

**GREENING  
THE HILL**  
Our Community  
Our Future

# Environment Strategy 2020 Accomplishments

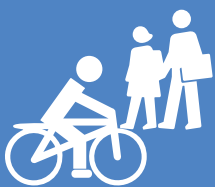
Richmond Hill's Environment Strategy, *Greening the Hill: Our Community, Our Future*, was approved by Council in 2014. Based on community and stakeholder input, Greening the Hill outlines Richmond Hill's vision and plan to become a more environmentally sustainable community. This document highlights achievements from the Environment Strategy in 2020. With health and safety protocols in place, we saw great success, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.



## Leading the Way

Richmond Hill continues to be recognized for its environmental leadership. In 2020, the City was honoured with several awards for its environmental work, including:

- Award of Distinction from the So(cial) Good Design Awards for the Resilient Richmond Hill climate change video
- Best Web GIS Award by BeSpatial/URISA Ontario for the Resilient Richmond Hill Story Map
- Living City Energy Efficiency Leadership Award (Gold) for City Hall and '10% Club' awards from the Mayor's Megawatt Challenge, to three community centres, for achieving more than 10% energy savings in 2019
- FCM Visionary Award (Honourable Mention) for the Sustainable Neighbourhood Action Program in partnership with Toronto and Region Conservation Authority (TRCA) and other municipalities



## Making Strides on the Lake-to-Lake Route

Richmond Hill, in partnership with York Region and TRCA, has made great strides in delivering its portion of the Lake-to-Lake Cycling Route and Walking Trail. Since 2016, over 13 km of the route has been constructed. In 2020, significant progress was achieved:

- Completed construction of 2 km of the route along Leslie Street from Major Mackenzie Drive to Elgin Mills Road
- Began work to extend the route from Elgin Mills Road to 19th Avenue
- Initiated or participated in feasibility or design work for the remaining segments of the route



## Restoring the South Richvale Greenway

In partnership with the TRCA, the City completed restoration of the South Richvale Greenway in 2020. Portions of the Greenway along Patterson Creek were remediated and erosion controls were strengthened. This restoration work benefits the community by:

- Providing long-term protection against erosion
- Preserving the integrity of the local ecosystem
- Protecting private property and City infrastructure from flooding damage





### Greening our Facilities

The City completed the redevelopment of David Hamilton Park and expansion of Ed Sackfield Arena in 2020. In addition to achieving a LEED silver certification for the arena expansion, this project incorporated many sustainable features, such as:

- 400+ trees planted and new naturalized areas to enhance wildlife habitat
- A system to recycle water from the splash pad to irrigate the sports fields
- Energy efficient design and use of LED lighting fixtures and room light sensors
- Recycled content in building materials and environmentally-friendly finishes



### Celebrating our Pollinators

The City continued programs to encourage biodiversity and enhance pollinator habitat in 2020.

- The City reimagined its Healthy Yards event by providing curbside delivery of 2,350 native wildflowers and 915 native trees and shrubs. A drive-through pick-up event was held for the over 350 rain barrels and 300 backyard composters sold.
- In honour of Flight of the Monarch Day, 200 Monarch-friendly plant kits were provided to residents at no cost. A webinar series was also held, where nearly 80 participants learned about the power of pollinators and how they could help.



### Protecting our Urban Forest

The City's first Urban Forest Management Plan was approved in 2020. The Plan will guide the City's efforts in the next 20 years to preserve and enhance the nearly 2.6 million trees and shrubs that make up Richmond Hill's urban forest. Maintaining a healthy urban forest benefits our community in many ways, including:

- Improved resiliency to climate change and reduced flood risk
- Enhanced wildlife habitat and biodiversity
- Cleaner air and water
- Improved health and increased property values



## Watch for these environmental projects in 2021!

- **Transportation Master Plan Update**
- **Community Energy and Emissions Plan**
- **Single-use plastics education strategy implementation**
- **Environmental Scorecard release**
- **Sustainability Metrics Update**



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