



Strategic Plan (2024-2027)

*Growing Our Club As A Cornerstone
Of Richmond Hill Life*





A Plan To Embrace The Modern Face Of Richmond Hill!

With the Covid-19 pandemic behind us, the Board of Directors has had much to reflect on as we have developed a new strategic plan for the club.

- What have we learned from the pandemic and how can we make our club more robust to defend against crises like this in the future?
- How well are we truly embracing safe sport and fostering the culture in which it thrives beyond the policy book and into the choices people make?
- How genuinely inclusive are we as a club and how reflective are we of the diverse, dynamic and vibrant community that is Richmond Hill?
- How well are we providing quality soccer experiences for everyone – from a four year old kicking their first ball to our top OPDL, League One and adult players?

These are crucial questions we have been grappling with, in our passionate desire to position Richmond Hill Soccer Club as a central driver of livability in our community. When people think of great things about Richmond Hill, we want this club to come to mind!

So we've been busy. For a full year, we have been working meticulously on our new plan, with support from renowned sport management consultancy Capitis Consulting, who have developed many of the

most compelling and successful strategic plans in Canadian amateur club sport.

We reviewed our outgoing plan to see where it had worked and where it hadn't. We spoke to you! We collected views, perspectives and ideas from over 200 of you, ranging from players and parents, to coaches, match officials, staff and volunteers.

We spent months honing a plan that would have strategic ambition in it that we know is what our stakeholders want, because it has come directly from them.

Take a few minutes to read what we have committed to accomplishing by the end of 2027 in the pages that follows. Then join me and the rest of the Board of Directors and staff at the club in making this exciting ambition a reality.

The planning is done. But the work starts now. Together, as a club, we are daring to dream. Come dream with us!

Pradeepta Chakravarti

President

Richmond Hill Soccer Club

What Is A Strategic Plan And What Does It Do?

A strategic plan is an essential document that any well-managed amateur soccer club should have. It lays out medium-to-long term direction and associated ambition and goals for the club to achieve within the term of the plan (four years in the case of this plan).

This allows management to develop programs, campaigns and activities that are geared to achieving these goals and to deploy resources to support their execution.

It also importantly allows the Board of Directors to properly oversee management's work and ensure they are undertaking activities that are in interests of the club (as defined by the strategic plan).

Through a well-developed strategic plan, your Board of Directors can ensure that what the club does lines up properly with its vision, mission and values and effectively manage staff's performance in how well it executes the strategic plan.

Finally (and importantly) it defines success for us as a club, allowing us to celebrate and reward each other when the goals in the strategic plan are successfully met.



Why Does A Strategic Plan Concern Me?

The strategic plan matters to you because, as its members, Richmond Hill Soccer Club is YOUR property! The club ultimately serves you, so you have a responsibility to ensure that it is being well-managed and serving the community's needs through its membership.

Furthermore, this strategic plan will inform all activities of the club moving forward. So if you want to know why your child's program is being run a certain way, or why the Board of Directors is authorizing investment in certain areas, the answer will probably already lie in this strategic plan.

Knowing what is in this plan is your best way to fully understand what is going on at the club, and why, before it has even happened. So get familiar with it right here and join us in making our plans a reality!





“This strategic plan was meticulously built over a whole year by a Board of Directors that insisted on quality over speed. We were hugely impressed by the club’s commitment to detail, accountability and authenticity that makes this plan a true reflection of its stakeholder’s wants and needs.”

*- Paul Varian, President,
Capitis Consulting Inc.*

VISION

Love the game. Develop the person. Excel in all we do.

MISSION

Richmond Hill Soccer Club is a safe space that ignites a passion for soccer and betters people in every way.

VALUES

Fun

We firmly believe that, regardless of the intensity or competitiveness of the soccer activities people engage in, core to their experience must be a fundamental feeling of fun and happiness that makes people want to come back and bring others with them.

Respect

We believe that everyone should treat people as they would expect to be treated themselves. We are committed to our club being a safe space where people can freely and openly express themselves, find their identity and form people-building friendships and bonds that provide shelter from the pressures of life.

Commitment

We believe in following through on what we say we will do. We believe that commitment is a core value in the pursuit of excellence, whatever that looks like. We understand that mutual commitment builds trust, respect and ultimately strong community inside our club, and in the broader community we serve.

Belief

We dare to dream. We aren’t afraid of thinking outside the box and striving for what could be achieved, no matter how lofty and ambitious. We replace ‘no’ with ‘why not?’ We pursue things that are hard to achieve because those things are worthwhile goals. We aren’t afraid of the new or unknown. We believe in each other and ourselves.

MOTTO

‘Dare To Dream’

SOCCER

Strategy that targets the experience that people have participating in soccer programs at RHSC, through playing, coaching or match officiating, creating a pathway for all people who want to develop and grow.



“Clubs like Richmond Hill Soccer Club are crucial in the development of grassroots soccer in Canada. We are very pleased that their strategic plan provides structured guidance to their programming.”

- Jason DeVos, Interim General Secretary, Canada Soccer



“RHSC’s commitment to supporting LTOD in its new strategic plan allows Ontario Soccer to provide development support to the club’s match officials, in partnership with York Region Soccer Association.”

- David Barrie, Manager of Match Official Development, Ontario Soccer

STRATEGY	TARGET	RATIONALE
<p>Explore and gather in better detail player/parent experience in non-competitive, house league level programs.</p> <p><i>Focus in particular on where experiences are not optimal and why some people aren’t returning to RHSC’s core house league programs</i></p>	<p>Annual player/parent satisfaction data on specific program experience.</p>	<p><i>We recognize and respect that our House League is the engine room of our club and a healthy House League is essential for a vibrant, successful club. To that end, we are taking a long term approach to building a House League with sustainable value and this starts with exploring in detail what participants like, don’t like and ultimately want out of the program.</i></p>
<p>Establish long-term investment in an in-house coach education program, aimed at building RHSC as a recognized centre-of-excellence for coach development.</p> <p><i>Move beyond funding of coaches’ external coaching levels to create an internal program that targets specific development needs of each coach, and help them learn together and from each other as a team.</i></p>	<p>Overall coach satisfaction at +85%; Overall coach rating of development +80%.</p>	<p><i>Our coaches are the beating heart of our club and research shows without doubt that they are the singular main reason why participants are satisfied with a soccer program or not. We already have strong foundational coach support in place, but we want to be better than that and build a coach development program that is regarded in the soccer coaching community as being best-in-class. This way we can retain our coaches and also attract other great ones.</i></p>
<p>Actively support Ontario Soccer’s Long Term Officials Development pathway for the development of match officials at RHSC.</p> <p><i>Work closely with Ontario Soccer and York Region Soccer Association’s referee development program to establish development pathways, mentoring opportunities and advanced officiating possibilities for RHSC match officials, particularly female officials.</i></p>	<p>Overall match official satisfaction rate is +80%; mentoring rating is +75%, advancement opportunities are at +65%.</p>	<p><i>Ontario Soccer has done great work building arguably the best match official development framework in Canada, that is well supported by our local soccer district York Region Soccer Association. To that end, our efforts will be centred on implementing Ontario Soccer’s LOTD plan within our club and playing our part in making the provincial program a success.</i></p>
<p>Continue to design and implement policies and procedures that drive a culture of safety and respect in all RHSC soccer experiences.</p> <p><i>Actively institute and monitor Canada Soccer’s Safe Sport policy guidelines and drive a culture of respect through all players, coaches and spectators.</i></p>	<p>Year-on-year decline in volume of abuse incident reports; overall referee rating of game-time conduct at +80%.</p>	<p><i>Safety and respect is at the centre of our club’s vision, mission and values. Our commitment to creating a safe place for our participants includes psychological safety, so people can be bold, courageous and not fear the risk of ‘failure’ in trying new things. We believe safety and respect are at the centre of daring to dream.</i></p>
<p>Drive performance of females in playing, coaching and match officiating programs at RHSC.</p> <p><i>Actively design soccer programs, incentives and measures that unleash the abilities of girls and women to be their best and inspire other, younger girls to dare to dream and unlock their potential.</i></p>	<p>A female RHSC team reaches the Gary Miller OPDL Charity Shield by 2026. There is a female coach on every RHSC female team by 2026. A pool of four female referees has been developed to manage the centre in OPDL/L10 by 2027.</p>	<p><i>We believe that the most important tool in driving inclusion is for people to see others who are similar to them participating and succeeding. To that end, we committed to driving ‘success’ in female participation in our club in all areas of soccer, not just playing.</i></p>

CLUB

Strategy that targets development of the organization of RHSC, in terms of its capacity, capability and sustainability.



“In developing grassroots soccer, the key is to foster a sense of belonging and showing the kids what happens when they dare to dream. For young girls, seeing other girls around them participating, succeeding, moving into leadership positions? This is what it is all about. This is what will make girls feel they truly belong in soccer, in whatever capacity they put their mind to achieving.”

- Melissa Mannella,
Grassroots Developer,
Richmond Hill Soccer Club

STRATEGY	TARGET	RATIONALE
<p>Renovate RHSC’s House League in terms of player volumes and participant experiences.</p> <p><i>Target marketing efforts at young, foundational age groups (<U9) and focus on player retention in ‘golden ages’ development ages (U9-U12).</i></p>	<p>More than 5% growth of aggregate <U9 player base (indoor & outdoor combined), year-on-year. 80% headless player retention from U9 to U12 age groups.</p>	<p><i>We understand that the base of our participant pyramid - kids aged U9 and younger - is where everything else springs from. To that end, we’re targeting the participation of young kids in our entry-level House League programs, from where we hope to retain them at the club in whatever capacity they choose for years to come.</i></p>
<p>Design and institute a material volunteer appreciation strategy.</p> <p><i>Establish better data on what modern sport volunteers want from their experiences and how they want to be recognized. Assign a dedicated staff member to drive volunteer development and reward initiatives.</i></p>	<p>Coach rating of recognition & reward at +75%. Overall volunteer appreciation at +80%; coach return rate at 75%.</p>	<p><i>We accept the reality that volunteers are becoming harder and harder to find and that we must do more as club to support them, but also recognize and reward them. We know that central to volunteer retention is the notion that volunteers must enjoy their experience and feel valued. We also know that this doesn’t just happen by itself. So we’re taking a more robust, structured approach to it.</i></p>
<p>Facilitate the design and development of a new indoor soccer facility at Richmond Hill, in line with the club’s program requirements.</p> <p><i>In association with the City of Richmond Hill, oversee the development of a facility that matches the future technical needs of RHSC, vis-à-vis other facilities the club has access to.</i></p>	<p>Completion of a new indoor soccer facility by 2026.</p>	<p><i>If we are to grow as a club, we need more places to play. We are already blessed with what is one of the finest community multi-sport centres in Canada in Richmond Green and we aim to expand on this centre with more indoor soccer facilities in the future. It is essential that we work closely with the City of Richmond Hill to ensure any new facility is constructed in line with our capacity needs, so we can leverage its full value.</i></p>
<p>Target the development of girls and women in leadership positions at RHSC, driving a club identity of opportunity for everyone, as a player or through another role.</p> <p><i>Establish a mentor-based female leadership development program that unlocks leadership potential in the club’s female participants that reach beyond technical advancement as a soccer player.</i></p>	<p>Aggregate of 25% increase in the number of females in positions of coaching, match officiating (or mentoring), or club leadership.</p>	<p><i>Our commitment to female participation in our club is absolute. As such, aside from performance in soccer participation, we want to see more girls and women occupying positions of leadership in the club at large, including our Board of Directors, volunteer committees and other leadership opportunities.</i></p>
<p>Source and capture increased corporate partnership and government grants revenue to improve the club’s overall revenue mix.</p> <p><i>Aim at increasing total non-fee based revenues to 20% of overall revenue mix, continuing to work through business partners such as KidSpired Media Inc.</i></p>	<p>Non-fee based revenue at 20% of total revenue, or higher.</p>	<p><i>Currently, our sponsorship revenue is not at the level that would be expected for a club of our size. To that end, we aim to boost it to create a broader revenue mix that will lessen our reliance on fee revenues and other revenue sources. This is line with best practice in financial risk management, which we embrace as a club.</i></p>

COMMUNITY

Strategy that targets fundamental value-add that RHSC brings to the community that it serves, both locally in the City of Richmond Hill and to other nearby residents.



“I am delighted that Richmond Hill Soccer Club has developed a new strategic plan. The club is a cornerstone of sport and recreation in our community, particularly among our youth, and we fully support the direction the club is taking, particularly with respect to ensuring its programs are open and accessible to all our residents.”

**- Hon David West,
Mayor of Richmond Hill**

STRATEGY	TARGET	RATIONALE
<p>Embrace the modern ethnicity of Richmond Hill in the club’s participant base (players, parents, coaches, match officials, staff and other volunteers).</p> <p><i>Establish marketing and outreach programs to attract and capture Richmond Hill’s visible minority populations, notably the fast-growing Sino-Tibetan, Indo-Iranian and Iranian communities now making up 46.9% of Richmond Hill’s total resident base).</i></p>	<p>Consistent year-on-year increase in percentage of RHSC’s participant base listing non-English or French languages as their mother tongue.</p>	<p><i>Targeting socio-cultural groups who are expanding in Richmond Hill ensures that the club is continuing to reflect the modernization of the community and present itself as an inclusive, welcoming organization where all can feel they belong.</i></p>
<p>Target teenage girls in Richmond Hill aged 12-18 who are not currently playing soccer to participate at RHSC in socially-driven soccer opportunities.</p> <p><i>Establish a long term marketing plan that promotes RHSC as a ‘place to be’ for girls of all ages, particularly those who have had limited or poor experiences with sports in the past.</i></p>	<p>New, aggregate, non-returning females players aged 12-18 at 10%.</p>	<p><i>This cohort is a prime area of participant drop-off, not just in RHSC but in youth sports at large. As well as targeting player retention, we’re going to go out and find girls who haven’t felt soccer is for them in the past and bring them into the game!</i></p>
<p>Target adult markets in Richmond Hill for adult-focused recreational soccer opportunities.</p> <p><i>Focus in particular on Richmond Hill’s growing Millennial market and drive a soccer experience that includes broader entertainment and socialization value-add, outside of playing soccer itself.</i></p>	<p>20% year-on-year increase in overall >U18 player registration base at RHSC.</p>	<p><i>Census data shows that Richmond Hill’s population is aging. In particular, the Millennial generation is set to expand considerably in the coming years. We want to cater to this growing community group by providing better, targeted soccer opportunities for adult community groups.</i></p>
<p>Expand the club’s partnerships and working relationships with private and public educational institutions in Richmond Hill.</p> <p><i>Similar to RHSC’s current relationship with Holy Trinity School, drive these partnerships to include access to school-based facilities & sports programs, and marketing initiatives to attract players / coaches to RHSC.</i></p>	<p>15% of all players identify their school/college as the primary means of how they heard about and chose to join RHSC.</p>	<p><i>We understand that our club is ultimately the property of the community of Richmond Hill and it is our duty to serve its residents and increase their quality of life. To that end, we believe the club should be entrenched in the very fabric of the community as much as possible. So we will be aiming to establish alliances and partnerships with Richmond Hill’s educational institutions to bring the value-add of soccer to their students.</i></p>
<p>Expand the club’s commitment to making its programs more accessible to Richmond Hill’s financially-challenged families and individuals.</p> <p><i>Explore partnerships with organizations like KidSport Ontario and Canadian Tire Jumpstart to access funding and support programs to improve accessibility.</i></p>	<p>Number of players registering at RHSC through identified financial assistance programs is at 5.5% of the club’s overall registration volume.</p>	<p><i>Further to the above, we understand that to be a genuine community organization, our programs must be accessible to all as much as possible. Between 2006 and 2021, an average of 13% of Richmond Hill’s population was living at or below the poverty line. So we deem the removal of financial barriers to our programs as an important issue to address in a strategic and structured way.</i></p>

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