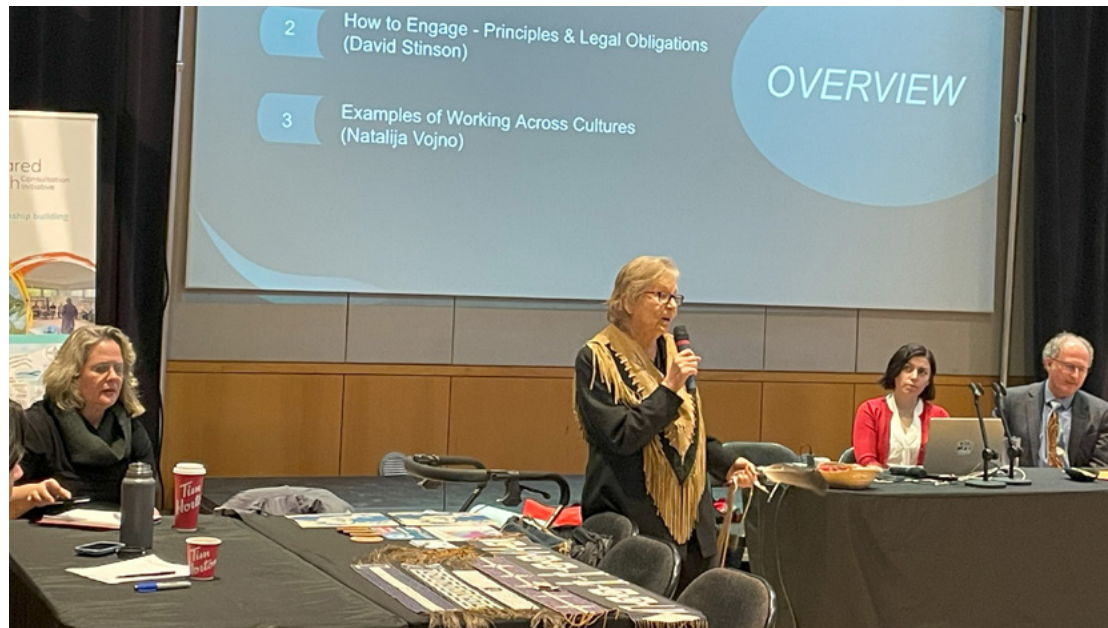
A New Leaders Program was launched to build essential leadership skills for those who are new to management.

Succession planning for the City's Executive Leadership Team has been completed and work has started for the next level of leadership, to ensure that the organization is prepared for future transitions by identifying, developing, and supporting emerging leaders.



The aquatics team is now certified in Group Crisis Intervention & Assisting Individuals in Crisis, awarded by the International Critical Incident Stress Foundation.

700+
employees
participated
in over
33
learning
opportunities



Planning staff receive training on the history of Indigenous Peoples in Southern Ontario.



The People and Culture Division worked with internal partners on a Belonging Program to foster a supportive work culture where everyone is accepted, valued and empowered – so staff can take an inclusive approach when working with Council and the community.

457
staff trained
in Lean

The Strategy and Transformation Division, through the City's Continuous Improvement Program trained 17 staff to become Lean Yellow Belts, bringing the total number of staff trained in Lean process improvement to 457.



Richmond Hill Fire and Emergency Services crew members during a controlled training exercise.

In 2025, 176 Richmond Hill firefighters were certified under 15 specialized certification standards under the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). The NFPA serves as the world's leading resource on fire and related hazards, providing training courses and codes to enhance public safety.

With these investments, the City enhances team performance and service delivery, ultimately improving the service quality and efficiency, strengthening organizational stability, and maintaining consistent service delivery during times of change.



PILLAR 3

Strengthening our Foundations

The City of Richmond Hill aims to continue strengthening its foundations by delivering value, accountability and transparency to residents and stakeholders, while addressing the social, economic and environmental needs of the community both today and in the future. Although municipalities, including Richmond Hill, face various constraints (financial and otherwise) in meeting the evolving needs of their communities, Council and City staff remain committed to strengthening our foundations as a local government, decision-maker, and service provider.

By harnessing the power of data, fostering a culture of continuous improvement, and focusing on quality customer service, Richmond Hill strives to be more responsive to the community's needs, support innovation, and make responsible, evidence-based, and data-driven decisions.



PRIORITY 1:

Make decisions that are evidence-based and data-driven to enable the City's long term financial sustainability, as well as social, environmental, and economic sustainability.

Council approved the City's [2025 Asset Management Plan](#) which provides an updated long-term plan for managing the City's assets and helps to support informed decision making with the goal of achieving long-term financial sustainability by balancing lifecycle costs, risks and service levels.

The City secured \$564,950 in funding from private sources, including local businesses through advertising agreements and sponsorships.

In 2025, Richmond Hill was awarded over \$1,714,587 in grant funding, including from the Federal and Provincial governments to reduce the costs of delivering City infrastructure and initiatives.

The City updated our fleet with new tracking systems to provide data to optimize routes, reduce costs, and improve productivity and safety.

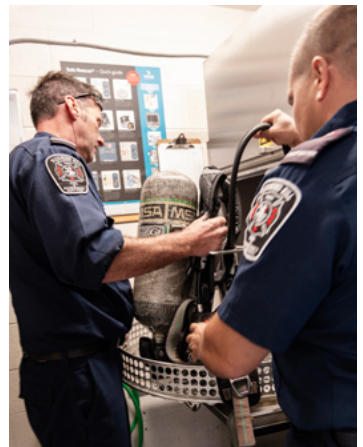
\$1,714,587
in grant funding secured

32
applications for funding submitted

79.2%
success rate of grant applications



Lake Wilcox Fish and Wildlife Sanctuary Accessible Ramp, supported by the Government of Ontario.



Richmond Hill Fire and Emergency Services crew member using the new decontamination washer, which offers an enhanced cleaning method of their personal protective equipment to keep firefighters safe. Funding provided by the Government of Ontario.

PRIORITY 2:

Focus on quality customer service and a continuous improvement mindset to support innovation and be responsive to residents, stakeholders, businesses, the private sector, and colleagues.

Richmond Hill continued to promote the self-service Water Billing Portal and successfully surpassed its 2025 target enrolment of 20%. This online portal is a convenient way to allow customers to pay their water bill online and analyze their water usage. The City also expanded the Advance Metering Infrastructure (AMI), which offers improved operational efficiency and an enhanced customer experience.

The City continued work on a corporate-wide “budget to pay” initiative to strengthen consistency in the delivery of financial activities, specifically by improving service delivery and finding efficiency by reducing unnecessary approvals and wait times. In 2025, capital processes were the focus, and in 2026 the work will move to operating processes. The work on capital processes found staff time savings of approximately 6,000 hours across the organization.

Community Standards Services enhanced its protocols to provide 24-hour service for resident complaints in 2024, and in 2025, customer service response time continues to improve. In the first half of the year, 81.5% of calls were responded to within an hour, up from 73% in 2024.

The City’s continuous improvement approach through the Strategy and Transformation Division of the City Manager’s Office helped to realize 673 hours of staff time saved in 2025, through Lean process improvement projects and tools.

- As an example, working with the Fire and Emergency Services Division, the team worked to reduce fire re-inspections and related processing time to achieve compliance for building occupancy. Not only did this reduce the number of staff hours by 40% per occupancy, but it also helped to achieve compliance with fire standards in a shorter time (165 days to 30 days) and lead to safer living spaces, specifically for vulnerable residents, such as those in long-term care facilities.

Council approved a new, modern and easy-to-understand Responsible Pet Ownership and Animal Regulation By-law that responds to community and stakeholder input regarding animal welfare, responsible pet ownership and public safety.

The City has expanded its Administrative Monetary Penalties (AMP) program to cover additional by-laws, including Responsible Pet Ownership and Animal Regulation, Kennel, Tree Preservation, Trees on City Lands, Site Alteration, and Active Transportation and Micromobility. This expansion enables monetary fines to be imposed directly for infractions, streamlining enforcement and reducing reliance on court proceedings. By avoiding delays associated with Regional Court backlog and attendance, the City can resolve matters more quickly and efficiently, ensuring community standards are upheld in a timely manner.



Strategic Plan Implementation Plan for 2026–2027

As we conclude the second year of the 2024–2027 Strategic Plan, the City remains committed to advancing its core Pillars: building a livable and sustainable community, investing in people, and strengthening our foundations. Looking ahead, the following overview highlights key projects and programs planned for 2026–2027 that will keep the City moving toward its vision of “a vibrant and inclusive city of neighbours.”

WHAT WE ARE PLANNING IN 2026 AND 2027

Pillar 1: Growing a Livable, Sustainable Community

In 2026, the **new pedestrian and cycling bridge** will officially open at the **Richmond Hill David Dunlap Observatory** (a project supported by the Federal government's Active Transportation Fund) to enable active transportation and greater access to this National Historic Site.

The City will advance the **Dave Barrow Civic Square Park** project toward construction in 2026, creating a space that will bring our community together in the spirit of our former Mayor's vision.

We will be wrapping up our work supported by the federal **Housing Accelerator Fund Grant** that enables more housing and affordable housing options for Richmond Hill residents. Continued implementation of the **Community Improvement Plan to support Affordable and Sustainable Housing**, along with the **Affordable Housing Concierge Pilot Program** are key activities funded by the grant.

The City will update its **Community Benefits By-law** to ensure that sustainable funding is in place to support the amenities needed by our growing community.

As Richmond Hill is home to ecologically significant kettle lakes and headwater streams on the Oak Ridges Moraine, a **review and update of the City's Salt Management Plan** will be done to ensure we continue to implement salt reduction innovation while maintaining safety during the winter months.



Construction of the Pedestrian and Cyclist Bridge at David Dunlap Observatory Park

Pillar 2: Focusing on People

In 2025, the City opened the new **Cultural Centre on Yonge Street**, and in 2026, its service offerings will be expanded to better serve the artists and cultural groups that contribute so much to Richmond Hill's vibrancy and inclusivity.

The City will deliver **Municipal Elections in 2026**, providing trust and confidence in local democracy to enable residents and property owners to determine who will represent them at City and Regional Council into 2030.

To build and develop a workforce for the future, the City will be developing an **Employee Retention Strategy** and a **Recruitment Strategy**.



Pillar 3: Strengthening our Foundations

The City is looking to advance a **service-based** budget approach, which will allow residents and businesses to better understand the costs of what services the City provides, and will enable **multi-year budgeting** to plan ahead for revenues and expenditures more effectively. This will further be supported by updates to the **Water, Wastewater and Stormwater Master Plans**, to understand and plan for the infrastructure needs of Richmond Hill.

Council will consider a **Financial Master Plan (Long Range Financial Plan)** which will provide an assessment of the financial health of the City in the context of its demographic and economic environment, municipal financial benchmarks, and current and forecast spending and revenues.

A **new property tax online portal** will be launched, which, combined with the water online portal will allow residents to view and make payments at their convenience.

The City is planning **energy conservation measures**, which include facility LED lighting retrofits, building systems efficiencies and a renewable energy system (i.e. solar panels). These measures are part of the 2024 Corporate Energy Plan aimed at achieving GHG emissions reduction and energy cost savings.

The City will be **updating our Emergency Management Plan** to improve our readiness for unexpected events and ensure continuity of our services.





CONCLUSION

With two years of implementation of the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan now complete, the City has achieved progress towards the Vision and Pillars originally set out with Council, the community and staff, by focusing on our shared priorities.

The City remains committed to accountability and transparency through annual reporting of our progress over the next few years as we work toward becoming an even more vibrant and inclusive city of neighbours. To review the 2024-2027 Strategic Plan itself, and to find annual reports on progress and receive updates, visit RichmondHill.ca/StrategicPlan.



RichmondHill.ca/StrategicPlan