On behalf of Council and staff, I’m pleased to present Richmond Hill’s 2016 Report on Culture.

In 2011, Council approved Richmond Hill’s first Cultural Plan. The Cultural Plan established an overarching vision, goals and recommendations for cultural development in Richmond Hill over a ten-year time frame. In 2016, we completed our fifth year of implementation and we are proud to be able to continue to report on the significant progress we have made in achieving these goals and recommendations.

In fact, 2016 was a banner year for the Cultural Plan with many exciting and important initiatives undertaken. These initiatives include the first round of funding through the Community and Cultural Grant Program, our first Digital Storytelling Project, continued implementation of the Festivals and Events strategy, hosting the Creativity Connected Awards program and much more!

In this report, you will find detailed information on major activities undertaken through the Cultural Plan. This report also highlights informative facts and figures related to cultural programming, festivals and events, cultural institutions and community engagement activities in 2016.

I hope you will take a moment to review our 2016 Report on Culture and join us in celebrating five years of cultural development in Richmond Hill.

Yours Sincerely,
Dave Barrow
Mayor
VISION
Richmond Hill is admired as a vibrant community in which culture is a part of all facets of the Town’s planning and decision-making; where diversity, gender and age are reflected in all aspects of cultural expression; and where an authentic and distinctive identity inspires a creative spirit.

CULTURAL PLAN IN ACTION
2016 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Goal One: Demonstrated Leadership
✓ Completed second term of the Cultural Leadership Council
✓ Convened issue-based community forum
✓ Delivered first round of funding through Richmond Hill Community and Cultural Grant Program
✓ Reviewed mandate of the Interdepartmental Culture Team
✓ Strengthened and expanded Cultural Mapping in Richmond Hill

Goal Two: A Dynamic Cultural Sector
✓ Hosted Richmond Hill’s third Cultural Summit
✓ Engaged the Richmond Hill Small Business Enterprise Centre in Business Development and Technical Assistance for the Cultural Sector
✓ Implemented the Richmond Hill Festivals & Events Strategy
✓ Fostered stronger leadership and organizational capacity among non-profit cultural organizations
✓ Enhanced partnerships with Richmond Hill Public Library

Goal Three: An Inclusive Cultural Community
✓ Continued to strengthen and expand youth engagement in culture
✓ Created a Cultural Fusion Event for Youth

Goal Four: Places and Spaces for Culture
✓ Implemented the Public Art Policy
✓ Initiated comprehensive inventory of cultural spaces and facilities

Goal Five: A Celebrated Story
✓ Communicated cultural success stories
✓ Expanded use of the Cultural Plan webpage
Cultural Leadership Council
The second two-year term of the Cultural Leadership Council (CLC) was completed in September 2016. The CLC is comprised of 22 members and represents artists, arts and cultural groups, creative industries, youth and diverse citizens. The diverse makeup of the CLC provides an important connection between Richmond Hill, its community, and local businesses to achieve the goals and recommendations of the Cultural Plan. The CLC met three times in 2016 and provided valuable input into many recommendations, including the Canada 150 Celebrations, private sector support for cultural organizations, the Celebrated Stories project and the Cultural Summit.

Community Forum
Richmond Hill’s Cultural Plan was developed based on extensive community consultation. As the Cultural Plan is implemented, the community continues to shape the development of projects and initiatives. In addition to ongoing community consultations through the CLC, Richmond Hill invited feedback through the Cultural Summit.

Community and Cultural Grant Program
Richmond Hill is proud to support the local not-for-profit organizations and individual artists who make Richmond Hill a vibrant and exciting place to live and work. To support these groups, Richmond Hill launched the new Community and Cultural Grant Program. This new $65,000 fund provided support to 19 community and cultural organizations as well as individual artists whose projects supported a more vibrant Richmond Hill. The Community and Cultural Grant Program provides funding on an annual basis. The second intake for 2017 projects was also undertaken in November 2016.

Reviewed Mandate of Interdepartmental Culture Team
Richmond Hill’s Interdepartmental Culture Team (IDCT) was created in 2012 to ensure a shared vision and understanding of cultural planning opportunities in the town. The IDCT meets regularly and includes representatives from Planning and Regulatory Services, Recreation & Culture, the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts, the Richmond Hill Public Library, Environment and Infrastructure Services and Council’s office. In 2016, the mandate and mission of the IDCT was reviewed to ensure that Richmond Hill continues to adopt a cultural lens across all areas of decision-making.

Richmond Hill Culture Map
Richmond Hill continues to support the online Culture Map, which allows users to locate each of Richmond Hill’s cultural assets. These assets, which total over 1,300, were verified in nine categories, including the creative cultural industries, natural and cultural heritage, cultural facilities, community cultural organizations, public art, festivals and events, intangible assets and independent artists. The Culture Map is now available at RichmondHill.ca/CultureMap
GOAL TWO:
A DYNAMIC CULTURAL SECTOR

Richmond Hill Cultural Summit
The third annual Richmond Hill Cultural Summit was held on Tuesday, March 29, 2016 at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts (RHCPA). In 2016, over 180 Richmond Hill-based artists, volunteers, students and culture lovers attended to learn more about the Cultural Plan projects undertaken in 2015. In addition, the evening featured performances by local artists, demonstrations from community art organizations, a networking reception and the premiere of the Celebrated Stories: Digital Storytelling Project. The stories can be viewed at RichmondHill.ca/CelebratedStories

Business Development and Technical Assistance for the Cultural Sector
Richmond Hill supports the development of the creative industries and recognizes their impact on the local and regional economy. The sixth annual Creative Industries Symposium was held on Tuesday, November 8, 2016 and the theme was Shifting Gears in Changing Business Cycles. The Symposium fosters a dialogue between creative minds and provides a networking opportunity for creative entrepreneurs to connect with industry leaders. During the Symposium, the first annual Creativity Connected Awards were presented. The awards recognize individuals or companies in Richmond Hill who have demonstrated excellence in the creative industries field. In 2016, the Richmond Hill Small Business Enterprise Centre also hosted workshops and offered assistance in business development.

Festivals & Events Strategy
Implementation of the Festivals & Events Strategy continued in 2016. During the year, a formalized application process was implemented and a new Festivals & Events Application and Resource Manual was launched for those groups looking to plan and execute an event in Richmond Hill. A Special Events Advisory Team (S.E.A.T.) was formed to review the applications, ensuring necessary permits, permissions and insurances are in place to assist in the delivery of a safe event. An Event Toolkit containing an Event Planning Manual, samples of best practice documents, and links to checklists, guidelines and government, tourism and operational resources was also made available at RichmondHill.ca.

Capacity Building for Cultural Organizations
Richmond Hill-based cultural organizations deliver programs and services that support Richmond Hill’s continued growth into a more vibrant community. To help build their capacity, Richmond Hill hosted a workshop on effective e-marketing strategies in partnership with the York Region Arts Council.

Enhanced Partnerships with the Richmond Hill Public Library
The Cultural Plan recognizes the Richmond Hill Public Library (RHPL) as a vibrant cultural institution. Together, Richmond Hill and the RHPL have worked to continue to support cultural development in the community. In 2016, both the RHPL and Richmond Hill partnered to deliver Moonlight Movies and Culture Days. In support of Culture Days, the Central Library served as a community hub with activities offered by local artists and arts organizations to over 600 attendees. The RHPL also supports the CLC and IDCT.
GOAL THREE: AN INCLUSIVE CULTURAL COMMUNITY

Youth Engagement in Culture
Richmond Hill supports meaningful youth engagement in the development of cultural activities. Youth are one of the five key sectors represented on the Cultural Leadership Council. In addition, youth are engaged directly in culture through the Youth Action Committee and through mentorship of the Council for Richmond Hill Emerging Artists and Teen Expression (CREATE). In 2016, this engagement resulted in the second Hill After Dark event. This cultural fusion event for youth is hosted by the Youth Action Committee and attracted over 150 youth and their families. CREATE also produced their annual Top of the Hill youth talent show and a new workshop called FOCUS, which allowed youth to learn photography skills.

GOAL FOUR: PLACES AND SPACES FOR CULTURE

Public Art
In 2016, the pilot Sidewalk Poetry Initiative was approved. As new sidewalks are constructed or marked for replacement, a selected short poem or text will be impressed on the surface to create moments of outdoor reading to beautify the community’s pedestrian experience. Richmond Hill’s Public Art Advisory Committee also initiated an art project for the Sports Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony. To mark this occasion, four local schools created 127 painted canvas flags. The flags were installed at the plaza in front of the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts.

Cultural Spaces and Facilities
Council approved the Museum Feasibility Study in April 2016. The Study examined the existing conditions of the Heritage Centre and its connection to the rest of the community. Following Council’s approval, an implementation schedule was developed to prioritize the recommendations, actions and resources required to make the Study a reality. The short term strategies in the Study have been recommended to increase public awareness and involvement in the Heritage Centre and in celebrating and appreciating the history and heritage of Richmond Hill.

GOAL FIVE: A CELEBRATED STORY

Celebrated Stories
The Richmond Hill Digital Storytelling Workshop brought together six community members for a week of participatory workshops on storytelling, audio and video editing, and community building. Participants gained valuable skills as they worked with trained facilitators who assisted them in recording and presenting stories about their own lives. The workshop guided the participants to share their experiences as world citizens, newcomers to Canada, and Richmond Hill residents. The workshop was conducted in partnership with the Richmond Hill Welcome Centre and North York Community House.

Launch of New Richmond Hill Website
In 2011, RichmondHillCulturalPlan.com was launched to provide the community with information about the Cultural Plan. To make this information more accessible, RichmondHillCulturalPlan.com was integrated with the new Richmond Hill website in 2016. Visitors can now browse RichmondHill.ca to stay up-to-date on the Cultural Plan, view Celebrated Stories, use the Culture Map and much more! Visitors can sign up for Culture Updates, an e-newsletter with information on events like the Cultural Summit, upcoming workshops, and other opportunities for the community to get involved in culture.
WHAT’S UP FOR 2017?

Implementation of Richmond Hill’s Cultural Plan will continue in 2017 with initiatives designed to strengthen culture in the community, including:

- The fourth annual Richmond Hill Cultural Summit on Thursday, March 30
- Continued funding available through Community and Cultural Grant Program
- The premiere of Celebrated Stories: Cultural Icons
- Development of Spacefinder York Region in partnership with the York Region Arts Council
- Launch of the Richmond Hill Artist in Residence program
- Launch of Park Stories a new cultural mapping project

Canada 150 Celebrations in Richmond Hill!
In Richmond Hill, residents and visitors will be invited to participate in commemorative programs and events that have been developed to celebrate Canada’s sesquicentennial anniversary, including:

Richmond Hill Community Murals 2017
Working in partnership with the Bell Box Murals Project, this community-engaged public art program will transform Bell Canada utility boxes across Richmond Hill.

Street Banner Contest
Residents were invited to submit a design commemorating Canada 150 for the Street Banner Contest. The winning entries will hang on light poles along Yonge Street, in the downtown core.

And, much more, including Earth Day celebrations, 150 Maple Tree Giveaway and special Canada Day 2017 celebrations! Learn more by visiting RichmondHill.ca/Canada150

We acknowledge the financial support of the Government of Canada. Nous reconnaissons l’appui financier du gouvernement du Canada.
Richmond Hill’s arts, culture and heritage programs offer participants the opportunity to discover Richmond Hill’s history and enhance their skills by bringing out their inner artist. The Heritage Centre’s unique programs and events celebrate the community’s past and provide engaging educational opportunities for residents and visitors of all ages. Each year, events like the Studio Tour, Moonlight Movies, Doors Open, and Culture Days showcase the history, culture and talent that is alive in Richmond Hill.

**ARTS AND CULTURE PROGRAMMING**

- **5,400** adults, children and youth in registered arts, culture and heritage programs
- **3,700+** attended Doors Open across 15 sites
- **44** artists featured in the 2016 Studio Tour
- **1,850** 2016 Studio Tour visitors
- **2,100** attended Moonlight Movies
2,346 attended 28 special events for older adults

959 attended Heritage Services events

1,200+ attended Culture Days activities in Richmond Hill

2,100+ Likes and followers on Cultural Plan and Studio Tour Facebook and Twitter accounts
The Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts (RHCPA) is the premier destination for entertainment in Richmond Hill. Located in the heart of the historic downtown, the RHCPA is a state-of-the-art cultural facility that offers a full season of professional entertainment by Canadian and International performers. Since 2009, the RHCPA has established itself as a theatre for the community. The theme of unity through artistic diversity encapsulates the spirit of the RHCPA and an ambitious season of professional programming and community groups have filled every available night.

371 events took place at the Richmond Hill Centre for the Performing Arts over 309 days

80,000 tickets issued

100,000+ patrons

11 visual art showings

10 international film screenings as part of The Reel Thing Film Series

12,650 students attended performances of the Education Program
Richmond Hill Public Library is a vibrant community hub where people come together to learn, collaborate, and actively create. Through a wide range of collection items, programs, and resources, the Library offers physical and digital spaces that allow its diverse population of visitors to set their imagination free, nourish their curiosity, and relax among peers. The Library serves Richmond Hill residents through its four locations – Central Library, Oak Ridges Moraine Library, Richmond Green Library and Richvale Library – providing access to knowledge, working spaces, meeting areas, and a variety of cultural events and entertainment for our growing community.

1,302,288
in-person visits

1,577,940
electronic visits

456,692
social media visits

57,692
program attendees

501,354
Wi-Fi connections

2,134,997
collection items borrowed

288,028
collection items used in library

3,831
post-secondary study hall attendees
Vibrant festivals and events are key to the cultural health of a community. Richmond Hill is proud of its history of hosting and supporting festivals and events for the community to enjoy. Festivals and events create opportunities to showcase local talent, allow residents and visitors to connect and share experiences, contribute to the town’s economy, and they encourage volunteerism in the community.

110,000+

people attended events in 2016
Creative industries based in Richmond Hill are an important part of the local and regional economy. Richmond Hill offers workshops and business development assistance to support these companies as they continue to grow. The annual Creativity Connected - Creative Industries Symposium provides professional development opportunities to local creative entrepreneurs. Excellence in the creative industries is also recognized through the Creativity Connected Awards.

364 attended the Creativity Connected Symposium

7 film permits issued

3 of Richmond Hill’s most talented received the first Creativity Connected Awards

460 creative industries mapped via Richmond Hill Culture Map
Richmond Hill recognizes the importance of maintaining its natural and cultural heritage. Cultural heritage is protected and celebrated through heritage property designations, the Heritage Centre and the A.J. Clark Interpretive Centre as well as through projects like the David Dunlap Observatory “Destination Park”. Richmond Hill also takes pride in its natural heritage and the variety of landscapes, hundreds of different kinds of plants and flowers, rich forests, wetlands, lakes and streams that make up Richmond Hill.

124 designated heritage properties

289 registered and listed heritage properties

9,387 artifacts significant to the history of Richmond Hill

Approved Museum Feasibility Study
Richmond Hill is grateful to all of the individuals who volunteer their time and creativity to support town-run programs and services. Our volunteers are committed and enthusiastic. They help sustain programs and events, and connect with people across the community all while demonstrating a high level of commitment and enthusiasm. Volunteers in Richmond Hill make the community a stronger place to live, work and play.

820
volunteers supported events and recreational programs

40
members of the Youth Action Committee volunteered approx. 3,760 hours

30,690+
hours contributed

43
community members engaged in arts, culture and heritage related committees
Visit RichmondHill.ca/CulturalPlan to learn more about Richmond Hill’s Cultural Plan and to sign up for Culture Updates!