



Town of Richmond Hill

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## **CROSBY PARK FUNDRAISING EFFORT TOPS \$300,000 MARK AND STILL GOING!** Community Bands Together in Support of a Unique Project

RICHMOND HILL – Fundraising efforts for the Crosby Park redevelopment project have surpassed \$300,000 thanks to the enthusiasm and support of the community.

“The support the community has given us throughout this project has been unbelievable,” said Mayor Bill Bell. “The amount raised represents the strong commitment of residents, businesses and local organizations to improving the quality of life for *everyone* in Richmond Hill.”

Once complete, Crosby Park will be the first fully accessible park in Richmond Hill enabling people of all ages and abilities to interact with one another while enjoying the outdoors. Its redevelopment is such a unique project, that the Town took a unique approach which would allow residents to embrace the project and be involved in the development of something special in their community.

A fundraising effort was spearheaded through a partnership between the Town and the Richmond Hill Mobility Accessibility Foundation, a local non-profit organization committed to breaking down barriers for those with disabilities. The response by the community was overwhelming, and with contributions continuing to roll in, the \$400,000 fundraising target is within reach.

“This is unlike any other park we have created in the past,” said Councillor Arnie Warner. “We’re extremely proud of the new design and the interest shown by the community has made what we’ve accomplished to date that much more gratifying.”

In June of this year a Family Fun Day was held for residents to celebrate and learn more about the upcoming, inclusive new park design. More than 900 people attended the event despite the rainy weather and most events being hosted inside.

“We’re extremely impressed with the number of donations we were able to solicit,” said Barry Munro, Fundraising Committee Chair and Chairman of the Richmond Hill Mobility Accessibility Foundation. “Groups of all sizes, from individuals to small community groups to local charities and private businesses have shown how excited they are about this project.”

Scheduled to be completed in fall 2007, this unique project will feature something for everyone, from tots to seniors, regardless of age or ability. The park will be a delight for the senses and will include recreational amenities for children with disabilities, as well as able-bodied children whose parents have disabilities.



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All of the money raised will be used to transform the park from one that is reasonably accessible to one that is fully accessible, not only for those with physical disabilities, but also for those who are sight and/or hearing impaired as well.

Sandy Steplock, whose son Matheson has Cerebral Palsy and was part of the inspiration for this project, was on hand for the big announcement at the Council Meeting on September 25 and said that she and her son are looking forward to the opening of the park as it will provide her son and others like him with a safe place to play where he has access to the same amenities as his friends. "It's a way for him to just be a kid and play. It's a chance for him to be a kid like all of the other kids," said Steplock. "Safety and accessibility are factors with regular parks, but with this park he'll be able to do things on his own."

Some of the new features will include: a playground area with ramps that will enable children of all ages and abilities to access all levels of the play area; a water play area and splash pad accessible to those with mobility restrictions; a trail network with extra-wide paths and special features for those with sensory impairments; as well as a butterfly garden with birdhouses for some peaceful relaxation and an opportunity, particularly for seniors, to enjoy the outdoors. In addition, the bleacher areas of the existing baseball diamond and soccer field will be made fully accessible, so parents and grandparents who may have mobility restrictions can interact with their children.

"We think this is a marvelous project, covering all generations and we wanted to do whatever we could to help out," said Margaret Dvorsky, president of the Richmond Hill Lions Club. "It's so nice to see the generations working together."

"It is our hope that Crosby Park will set the standard for future parks in Richmond Hill," said Councillor Warner. "And we expect it will be considered by other municipalities as a benchmark when designing future parks in their communities."

*For a list of donors, please see the backgrounder attached.*

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*This document was produced by Communication Services Division staff, Corporate Services Department,  
at the Town of Richmond Hill.*



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### BACKGROUND

The following is a list of organizations and community groups that have given their support and made generous donations to the Crosby Park redevelopment project to date:

Richmond Hill Fire Department	\$1, 000
Richmond Hill Lions Club	\$1, 500
Rotary Club of Richmond Hill	\$2, 000
York Region Greening – In kind donation of trees 3.5K (Crosby Park Family Fun Day in June resulted in \$900 in tree sponsorship)	\$3, 500
Johnny Bower Foundation	\$5, 000
Rogers Cable – Monetary and in kind donation	\$20, 000
Regional Chair, Bill Fisch – Annual Golf Tournament	\$25, 000
Meridian Credit Union	\$30, 000
S’port for Kids Foundation	\$45, 000
Mayor’s Charity Golf Tournament	\$100, 000
Richmond Hill Mobility Accessibility Foundation	\$100, 000
<b>Total to date</b>	<b>\$ 333, 000</b>