

For Immediate Release: Monday, March 20, 2007

Richmond Hill Joins Call for Fair Health Care Funding for GTA/905

Richmond Hill: The Town of Richmond Hill Municipal Council has joined a number of other communities across the GTA/905 by unanimously endorsing a resolution calling on the Ontario Government to improve local access to hospital and health care services by addressing the growing gap in health care funding inequities facing residents in Richmond Hill, York Region and other GTA/905 regions.

"We believe that fair funding is needed to improve local access to health care services, because of the important role they play in ensuring our community remains safe and vibrant. Residents need to be able to count on the fact that local hospitals are able and ready to provide the services their community needs. It's something we all depend on" said Richmond Hill Mayor Dave Barrow. "That is why Richmond Hill Council fully supports the need for further funding for hospitals in York Region and those in the GTA/905 regions."

"Richmond Hill's voice is being added to a growing chorus of GTA/905 voices makes clear that fixing the under funding of GTA/905 residents' health care, home care and social services is a key priority in Ontario's high growth communities," said Kirk Corkery, Chair of the GTA/905 Healthcare Alliance.

A recent PricewaterhouseCoopers report found a \$1.5 billion annual funding gap in provincial funding for GTA/905 residents when compared to other regions in Ontario. The report found that GTA/905 residents face a \$551.5 million funding gap in social services, \$899 million gap for hospital care and \$90 million gap for home care. The gap results from a \$181 less in per capita funding for social services and a \$246 less per capita gap for health care services for GTA/905 residents compared to the rest of Ontario. In both sectors, the gap in provincial funding between the GTA/905 and the rest of the province is widening.

"The under funding of hospital care, home care and key social services in Richmond Hill and the rest of the GTA/905 makes clear that current provincial funding policies ignore the very real and growing needs of high growth communities like Richmond Hill," said Dave Weldon, Chair of York Central Hospital. "Lack of support for human services in high growth communities from Peterborough to Richmond Hill and across Barrie, Orangeville and Oakville needs to be fixed through immediate provincial growth funding and population-based funding to allocate provincial resources for health care and social services."

"Considering that residents of York Region contribute more than \$170 million annually through the health care tax it would be good to see some of that money come back to Richmond Hill residents", noted Corkery. "As the Premier correctly argues that Ontario does not receive our fair share from Ottawa we hope he will also bring his attention to a significant funding inequity for health and social services that faces three million Ontarians across the GTA/905."

The GTA/905 Healthcare Alliance is the collective voice of acute care and mental health hospitals across the GTA/905 regions. Alliance hospitals provide care in communities that represent more than 25 per cent of Ontario's population. The GTA/905 area is the fastest growing region in Ontario, increasing by more than 100,000 new residents annually and accounts for more than half of Ontario's annual population growth.

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**EXTRACT FROM COUNCIL MEETING
C#10-07 HELD MARCH 19, 2007
CONFIRMATORY BY-LAW NO. 46-07**

3.0 Minutes – Committee of the Whole meeting CW#05-07 of March 5, 2007

3.14 Proposed Resolution – GTA/905 Healthcare Alliance – Submitted by Tariq Asmi, Executive Director, GTA/905 Healthcare Alliance – (Item No. 19)

Rec. 14 WHEREAS local and timely access to health care and health care services is essential for building strong, prosperous and healthy communities;

WHEREAS the Town of Richmond Hill is among the fastest growing communities in Ontario and a key community in the Provincial Growth Plan for Ontario;

WHEREAS provincial funding for health care and social services fails to take into account the increasing need for additional services locally in high growth regions of Ontario, such that there is a large and growing provincial funding gap for health and social services in the Town of Richmond Hill and the GTA/905 regions compared to the rest of Ontario;

WHEREAS the Town of Richmond Hill fully supports Premier McGuinty's request for a fairer share of the federal transfer payments and that Ontario's argument with the federal government parallels the Town of Richmond Hill's and the GTA/905's health and social services funding gap situation vis-à-vis other Ontario regions;

WHEREAS York Region residents are now contributing more than \$170 million to the province of Ontario by way of the health care tax;

THEREFORE be it resolved that the Town of Richmond Hill request the Province of Ontario to provide immediate growth funding to the Town of Richmond Hill's and other GTA/905 hospitals, health care and social services so they can meet the needs of the growing number of residents in their communities;

FURTHER that the Town of Richmond Hill request the Province of Ontario to commit to allocating provincial health and social services to Local Health Integration Networks (LHIN) and Ontario regions on the basis of population size, growth and characteristics, i.e. population-based funding;

(continued)

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AND FURTHER that the Town of Richmond Hill request the Province of Ontario to develop a health and social services plan for Ontario's high growth regions to help build the "complete communities" envisioned in the *Places to Grow Act*;

AND THAT THIS RESOLUTION be sent to the Premier of Ontario, the Minister of Health and Long-Term Care, the Minister of Finance and the Association of Municipalities of Ontario.