



Community Hub & Centre for the Arts

Feasibility Study - Final Report

Updated November 2019

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Project Team



JANE FINCH COMMUNITY AND FAMILY CENTRE

The Jane/Finch Centre is a community-based organization and registered charity in northwest Toronto. As an anchor agency of the United Way of Greater Toronto, they provide a wide range of programs and services, including early years education, youth-led programs, seniors programs, financial literacy, settlement services, mental health programs, and community development.

Green Change is the Jane/Finch Centre's planning and design team that works directly with communities to improve their physical environment and ensure equitable neighbourhood development. They coordinated the overall feasibility study and facilitated the community engagement process.



COMMUNITY ACTION PLANNING GROUP

The Community Action Planning Group (CAPG) is a community-based, resident-led group that focuses on planning and development issues in the Jane-Finch area and across northwest Toronto. They have played a lead role in securing land for the community hub and funding for this feasibility study.



WORKSHOP ARCHITECTURE

Workshop Architecture is an architecture and urban design firm based in Toronto that specializes in providing innovative design solutions for public and non-profit clients. They delivered the concept design phase of the feasibility study.



COMMUNITY FACILITATORS

Community members were hired to help organize and facilitate our various outreach and engagement activities throughout the project. They were also active participants in our Stakeholder Advisory Group meetings, ensuring that community input continued to influence the vision, programming, and concept design of the hub. Our Community Facilitators were: Mildred Agasaoy, Anna-Kay Brown, Bolu Fowodu, David Mejia Monico, Ladna Mohamad, and Kajany Yogarajah.

Acknowledgements

Land Acknowledgment

We acknowledge that the land for the future community hub and centre of the arts is on the ancestral lands of the Huron-Wendat, the Anishinaabek, the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, the Chippewa and the current treaty holders, the Mississaugas of New Credit. This territory is covered by the Dish with One Spoon Wampum Belt Covenant, an agreement between the Haudenosaunee Confederacy and the Anishinaabek Nation to peacefully share resources and to care for the Great Lakes region.

Today, the area known as Tkaronto is home to many First Nations, Metis, and Inuit peoples, and we are grateful for the opportunity to learn, share and grow together. Finally, we acknowledge the many broken promises and treaties, and the need to work towards reconciliation with the original caretakers of Turtle Island both in the present, and for future generations.

Project Partners

A special thanks goes to all the volunteers, local residents, and community partners who contributed to this report and shared their stories, ideas, and passion for the project.

Stakeholder Advisory Group

The Stakeholder Advisory Group provided feedback and advice to the project team during the community engagement and concept design processes. The group was comprised of project team members, community facilitators, resident leaders, community partners, and other stakeholders.

Community Partners

These partners helped inform the project, and assisted with outreach and/or hosted engagement activities with the project team within their programs and spaces.

- Jane-Finch Action for Neighbourhood Change
- Albion Neighbourhood Services
- Black Creek Community Collaborative
- Black Creek Community Farm
- Black Creek Community Health Centre
- Centre for Spanish Speaking People
- City of Toronto (Social Development, Finance and Administration and Driftwood, Oakdale, and Grandravine Community Centres)
- Community & Legal Aid Services Program - Osgoode Hall, York University
- Jane-Finch Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy (TSNS) Task Force Education Action Group
- Elspeth Heyworth Centre
- Flaunt It
- Finch LRT Steering Committee
- James Cardinal McGuigan Catholic High School
- Jane Finch Church Coalition
- Jane Finch Community Ministry
- Jane Finch Mall
- Jane Finch TSNS Resident Engagement Planning Table
- Jane Street Speaks
- JustBGraphics
- JVS Toronto
- Maximum City
- Northwood Neighbourhood Services
- Parenting and Family Literacy Centres
- PEACH (Promoting Education and Community Health)
- Yorkgate Mall
- Youth Unlimited
- Regent Park School of Music
- San Romanoway Revitalization Association
- Success Beyond Limits
- Toronto Community Housing Corporation
- Toronto Community Benefits Network

- Toronto Public Library (York Woods and Jane/Sheppard Libraries)
- University Presbyterian Church
- Upfront Theatre Foundation
- Westview Centennial Secondary School
- Winters Community Art Club at York University
- York University
- York University Heights Neighbourhood Planning Table

Key Informants

- ArtsBuild Ontario
- CaterTO
- Parkway Forest Community Centre (City of Toronto)
- Toronto City Planning
- Daniels Spectrum
- Driftwood Community Centre
- East Scarborough Storefront
- FoodShare
- Jane Street Hub
- North York Arts
- Regent Park Community Food Centre
- Regent Park Community Centre
- Regent Park School of Music
- Rexdale Hub
- Richmond Hill Centre for Performing Arts
- Toronto Centre for the Arts
- The Working Centre

Supporters

This feasibility study was made possible through the generous support of the Ontario Trillium Foundation and Tapestry Community Capital.

Introduction



Introduction



From September 2017 to June 2019, the Jane/Finch Community and Family Centre collaborated with the Community Action Planning Group (CAPG) to facilitate a comprehensive and inclusive community engagement process to develop the vision, programming, and concept design for a proposed new community hub and centre for the arts in Toronto's Jane-Finch neighbourhood. This process included a range of key informant interviews, focus groups, workshops, surveys, information tabling, field trips, and community forums, through which residents and partners provided information about neighbourhood assets, needs, and priorities. A Stakeholder Advisory Group was also created to provide regular feedback and guidance during the process and broaden community ownership of the project.

In late 2018, Workshop Architecture was hired to develop a concept design for

the community hub. Informed by resident and partner input, they helped refine the list of desired program spaces, identify opportunities for flexible use, consider the site constraints, and evaluate the potential for a phased construction of the hub. They also produced a site plan, floor plans, renderings, and estimated construction budget.

The resulting feasibility study outlines a clear vision for a community-driven, community-operated multipurpose facility that supports creative, social, recreational, and entrepreneurial programs for residents of the Jane-Finch neighbourhood and beyond.

In the next phase of the project, CAPG will be completing a business plan and governance model for the hub.

Background



Background

This feasibility study builds on CAPG’s advocacy and planning work to secure land for a hub as a community benefit of the Finch West Light Rail Transit (LRT) project and the associated Maintenance and Storage Facility (MSF) in Jane-Finch.

Finch West LRT

The Finch LRT is a new 11-kilometre surface transit line that will run in a dedicated lane along Finch Avenue from Keele Street to Highway 27. Major construction is expected to begin in spring 2019 and be completed in 2023. The line will have 18 stops, with underground stops at both Finch West Subway Station and Humber College terminals. Once completed, the line will be operated by the Toronto Transit Commission (TTC).

The Finch West LRT was originally announced in 2010 as part of Transit City, and was intended to reduce the number of buses travelling along Finch Avenue West. After some delays, Metrolinx announced in April 2015 that it would be moving forward with the construction of the Finch LRT at a cost of \$1.2 billion.

The project is being delivered through a public-private partnership. In April 2018, Metrolinx and IO selected a private company called the Mosaic Transit Group to design, build, finance, and maintain the Finch LRT for 30 years.





Maintenance and Storage Facility

The Finch MSF will be located along Finch Avenue between Norfinch Drive and York Gate Boulevard (just east of Highway 400 and west of Jane Street). It will accommodate the storage and maintenance of the light rail vehicles that will operate along the Finch LRT route. It is also being built to accommodate the vehicles for a potential future Jane Street LRT (Finch West LRT MSF Environmental Project Report, 2015). The MSF will include administrative offices, train wash and inspection facilities, maintenance and train operations building, and an electrical substation.

Community Benefits Framework Agreement

Land for the community hub has been secured as neighbourhood improvement through the Community Benefits Framework for the Finch LRT. This framework is the result of a commitment made by Metrolinx in 2014 to include a community benefits program for its major transit infrastructure projects in Toronto.

For the Finch LRT, the community benefits targets include hiring local apprentices; providing opportunities for Professional, Administrative, and Technical (PAT) jobs to trained newcomers; and supporting small and medium-sized businesses and social enterprises through the procurement of materials and services; and supporting neighbourhood improvements.

Initial Community Engagement on the Hub Site

When CAPG learned that Metrolinx would be building the Finch MSF in the heart of Jane-Finch, they started organizing with other residents and partners to ensure that the industrial facility was not the face of the site and that additional uses could be built along Finch Avenue. From 2014-2015, CAPG members actively participated in the public open houses for the environmental assessment of the MSF site and provided detailed feedback on Metrolinx's initial concept design. The group also established its own set of seven site planning principles for the facility. These principles were adapted by City staff and taken to Toronto City Council in December 2015, which endorsed them and requested that Metrolinx include them in the Request for Proposals for the Finch LRT project. City Council also directed the Chief Planner and Executive Director of City Planning to work with Metrolinx and the bidders during the design and tendering process of the LRT to promote the implementation of these principles in their proposals.

Approved Site Planning Principles

1. Consider additional land uses
2. Shrink the MSF footprint
3. Engage out community in the design and development process
4. Optimize community benefits
5. Encourage intensification
6. Achieve high quality design

In late 2015, CAPG received funding through York University's Catalyst Grant program to conduct their own community engagement process around the Finch MSF. They held three workshops to ask residents and community partners for their thoughts on the MSF and other potential land uses for the site. Participants agreed that a community hub and centre for the arts would be a great use of the site, and that land for a hub should be secured as a community benefit through the development of the Finch LRT. These workshops also established an initial list of program spaces that residents and community partners felt should be reflected in the design of any hub. This community input formed the basis of our engagement process for the feasibility study.



In July 2017, CAPG was given the opportunity to present the community's priorities for the MSF site and initial vision for a community hub to all three bidders of the Finch LRT, alongside Toronto Community Benefits Network (TCBN). Following the presentations and subsequent meetings, Metrolinx confirmed that they would be instructing the bidders to leave a minimum 32-metre setback on the site to allow for the hub development and other uses. In summer 2018, Mosaic provided final confirmation that a 32-metre setback had been left for community use. No formal written agreement had been signed at the time of this feasibility study.

Neighbourhood Context



Neighbourhood Context

Site

The proposed site for the community hub is located along Finch Avenue immediately adjacent to the Finch MSF. The full piece of frontage land secured by CAPG for the hub and other potential uses measures 32 metres deep by 274 metres long. It is surrounded by a mix of commercial, residential, institutional uses, and recreational uses, such as the Yorkgate Mall, Hawthorne Place Care Centre, and Remberto Navia Sports Fields. Located near the main intersection of Jane Street and Finch Avenue, the site is accessed by the 35/935 Jane and 36 Finch bus routes, and will be served by two Finch LRT stops in the future.

The frontage land is currently owned by Metrolinx, but is expected to be transferred to the City of Toronto for a nominal price either during or after the construction of the Finch LRT. Regardless of ownership, Mosaic will be using the site for staging during the entire construction of the LRT, and therefore, construction on the hub would not be able to start until 2023 at the earliest.

Prior to being acquired by Metrolinx for the Finch LRT project, the site was a vacant greenfield. It is currently zoned for residential development, specifically a private townhouse development that was never built. A rezoning process with the City of Toronto will need to take place in the future to establish the new regulations for this site, including building setbacks, maximum height, density, and parking requirements.



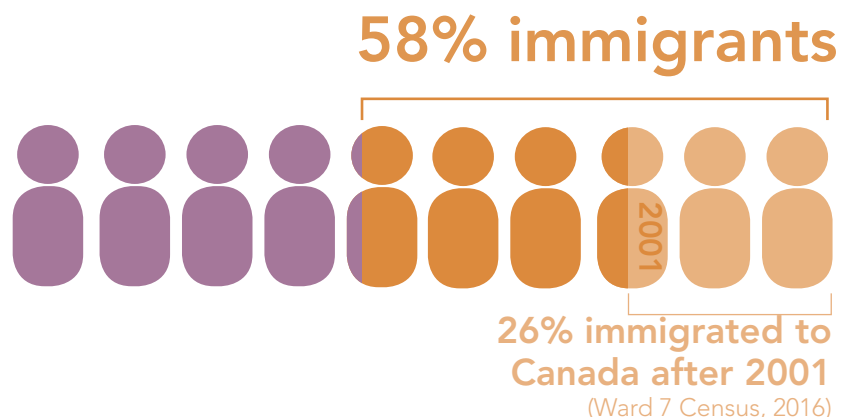
Jane-Finch Community

The Jane-Finch community is filled with many social and cultural assets. It boasts a large number of community organizations, grassroots groups, and active resident leaders. However, space in the neighbourhood for organizational and resident-led initiatives is limited. But these groups often lack space to share and grow community knowledge, skills and talents. Many community spaces are maxed out, overbooked and at capacity.

The Jane-Finch Toronto Strong Neighbourhood Strategy (TSNS) Task Force's 2015 research report highlights community priorities in three domains - economic opportunities, healthy lives, and social development. Economic opportunities refers to the high cost of public and private transportation, lack of job opportunities, and lack of recognition of professional accreditation gained outside of Canada. Healthy lives refers to limited access and poor quality of healthcare in the community. Social development refers to long-standing education, housing and safety issues. These priorities were also emphasized throughout our community engagement process for the hub.

Demographics

The Jane-Finch community is located in northwest Toronto. This inner suburban community consists of two neighbourhood improvement areas, Glenfield-Jane Heights and Black Creek, and is covered by Ward 7 - Humber River-Black Creek, which has a population of over 100,000 people (City of Toronto, 2016). There is also a large amount of green space, including the Black Creek ravine which cuts along the eastern boundary of the neighbourhood. Jane-Finch is one of Toronto's most diverse and vibrant communities with a large population of newcomers and young people. The 2016 Ward 7 census identified 19 % of the population as children from 0-14 years of age and 15% as youth ranging from 15-24 years old.



Local Assets

The Jane-Finch community is filled with many social and cultural assets. It boasts a large number of community organizations, grassroots groups, and active resident leaders. However, space in the neighbourhood for local organizations, grassroots groups, and resident-led initiatives is limited. Groups often lack space to share and grow community knowledge, skills and talents. Many community spaces are maxed out, overbooked, or at capacity.

Below are some of the existing local assets identified by residents and community partners that relate to what they would ultimately like to see in the community hub. The current reach and statistics of these program spaces have not been examined, however feedback from residents and community partners indicate where there are gaps and improvement needed. The list includes public, private, and non-profit spaces that support community use in the areas of arts and culture, sports and recreation, food, health, economic opportunities, childcare, and community building.

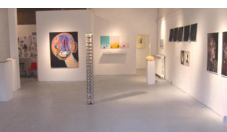
A complete inventory of community spaces will be made available through an online mapping platform created by the Jane/Finch Centre to help increase awareness of existing assets as well as opportunities for new or enhanced facilities.

Arts and Culture



Dance Studios

- York Woods Public Library
- Ephraim's Place
- Jane and Finch Boys and Girls Club



Art Galleries

- Art Gallery at York University

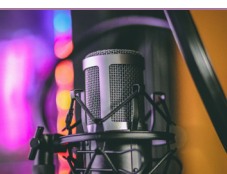


Multimedia Rooms

- Driftwood Community Centre

Music Practice Rooms

- Regent Park School of Music at Monsignor Fraser College



Recording Studios

- PEACH
- The Spot, Jane/Finch Centre



Theatres

- York Woods Public Library
- Palisades Recreation Centre

Childcare



- EarlyON, Jane/Finch Centre
- YMCA

Sports and Recreation

Fitness Studios

- Driftwood Community Centre
- Northwood Community Centre
- Fit 4 Less
- Planet Fitness

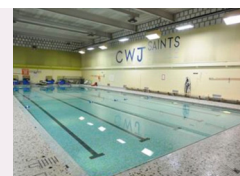


Game Rooms

- York Woods Public Library
- The Spot

Indoor Swimming Pools

- C.W. Jefferys Collegiate Institute
- Emery Collegiate Institute



Multipurpose Gyms

- Driftwood Community Centre
- Oakdale Community Centre
- Domenico DiLuca Community Centre
- Northwood Community Centre



Health

Mental Health

- Jane/Finch Centre
- Black Creek Community Health Centre
- LOFT Community Services
- Sick Kids Centre for Community Health



Food



Cafes/Restaurants

- Tim Hortons



Community Gardens

- Black Creek Community Farm
- York Woods Library
- Oakdale Community Centre
- Driftwood Parkette



Community Kitchens

- Driftwood Community Centre
- Jane/Finch Centre
- Black Creek Community Health Centre
- Firgrove Community Centre

Economic Opportunities

Employment Services

- Yorkgate Employment and Social Services
- JVS Toronto
- North York Dufferin Street YMCA Centre
- Christian Horizons Employment Services
- Humber College Employment Services

Entrepreneurship Supports

- Black Creek Microcredit Program



Computer Labs

- JVS Toronto
- Yorkgate Employment and Social Services
- York Woods Public Library
- Jane/Sheppard Public Library
- Driftwood Community Centre

Community Building

Community Rooms

- John Booth Memorial Arena
- Driftwood Community Centre
- Oakdale Community Centre
- Domenico DiLuca Community Centre
- Northwood Community Centre
- Grandravine Community Centre
- York Woods Public Library
- Jane/Sheppard Public Library
- York University-TD Community Engagement Centre
- Jane/Finch Centre



Lounges

- York Woods Public Library

Dedicated Youth Spaces

- York Woods Public Library
- The Spot
- Success Beyond Limits
- PEACH
- Jane and Finch Boys and Girls Club
- Northwood Community Centre
- Youth Unlimited



Community Needs

Support Community-Led Arts Spaces

West Side Arts Hub

The West End Arts Hub opened in 2010 at the York Woods Library as a community-driven facility for local artists and arts programs. It was an inclusive, welcoming cultural space supported youth arts programming and provided a home for local arts groups like Nomanzland. The West Side Arts Hub has since closed and the space was turned into an arts hub operated by the library.

Youth 'N' Charge Studio And Palisades Media Arts Academy

The Youth 'N' Charge (YNC) Studio was a successful recording studio located in the Palisades Recreation Centre at 15 San Romanoway, which is part of a complex of rental and condo buildings located at the main Jane/Finch intersection and owned by Greenwin and Capreit. The Palisades Media Arts Academy (PMAA) was a three-year program funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation and run through the San Romanoway Revitalization Association (SRRA). In April 2014, the studio and program were closed suddenly by SRRA after only two years of programming, as program workers were organizing to unionize their workplace. Former workers and youth participants organized a petition and rallies in response to the closure, and took SRRA to the Ontario Labour Relations Board with support from CUPE. YNC and PMAA's story remains an important lesson in finding and preserving safe spaces for creating art in Jane-Finch, especially for local youth.

Improve Access to Existing Facilities

York Woods Library Theatre

There is currently one theatre in the neighbourhood located at the York Woods Library. The theatre accommodates up to 260 people and is used for live performances and events. Through the engagement process, many residents indicated that this space can be difficult to book and access, and is often used by groups based outside of the neighbourhood.

School Pools

There are currently two indoor pools in the Jane-Finch area - both of which are located in high schools. These pools offer limited public access, since programs are scheduled around school hours and activities. During our engagement activities, many people mentioned that they travel outside of the neighbourhood to access indoor pools and would like to have one closer to home.

Community Kitchens

Creating a large, commercial-grade community kitchen has been priority in the neighbourhood for many years and reflects a longstanding need to improve access to fresh, affordable, and culturally appropriate food for local residents. Community food programs currently run out of kitchen spaces at Black Creek Community Farm, Driftwood Community Centre, Black Creek Community Health Centre, and the Jane/Finch Centre's satellite location at 2999 Jane Street. These spaces are limited in their capacity to host workshops and groups, and support local small businesses and social enterprises.

Fitness Studios

Currently, there are a few public and private fitness studios located in the neighbourhood. Driftwood and Northwood Community Centres have fitness studios with weights and cardio equipment, and two privately-owned fitness gyms have opened up in recent years at the Yorkgate Mall and Jane Finch Mall. However, many residents expressed a need for more affordable spaces to exercise in the community. Participants also shared an interest in having a studio that can accommodate a wider range of fitness programs and drop-in classes for all ages, emphasizing programs for kids and young people under the age of 16.

Investments in Community Facilities

There are a number of planned capital investments in the Jane-Finch neighbourhood that may lead to improvements to existing community spaces or creation of new facilities. These investments should be monitored and considered through the next phases of the hub's development to ensure both capital funding and community benefits are maximized. Given this context, the community may need to advocate strongly for the inclusion of certain program spaces with the hub.

York Woods Library

In May 2018, Toronto Public Library announced the York Woods Branch capital project which will see an \$8.3 million dollar renovation of the facility. Diamond Schmitt Architects was later hired to deliver the architectural services for the renovation. The scope of the project includes the addition of a new main entrance, revitalization of the ground and second floors, and reprogramming of spaces to better support and accommodate the needs of library visitors. The project will also focus on revitalizing the theatre and lobby. The library intends to begin construction in the second half of 2019, with the facility being closed during this time for approximately 24 months.



Source: Toronto Public Library

Regent Park School Of Music

As the demand for the Regent Park School of Music's (RPSM's) programs in the Jane-Finch community continues to grow, the non-profit organization is exploring the feasibility of centralizing all of its activities in one location. In 2019, they retained arts consultant Jenny Ginder, of Ginder Consulting, to explore the viability of such a move. They investigated both short- and long-term options in the neighbourhood, taking into consideration key factors, like student mobility and safety. The minimum required space for RPSM's new home is 3,000 square feet.

Firgrove Revitalization

Toronto Community Housing Corporation has drafted a master plan to rebuild and revitalize the Firgrove-Grassways community in Jane-Finch. Current plans include an enhanced community centre, childcare facility, and an outdoor pool, as well as a new public park. Conversations between CAPG members and City/TCHC staff have suggested that the community centre could be operated by the City instead of TCHC and that the outdoor pool could become an indoor pool.

Since the Firgrove neighbourhood is located about 600 metres south of the community hub site, revitalization plans should be followed closely.



University Presbyterian Church Expansion

In 2014, the University Presbyterian Church completed a feasibility study and preliminary business case for the development of a new Jane Finch Mission Centre adjacent to their current building at Finch Avenue and Driftwood Avenue. The addition would accommodate the church's growing congregation and vision for serving the local community through programs seven days a week. A strong focus has been placed on enhancing arts programming spaces, which University Presbyterian Church currently runs. Current plans include a main hall, music practice rooms, classrooms and computer lab.



Downsview Lands

Downsview Lands in north Toronto will be comprised of five neighbourhoods that surround Downsview Park. The five neighbourhoods will be interconnected, incorporating city transit, walking and cycling networks. The park-centred neighbourhoods aims to feature innovative design and provide places to live, learn, work and play.

In June 2019, the developer, Canada Lands Company, hosted two open houses to provide the public with an early version of plans for their William Baker neighbourhood, and get ideas, input and aspirations to inform the District Plan for the new neighbourhood. The plan will consider housing, green space, transportation, sustainability and community life which includes a community centre and opportunities for shops, cafes, day care, medical services and other community uses.

To develop the neighbourhood, Canada Lands Company will be working with The Planning Partnership Swerhen Public Consultation, BA Group, Counterpoint, Dougan and Associates and Urban Metrics. The project timeline slates construction to begin in 2020.

Other Future Developments

With the construction of the Finch LRT, new residential and mixed-use developments are expected over the coming years in the Jane-Finch neighbourhood. These developments may require or present opportunities for new community facilities and amenities, such as childcare centres and recreational spaces.

Policy and Planning Framework

Keele Finch Plus Study

The neighbourhood around Keele Street and Finch Avenue West intersection are functionally part of the Jane-Finch community, sharing stores, transit, services and institutional spaces. Keele Finch Plus is a City of Toronto study about planning for the future of the Keele-Finch neighbourhood, which is immediately to the east of Jane-Finch, and how to leverage investment in the Toronto-York Spadina Subway Extension and Finch LRT for the benefit of the community and the city. The goal is to develop a planning framework to encourage the right kinds of growth and investments into broader community improvements.

As part of the study, a comprehensive inventory of community services and facilities within the area was completed through research, technical assessment and public input. The inventory highlighted the demand for programs and services for children and youth, citing programs at Yorkwoods Library being of particular interest to community members. It also highlighted the need for renovations to many existing community facilities.

Jane Finch Planning Study

Starting in 2019, Toronto City Planning will begin conducting a planning study of the Jane-Finch neighbourhood similar to Keele Finch Plus. The planning will look into community centres and community benefits.

City Of Toronto Parks And Recreation Facilities Master Plan 2019-2038

The City of Toronto completed a 20-year Parks and Recreation Facilities Master Plan in 2017, and staff are scheduled to submit an implementation to City Council for approval in 2019. The long-term plan aims to guide investment in parks and recreation facilities, such as community centres, ice rinks, and sports fields, as the city's population grows and needs change in the future. It does not recommend any new recreational facilities be built in the Jane-Finch community over the next two decades. However, the plan does highlight the intent to renovate the many existing outdoor pools in the neighbourhood.

Community Engagement Process

The bottom right corner of the page features a series of diagonal stripes. From top-left to bottom-right, the stripes are: a thin white line, a thick white line, a thick orange line, and a thin white line. The background is a solid purple color.

Community Engagement Process

Overview

From December 2017 to June 2019, we led a comprehensive community engagement process to collect input from community members and partner organizations on the vision, programming, and concept design for the community hub. We used a variety of interactive engagement activities and tools to collect input from people of all ages and backgrounds. We partnered with community organizations, service providers, neighbourhood planning tables, community centres, and local malls to do outreach and engagement where people were at. Some key informant interviews and site visits took place within other neighbourhoods or cities in the region, such as Richmond Hill, Kitchener, and Kingston-Galloway in Scarborough.

Timeline

The engagement process was carried out in two phases. The first phase (December 2017 to August 2018) focused on establishing the vision, values, and programming for the community hub. We also conducted an inventory of existing community spaces and upcoming capital investments, to better understand existing assets and identify potential opportunities and gaps. The second phase (November 2018 to April 2019) involved working closely with Workshop Architecture to develop a concept design based on community input, and refine the list of desired program spaces.



Vision and Programming

December 2017 - August 2018

Began community engagement phase and used the following tools:

- focus groups/workshops
- info tables
- surveys
- field trips
- key informant interviews
- forums
- stakeholder advisory meetings



Interim Report

October 2018

Produced Interim Report with information from community engagement



Concept Design

November 2018 - April 2019

Began concept design phase and continued engaging with community to get additional feedback. In addition to the tools used in the community engagement phase, we also presented updates to local planning tables.

Engagement By The Numbers

16
information tables

40
key informant interviews

90
survey responses

3
field trips

4
presentations to local planning tables

24
focus groups

14
SAG meetings

3
community forums

over 400
people reached through social media

Total number of people reached:

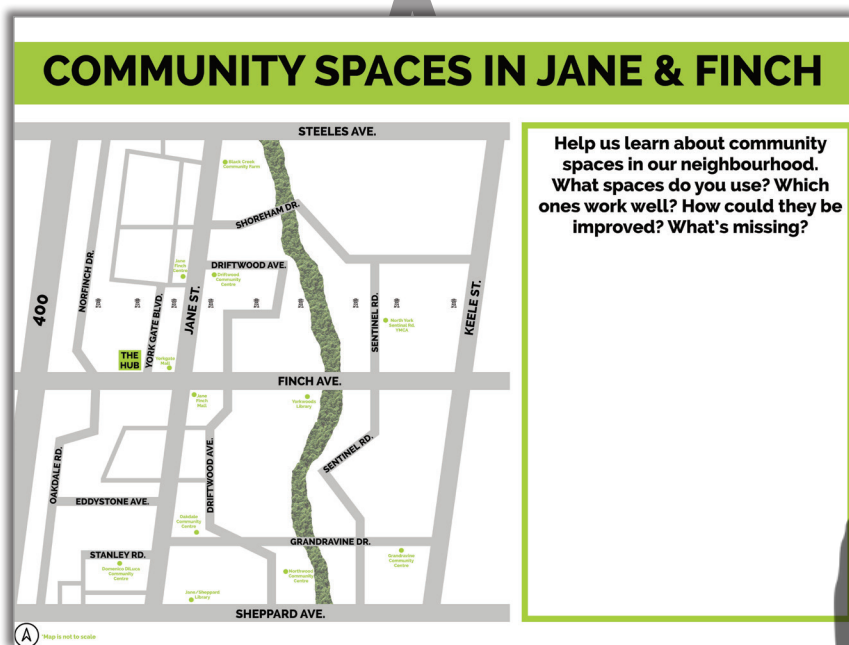
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Engagement Tools

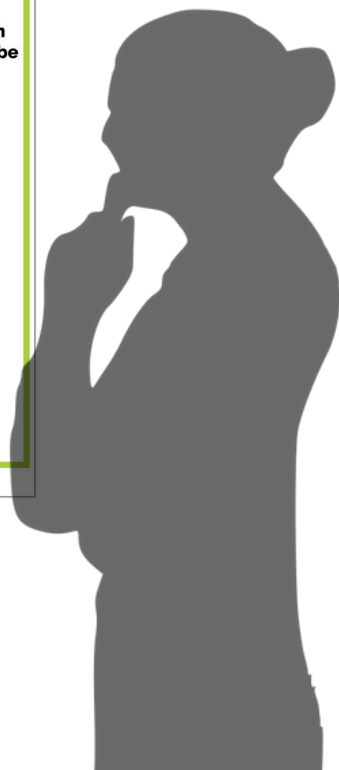
Information Tables

Tabling allowed us to provide more information and answer questions about the community hub and centre for the arts to users of existing community spaces in the neighbourhood, and collect feedback on the hub through various interactive activities. Information tables were held across the neighbourhood at local malls, libraries, community centres, and youth spaces.

Three interactive information boards and one voting activity were taken to each of the tabling events. These visuals and activities allowed residents to provide feedback on the vision and programming of the community hub and comment on existing community spaces.



Engagement activity used at information tables



Key Informants

Key informant interviews provided us with insights and advice from resident leaders, community partners, and other stakeholders. Their knowledge and expertise provided direction on the engagement process and potential program spaces.

Upon our interviews with these key informants, we also had the opportunity to tour around their community spaces and get a better understanding of key design considerations and requirements, along with insights on operational logistics.



The Working Centre cafe

We had the opportunity to visit The Working Centre, a non-profit organization that provides a wide range of programs, services and facilities to the community of downtown Kitchener, and got an indepth tour of their community kitchen, Maurita's Kitchen and cafes.

Maurita's Kitchen directly supports the community cafe with preparing and making food served there every day, as well as catering for special events and businesses. The food is made by drop in and regular volunteers, that are supported by a staff of The Working Centre. The open and welcoming environment of the kitchen allows volunteers to learn new skills, socialize, and contribute to the community driven cafe. Currently, the kitchen is only used by one other community group that provides free meals to the community and is not rented out to others, as the high demand of the cafe and catering doesn't leave room in the kitchen schedule.



Theatre at Daniels Spectrum

Another space we were able to get insights on was the Daniels Spectrum. The arts and culture centre has activated the surrounding community, enlivening the area with performance, exhibition, education, mentoring, and opportunities for connection. The ground floor is animated with a network of hallway galleries that allow visitors to casually explore creative work. Overall, the building has been successful in its intentions, and well received in the local community as well as the broader city. The project has accumulated a number of awards and has been widely published for its accomplishments.

The centre's focus on art and community resonates with the vision for the hub. The Daniels Spectrum was also a stop on one of our community field trips, Jane/Finch residents were able to explore and learn more about the Daniels Spectrum, its programming and impact on the community. The co-location of various organizations that share and contribute to Daniels Spectrum vision was an aspect that people wanted to see explored in our hub. Along with the design of spaces like the flexible theatre, classrooms and gallery space.



Surveys

Surveys were developed as a method to collect data on existing community spaces, and six main categories of program spaces for the hub. Copies of the survey were handed out to programs and organizations across the neighbourhood and an online survey was also shared through our networks. The majority of surveys were completed in person.

Focus Groups

Focus groups provided a platform for more in-depth discussions with residents about their thoughts and ideas for the community hub. Led by our team of community facilitators, focus groups encouraged residents to think about their current and future needs and wants, and how a community hub might help to fulfill them. They were held across the neighbourhood, reaching different age groups from children to seniors, as well as various cultural groups.

Activity sheets were used to prompt thoughts and ideas about what programs, services, and spaces should be included in the community hub. From there, facilitators asked participants questions about the importance of those programs, services, and spaces, and facilitated a conversation about which community spaces are working or need to be improved in the neighbourhood.



Activity sheet used at focus groups

Field Trips

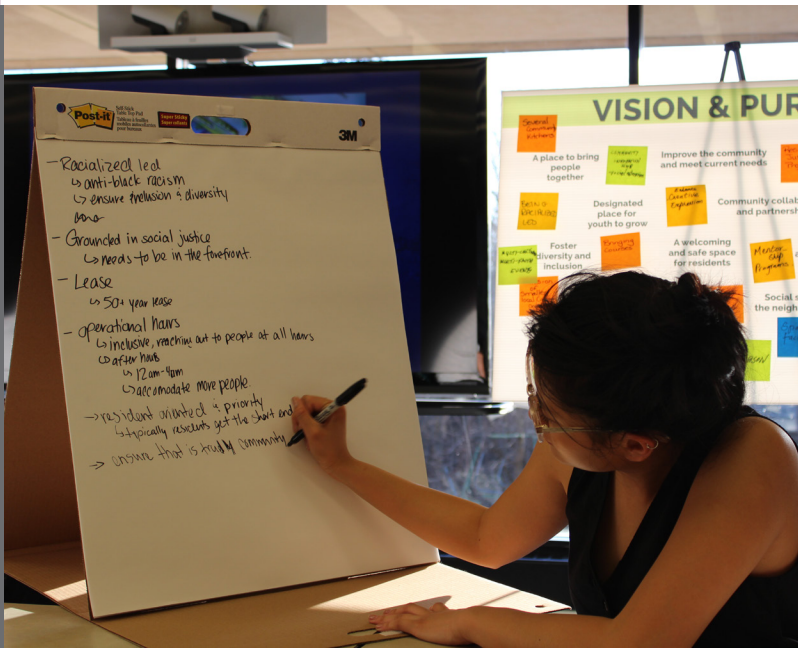
Three field trips were conducted between December 2018 and April 2019. The first field trip brought participants to three community spaces in the Jane/Finch neighbourhood: Yorkgate Mall, York Woods Library, and Driftwood Community Centre. The second and third field trips brought participants to community spaces outside of the neighbourhood, including the East Scarborough Storefront, Parkway Forest Community Centre, Daniels Spectrum, and Regent Park Community Centre.

These field trips allowed residents to visit and analyze existing community spaces across the city and get ideas for what they may want to see in a future hub. At each location, participants received a tour and got to learn on different types of programs offered at the space and the challenges and benefits of certain features. At the end of each tour, participants were asked to fill out a report card, providing a grade for various categories of program spaces. Participants were asked to explain the grades that they had awarded and comment on what program elements they liked and might want to see in Jane and Finch.



Stakeholder Advisory Group Meetings

Stakeholder Advisory Group meetings were held on a monthly basis, starting in March 2018. These meetings allowed residents and community partners to hear updates on input collected through the engagement activities, provide feedback on our process, and review the concept design.



Presentations to Local Planning Tables

Presentations to local planning tables gave us an opportunity to share updates on the project and get additional feedback from planning tables such as Black Creek Collaborative, Jane Finch TSNS Resident Engagement Planning Table, York University Heights Planning Table and Finch LRT Steering Committee.

Community Forums

Community forums provided an opportunity to report back on what we had heard during the initial engagement process and discuss next steps. At the forums, we also received more feedback from residents and community partners on the vision and program priorities for the hub. The events were held at York Woods Library and Oakdale Community Centre.



Vision & Programs



What We Heard

Vision

Residents and community partners were asked to share their vision for a community hub and centre for the arts through the engagement process. They were asked to share what values and purpose it should achieve, and how they would like to feel in the space. This section highlights what we heard from the community about their vision and values.

The hub will be a space that embodies our community's diverse skills and talents. We want people to rethink all their beliefs about Jane Finch and think of us as a community that has taken ownership of our future. Our community will no longer be considered a place to transition from but a place where people, including newcomers, local residents, youth and seniors can collaborate to make effective changes.

Having a landmark like the hub will transcend us to the next step of redevelopment. It is vital to have the community's input in the development process when developments are being conducted in our communities. Secondly the objective will include preserving our uniqueness, working collectively and showcasing our own strengths and ability to self-direct. The genetic makeup of this community will be impacted due to developments it is crucial therefore that residents have a seat at the table rather than being on the menu.

The hub will be a space that unites and engages all members of the community and surrounding areas through services, programs, and economic opportunities.

Youths will have spaces to showcase and harness their talents while participating in programs/services that will help transcend them to the next level. Our new residents and immigrants often times possess knowledge and innovative ideas that could be greatly utilized. Third the hub will be a place for seniors and families to connect with services and programs that are both beneficial for health, fun and creativity.

Residents envisioned a hub that is the heart of the community - a one-stop-shop that provides a variety of resources and information to address the needs of many people. Some envisioned a vibrant community hub that improves the social, health, and economic status of the community, and helps to revitalize the area. Others envisioned it as a gathering space that encourages community collaboration and brings people together, giving residents the opportunity to learn from and help each other.

Some residents imagined a hub that would be a welcoming space for newcomers and youth. It would provide access to various settlement services and resources, as well as opportunities to learn more about and interact with the community. The hub would also provide young people with engaging programs and services that encourage growth and education. It would be a safe, comfortable, and welcoming space for young people to socialize, learn, and work. The vision is also for a youth space, a place where programs and services are made by and for youth.

Values

Community Owned & Run

It is vital that the community hub is community owned and operated. Residents have been very proactive and advocated for the land space therefore it's of utmost importance for them to continue to have full control of all aspects of the hub from the design, services, programs, amenities and day to day operations. The hub should be grounded in community. Participants said that the hub should reflect the local community and that residents should be engaged throughout the development process and beyond. Many participants emphasized the need for the hub to be community owned and run.

Accessible & Inclusive

The hub will be a place that is fully accessible and inclusive for all people regardless of faith, race, gender or disability. The hub will have ramps, elevators, accessible doors and wide corridors. The safety of participants, staff and service providers are crucial so there will be security on the premises. Also the policies that will be used to govern the hub will reflect the importance of accessibility and inclusiveness for all residents and participants. Participants expressed the need for the hub to accommodate and welcome everyone. From the hours of operations to security to local hiring and procurement, all elements of the hub should be carefully considered and ensure that everyone can use the amenities of the hub in a safe and comfortable way.

Diverse in Culture, Faiths & Ages

The hub will be a portal that will encourage diversity in all forms from its programs, services, staff and amenities. The Jane Finch community is made up of various cultures and faith groups that must be reflective in all aspects of the hub. The hub will be a catalyst in bridging and uniting all the surrounding communities and in spite of our differences we have much more in common. should encourage diversity in all forms. Its programs, services, and amenities should address the needs of the diverse community of Jane and Finch. Participants also mentioned that the hub should be a place for people to share their cultures and faiths with each other and where the community comes together through its diversity.

Foster Growth & Collaboration

The hub will become a catalyst in uniting the communities in working together to create effective changes. It will be a place where residents and stakeholders can gather and collaborate on events and issues that are affecting our communities; showcase talents; and creating entrepreneurship opportunities. This initiative will also foster the relationships with our seniors and youths that will assist in bridging the generational gaps. should foster community growth, collaboration, and supports. Participants said that the hub could encourage residents to work together to raise each other and the community up. People could also come together to work on issues that affect individuals and the community at large.

Program Spaces

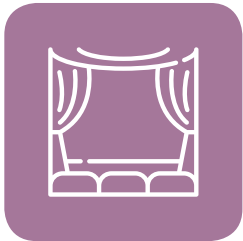
We used the initial list of program spaces that had been generated through CAPG's workshops in 2015-2016 as a starting point for collecting community input on the programming of the hub. Through our engagement activities, residents and partners helped refine this list by identifying which types of spaces were most important, what was missing, and key design considerations. Residents and key informants also highlighted various ways in which spaces, community programs, and services could be combined to accommodate community needs, along with overall design features that should be considered. The following section outlines some of these spatial requirements and design features.

Arts and Culture



indicates what residents mentioned as high priority

Theatre !



There is currently one theatre in the neighbourhood located at Yorkwoods Library. The theatre accommodates up to 260 people and is used for live performances and events. Residents have expressed that, although the community has an active theatre, having another performance space would be important, as the existing theatre is not exclusive to the community and can be difficult to book and access. Jane-Finch has a strong community of artists and it was made clear that there should be more venues in the neighbourhood for artists to share their talents. Residents also expressed an interest in having a movie theatre in the neighbourhood, noting that the closest theatres are located at Yorkdale Mall and Albion Mall. A new theatre should therefore be able to accommodate a variety of events, including film screenings, live performances, community celebrations, and public meetings. It was suggested that the theatre could be an intimate black box theatre that can be adapted depending on the need.

Dance Studio !



A dance studio was one of the most common program spaces that was mentioned by residents. Many people expressed that there are existing dance studios in the neighbourhood. But due to the high demand and interest in dance programming, these studios are often difficult to book and programs are often at capacity. In terms of the community programs within the space, there was a desire for more affordable and intensive dance programming for people of all ages and levels.

Recording Studio !



There are a few recording studios in the neighbourhood, however, access is not always secure. Jane-Finch has many musical talents looking for recording studios to produce their own music. Residents expressed that while the recording studios in the area work well, they are not always active due to a lack of funding and resources. Many people spoke about how recording studios should be more accessible, reliable, and affordable. Multiple small soundproof recording booths could allow for artists to use the facilities at the same time. Studios could also help support local talent and engage youth by providing a creative outlet. It could also bring in local community members to provide their expertise and skills with equipment and tools.



Practice Rooms

Dedicated studio and practice rooms are needed for various arts programming, each designed and equipped to learn and practice various forms of art including drawing and painting, and music. Residents and community partners in the arts field have stressed the importance of appropriate studio and practice rooms in order for arts programming participants to effectively learn and grow their artistic skills. A large music practice room is needed in order to accommodate various instruments and band sizes.



Gallery

Gallery space in the Jane-Finch neighbourhood is limited. Nearby York University has an art gallery on campus that is free and open to the public, but not easily accessible to residents. There is still a clear desire for a gallery space in the hub that is rooted in the community and can showcase the local talents of the neighbourhood. Residents mentioned that a gallery should exhibit work produced through programming at the hub, as well as work by recognized artists from Jane-Finch. The gallery should be an open, accessible, and casual space, like the Daniels Spectrum gallery. Large hallways with lockable gallery wall hanging systems and/or vitrines can be used to showcase work as well as accommodate small performances and other events/activities. accommodate various instruments and band sizes.



Art Rooms

Community partners and resident leaders suggested multidisciplinary arts programming that could meet different interests in the community. This programming would include more traditional arts, like music and visual arts, but also support emerging artistic mediums. Some residents also expressed that more programming and mentoring could be implemented for artists looking to pursue careers in the arts. These rooms need to be north-facing for natural light and to avoid intense sun exposure, as well as have sinks and dedicated storage space for art providers.

Sports and Recreation



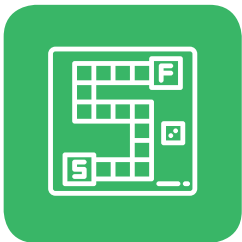
Indoor Swimming Pool

An indoor swimming pool was often raised as a priority at our engagement events, as there are only two indoor pools in the community - both of which are located in high schools. These pools offer limited public access, since programs are scheduled around school hours and activities. Many people mentioned that they travel outside of the neighbourhood to access indoor pools and would like to have one closer to home. Although there are currently five outdoor pools that are open during the summer months in the neighbourhood, an indoor pool would provide increased access through year-round programming. Residents mentioned that the indoor swimming pool should be sized for swimming lessons, lifeguard accreditation and with a therapeutic pool and sundeck.



Multipurpose Gym

A multipurpose gym was mentioned multiple times throughout our engagement, especially by youth. Existing community centres within the neighbourhood do have multipurpose gyms, however, many residents expressed an interest in a more updated recreation facility, stating that many existing community centres are outdated. A new gym could be used for various sports and fitness programming, as well as for events and larger community meetings. Emphasis was also placed on having more women's only hours and spaces.



Games Room

A game room would provide space for people to hang out and meet new people. Currently, there are a few youth-focused game rooms in the neighbourhood, one of which is located within the Youth Hub at Yorkwoods Library. Although there was a strong emphasis on having a game room as part of a youth space in the hub, there was also a clear interest in having a game room for adults and seniors. A game room would be equipped and stocked with both board games and video games, but ultimately, it would provide a venue for people to get together and socialize.

Food



Community Kitchen

A community kitchen was one of the most common program spaces mentioned during the engagement process by residents and community partners, with many people noting that it would be an important tool for building capacity, improving health and wellness, and reducing social isolation. At least three kitchens in the neighbourhood are currently being used for community food programs, but many people spoke about their limitations, including access issues, small size, and lack of equipment to support larger workshops and food entrepreneurs. A new community kitchen in the hub could be used for both community programs and opened up for local, resident-led, food social enterprises.



Cafe/Restaurant

There was great interest in having a café or restaurant that is grounded in the community. Although the neighbourhood has some coffee shops and restaurants, residents noted that there are few places in the neighbourhood to eat or have a drink, while hanging out with family and friends. The hub café or restaurant would be a place where people could go to enjoy community-grown food, hang out, or just relax. The food served could be from local gardens and cooked in the community kitchen at the hub. An area could be used for open mic nights and other small-scale live performances. The café or restaurant would ideally be community-run and focus on hiring local residents.



Community Garden

Residents and community partners raved about the existing community gardens around the community and expressed an interest in increasing the number of gardens. These gardens provide residents, who do not have access to outdoor space at home, the opportunity to grow their own food and share it with others. A community garden at the hub could offer plots that individuals and families could use to grow their own crops and/or communal plots for the cafe, programming and shared use. Residents and community partners also mentioned the role that a community garden could play in helping to address food insecurity in the neighbourhood and increase programming for youth, adults, and seniors around gardening and the natural environment. The community garden could also include a sheltered and sunny microclimate to extend growing season and be able to plant a variety of different crops reflecting the diverse cultures in the neighbourhood.

Health



Mental Health Services !

Mental health came up as a top priority for many residents and community partners. Residents suggested creating a safe, non-institutional space that would be dedicated to mental health programming and work towards eliminating the stigma associated with it. It was stressed that this kind of space must be welcoming and accessible for all, and serve a diverse community with multiple needs. Currently, there are mental health programs based out of the Jane-Finch community, and other outside organizations providing services in the area. However, many community partners stressed that there is a lack of space to accommodate the high demand for mental health programs and services. Residents also mentioned that there is a lack of programming specific to children and youth, which could be addressed through the hub. Support spaces that are welcoming and friendly can support programs and services like this. They can be connected to the hubs other spaces, but should also have a separate entrance for privacy and a small dedicated outdoors space.

Economic Opportunities

Social Enterprise/Business Incubator Hub



A social enterprise and business incubator space would help support residents who are looking to start their own businesses. Residents noted that an entrepreneurship program could encourage innovation in the community and attract more local businesses in the community. Residents also highlighted the high number of newcomers who live in North York and are looking to start their own businesses, but can only find these programs in the downtown core. An entrepreneurship program could address job insecurity and encourage people to work for themselves. It would provide opportunities for continual growth and support participants in becoming and staying financially independent. It could also help teach financial literacy and time management, and help incubate small businesses. Some residents mentioned that this program could lead to community revitalization.

Commercial/Retail Rental Spaces



Having accessible rental space for commercial/retail could be a possible contributing revenue stream for the hub, but also can benefit small and local businesses in the neighbourhood that is looking for a space to use. Entrepreneurs who may have participated in the social enterprise/business incubator hub, could also access rental opportunities to help launch their business.

Communal Spaces

Youth Lounge

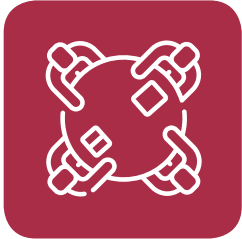


A specific focus on youth was emphasized throughout our community engagement. Residents and community partners talked about the importance of creating a safe and welcoming space for youth at the hub. A youth-specific room could be a space where youth could drop in to hang out or access a variety of programs and services. The lounge should be able to accommodate comfortable seating, room for games and gathering, as well as space for private conversations. Community partners clearly stated that the space should be created and run by youth for youth, creating opportunities for young people to influence and impact their space. Many people also mentioned the role of a youth room in addressing topics that may affect more vulnerable youth.

Common Area/Main Lounge



Most residents talked about how the hub should bring the community together and provide space for people to meet and socialize. Having a lounge space for unprogrammed activity was very important. Many people mentioned the current lack of unprogrammed spaces in the community for people to come together and just hang out. A safe, welcoming lounge space would provide community members a place to gather and spend time together. It is important to have a welcoming lobby space to lounge in with a community cafe close by and an atrium that provides a visual connection between levels. Large hallways and corridors can also provide additional lounge and gathering space.



Community Rooms

The hub must have multipurpose community rooms that can accommodate a variety of uses. These rooms must be open, versatile and of various sizes, so that they can be transformed as needed for programs, services and events. Through our key informant interviews, it was made clear that programs are always changing. Multipurpose community rooms should be designed to accommodate future changes in community programs. A program that has high interest right now may not have as much interest in the future. These rooms could also be used for small scale community or private events, as well as meetings and forums



Outdoor Spaces

Residents and community partners expressed the importance of having attractive outdoor spaces that are inviting and encourages people to relax, hang out, and enjoy the environment. They should include lush landscaping as well as seating and other amenities. Outdoor areas could include space for barbecues and picnics, as well as sheltered patio space and small courtyards and balconies. Having access to outdoor space could enhance the experience of those accessing programs and services.

A green roof was an interesting feature that many people expressed that they would like to have at the hub. Many residents noted that there is nothing like it in the neighbourhood. Beyond its positive environmental impact, people were also interested in the possible benefits of a green roof in terms of social wellness. Residents envisioned a rooftop that was publicly accessible, like the gardens at the Regent Park Community Centre. It would be a unique outdoor feature with greenery and seating for residents to enjoy during the warmer months. Plantings could include indigenous plants and be used to provide natural shade. Residents also mentioned that a green roof could also incorporate the community garden and make use of an otherwise underused space.

Amenities

Child/Family Play & Daycare

Affordable childcare came up as a priority with residents. Through the engagement process, we heard that there are not enough daycares to meet the needs of families in the community. Residents stated that there could always be more childcare. Services, especially more affordable childcare options. Some people noted that access to affordable childcare could open up more employment opportunities for parents. These childcare needs could be addressed in the hub design through a daycare facility and/or childcare drop-in centre. With the large population of young people and families in the community, many people reinforced that the hub should offer child-minding to parents and guardians during program hours.



In general, child-friendly features were raised as being important to many residents. Having engaging features that encourage children to explore and play would make the hub more inviting and welcoming for families. Many participants on our field trip to Parkway Forest Community Centre raved about the child-friendly features in the community centre's lobby space and child-minding space. These simple, yet effective features invited children to play and enjoy the space.

Multifaith Room

Residents of all ages expressed interest in a meditation room and a multi-faith room, with many noting that the two could be combined into one space. A quiet and welcoming space that would be used for relaxation, prayer and spiritual practice. The space could have unprogrammed hours for people to use, as well as host free yoga classes and guided meditation sessions. Residents noted that a meditation and multi-faith room could help support both mental and physical health, and encourage relaxation from daily stressors.



Computer Lab !

Access to computers and the internet was mentioned a number of times throughout the engagement process. Although there are computer labs within the neighbourhood at many of the community centres, libraries and job centre, residents highlighted that they lacked space and were often full. Some stated that the time restrictions and limited access of some computer labs, can pose a problem when doing work. Emphasis was drawn on a computer lab used for job training and employment, with all the necessary office equipment, such as printers and scanners. Others stated that an open computer lab for both work and personal use could be beneficial to the community.



Multimedia Room

Many residents and community partners mentioned having a multimedia room in the hub. As technology and interests in programs are constantly changing, there is a need for a space that can adapt to different types of audio and visual production. Overall, residents and community partners expressed an interest in digital arts, photography, and media arts, and noted a lack of spaces in the neighbourhood that are dedicated to multimedia art and design.



Additional Services

In addition to the program spaces mentioned above, we also received feedback on additional community programs and services that people would like to access at the future hub. These activities could be accommodated either through their own dedicated spaces or through flexible multipurpose rooms.



Service Space

Flexible work space that organizations or people can rent to run services, like employment, mentorship, mental health, health promotion and other services that the community may find a need or desire for.



Employment Services

Employment was an element that was often considered to be the most important programmatic theme for the hub. Residents and community partners emphasized the importance of job training programs that could address skills gaps and encourage community capacity building. There are currently two major mainstream employment centres in the immediate area - JVS Toronto and Yorkgate Employment and Social Services. However, residents expressed that the number of job training programs should still be increased, because employment and economic security are critical issues in the community.



Mentorship and Wraparound Supports

General mentorship and support were mentioned by many residents. Residents suggested that the hub could be a space where people could go to seek mentorship, support, or advice for a range of issues. From financial advice to social support groups, the hub could provide programs and services that provide mentorship for those in need of assistance. Many residents and community partners also advised that having knowledgeable staff who are able to provide referrals is very important. If the hub does not offer expertise or mentorship on a specific topic, information should be provided about where people can go to access support on a specific topic.



Health Promotion

Health promotion programs would focus on providing education on various health topics as well as training and services that support a healthy community. Residents explained that health promotion is needed to keep residents informed and create an awareness around healthy living. Many people mentioned that the program could incorporate education sessions from medical professionals.



Storage

Key informant interviews and our field trip tour guides emphasized the need for ample storage. Like flexible community rooms, storage provides a lot of versatility when it comes to the programs and events that can be hosted in the hub. Providing storage would help ensure that program spaces are used to their maximum potential. Including lockers for visitors can also be used to hold valuables when in programs or accessing services at the hub. Residents stated these lockers could be placed in an area with a staff member, like behind a reception desk, to avoid the risk of theft.

Concept Design



Concept Design

The final concept design for the hub directly reflects and amplifies the community's vision, needs, and priorities identified through the engagement process. It illustrates the scale and relationship between different program spaces, and considers taking a phased approach to the development of the hub.

The concept design will serve as a strong community-driven framework for the development of the business plan and governance model for the hub.

Site Plan

Zoning

The site is currently zoned for a townhouse development that was not constructed. A re-zoning process will need to establish the new zoning regulations for this site which will include building setbacks, maximum height, density and parking requirements.

The concept design is based on initial direction from the City of Toronto on potential restrictions, but as re-zoning is not yet underway a number of assumptions needed to be made at this time, and the design may need to be refined to fit within the final zoning bylaws for the site.

Phased Construction

If phased construction is required due to capital budget needs, it is recommended to plan for building phases to be added adjacent to earlier phases, not added vertically - adding extra floors on top of an existing building is not an efficient or cost effective way to build.

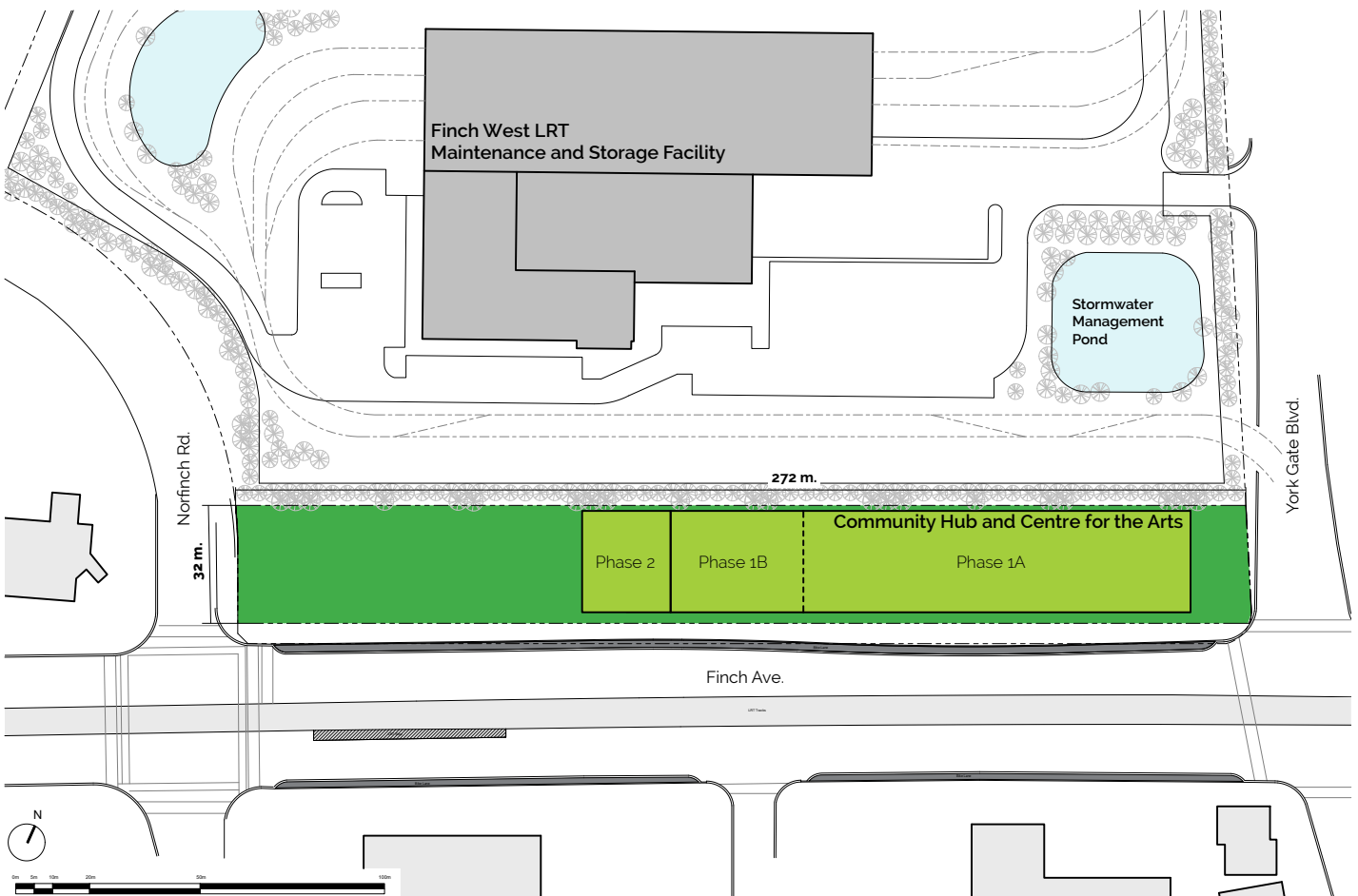
Minimum Building Footprint

Due to the spatial requirements of the program elements (i.e. to accommodate an NBA court size, the multi-purpose space needs to be at least 35m; a pool needs to be at least 25m long) and the need for adjacencies (i.e. the multi-purpose/theatre must connect to the green room and kitchen), all the building uses cannot be stacked vertically. Therefore, the building's footprint will cover at least two-thirds of the site if phased as shown.

Theatre, gymnasium and pool spaces require multiple stories of height for site lines, ceiling clearance for ball sports and diving boards and pool depth respectively. Therefore these spaces do not lend themselves well to stacking above one another.

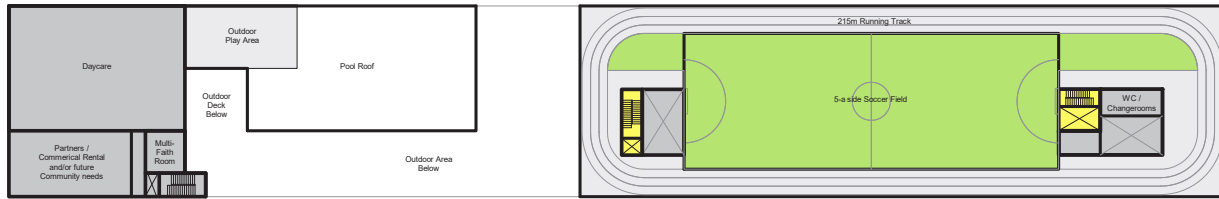
If constructed in a single phase, the uses in Phase 2 could be constructed above Phase 1A and/or Phase 1B, which could help to shorten the building footprint or make more room for an enlarged courtyard/ atrium.

If the pool will be provided by the City of Toronto at a different site, then either the Phase 1B area could be eliminated from the footprint, or the area may be replaced with a purpose-built gym and/or theatre, as per the community needs.

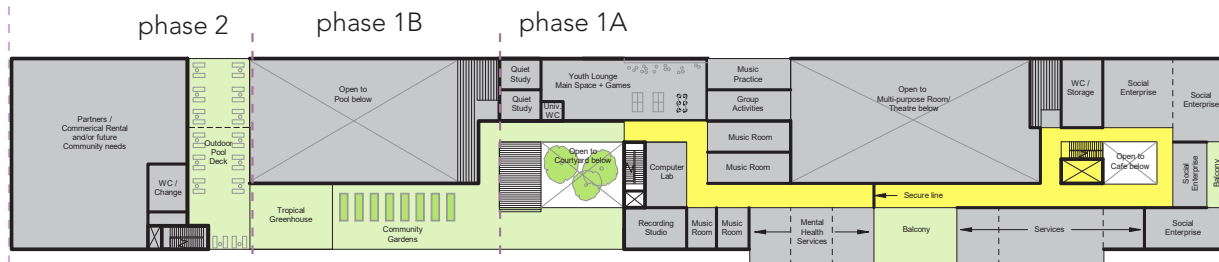


Floor Plans

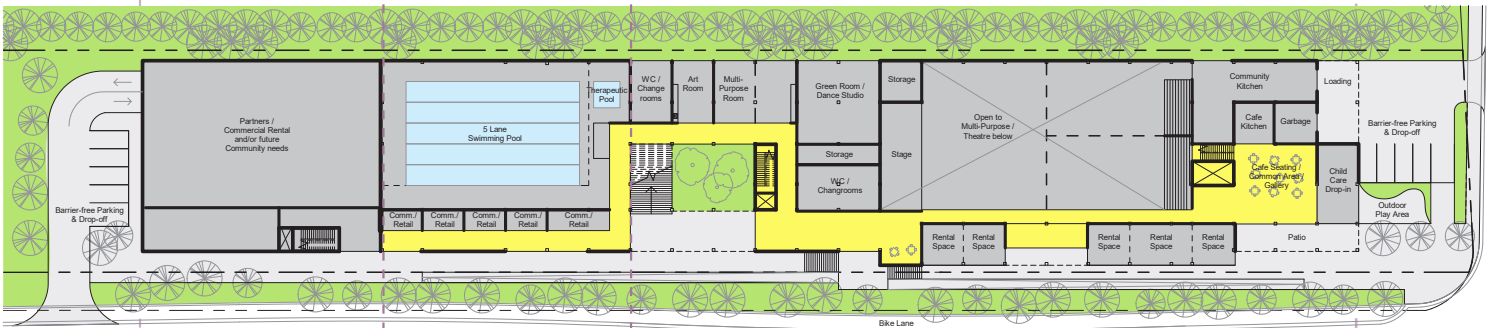
Roof Plan (may be level 3 or above)



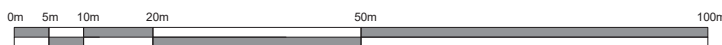
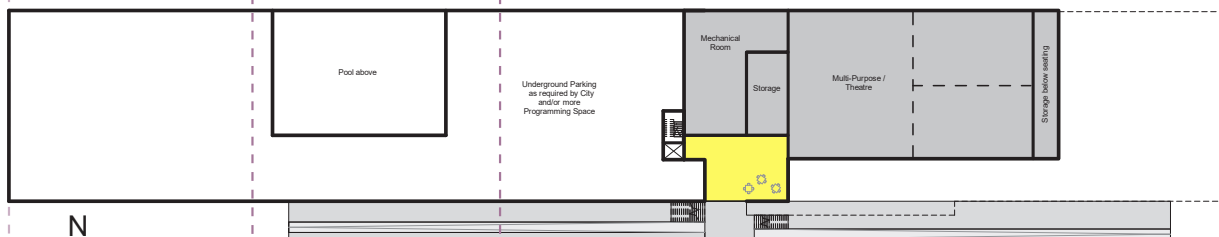
Level 2



Level 1



Basement



LEGEND

- Entrance
- Glass
- Solid wall
- Retractable wall
- 6m x 6m column grid
- Planting/vegetation
- Rooftop/outdoor space
- Interior rooms
- Interior hallway/lobby
- Pool water
- Tree
- Raised planter bed
- Cafe table for four
- Pair of sunloungers
- Pool table
- Ping pong table
- Staircase
- Elevator
- Sink and counter

Interior Views

Interior View 1: Interior View at Community Cafe and Lobby

The main entrance lobby of the hub at the northwest corner of Yorkgate Boulevard and Finch Avenue is a welcoming meeting space that doubles as an art gallery and a community cafe. Wall space with an art hanging system is dedicated to changing exhibitions that could be curated by art organizations working locally and by community groups. The community cafe has indoor seating and a patio sheltered from Finch Avenue by a row of trees and the building's screen. There is a cafe kitchen that can provide food and drink, but community members are also welcome to bring their own food or to use the space seven days a week. The lobby gallery and cafe opens to a wide light-filled double-height hallway that can be used to program events. Glimpses of the building's activities on the second floor can be seen from here, including dance studios, art spaces, music recording and the social enterprise offices.



The cafe gallery allows opportunity for local artists to show their work. Pictured here is artwork by Alocal artist, Ato Seitu.

Interior View 2: Interior View from within the Theatre/Multi-Purpose Hall

The large three storey high multi-purpose space in the hub is designed as a state of the art theatre space with a box office and main entrance one floor below street level, accessed by an elevator, stairs, and accessible ramp. Further entrances and a mezzanine walkway are to street level, passing behind a row of small commercial spaces that activate the streetscape along Finch Ave. These storefront spaces can be rented as incubators for new local businesses or they can provide further amenities for the neighbourhood. When the multi-purpose space is not in use as a theatre or for a function that requires privacy, then the large curtains and glass doors to the mezzanine viewing gallery can be left open for members of the community to wander through and watch the activity below: whether it is a basketball game or a dance lesson. The space has retractable seating and wall partitions so that it can be booked by multiple groups at one time and to give it flexibility for different types of uses. When all or part of the multi-purpose room is not booked, the room can be extra space for families or youth to play.



Convertible and versatile spaces like the theatre, allow for various activities and events.

Exterior Views

Exterior Views Looking East Along Finch

At the heart of the hub is a green public courtyard space that is partially covered and enclosed by a screen on the south side to provide a sunshade and windbreak. The space has an elevator and large exterior staircase that connects to a second floor roof garden with garden plots and a youth hub with a series of study, music and game rooms that are open 24/7 with a staff member present. The staircase is a place to meet on a nice day and the roof garden provides a space for views over the neighbourhood.



The screen in this view is made from an expanded metal mesh that is finished in a warm copper or bronze colour to complement the timber structure.

The sidewalk along the front of the hub has been designed to be extra wide so that events and activities can spill out of the building to bring community and cultural life to the street. Extra seating is provided by linear benches integrated into the raised planters and shaded by a row of street trees. The ground cover could be a light granite or broom-finished concrete that provides a seamless transition from the sidewalk to the courtyard and into the hub.



The glazed brick screen in this view is inspired by the white brick residential apartments in the area and contrasts with the timber structure and green plantings.

Material Options

Cross-laminated Timber

Cross-laminated timber (CLT) is proposed for the structure of the building for a number of reasons: there was a lot of positive feedback on the material from the community; it is preferred to concrete from an environmental perspective and for appearance/warmth; a six metre column grid through most of the building will allow for future flexibility for changing uses over time.

Where large spans are needed such as a theatre, pool or gymnasium, the column grid will be broken and substituted with a steel or glulam truss structure.

Sheltering Screen

The concept design has a screen wrap around the building to give a distinct identity to the hub, mitigate the solar heat gain on the south-facing Finch Street facade, and help to balance privacy with visibility and views. The screen would wrap the community hub and arts centre elements only. The rest of the building facade could be in a complementary material such as a terracotta brick or ceramic panel.

Two potential materials and approaches for the screen are shown in this report. The screen design will be further developed with more community input in the next phases. Also, there is potential to involve an artist to work with the design team to integrate artwork into the facade.

In Screen Design Option 1, the screen is inspired by the white brick residential apartments in the area, the brick screen contrasts with the timber structure and the green planting. To make the screen lighter and the openings between the brick large, we have show brick tile (aka wafer brick) on a light metal frame. La Gota Cultural Centre includes the same structure and was a popular style in the community workshops, rather than stacked full-size structural brick that be deeper and create more shadows. The brick screen can gradually change to a full size brick screen and then a solid brick wall surface broken by window opening as the building moves from community hub to the rest of the building spaces. In Option 2, the screen is made from an expanded metal mesh that is finished in a warm copper or bronze colour to complement the CLT (cross-laminated timber) structure. A screen can be made of lower cost, high quality materials that are designed well with good proportions and details. Expanded metal meshes can come in various sizes and finishes, and can help to unify a building facade, while playing with light and shadow.



Potential Revenue Opportunities and Partnerships

The concept design is focused on the priorities and program spaces that were identified through engagement activities and Stakeholder Advisory Group meetings.

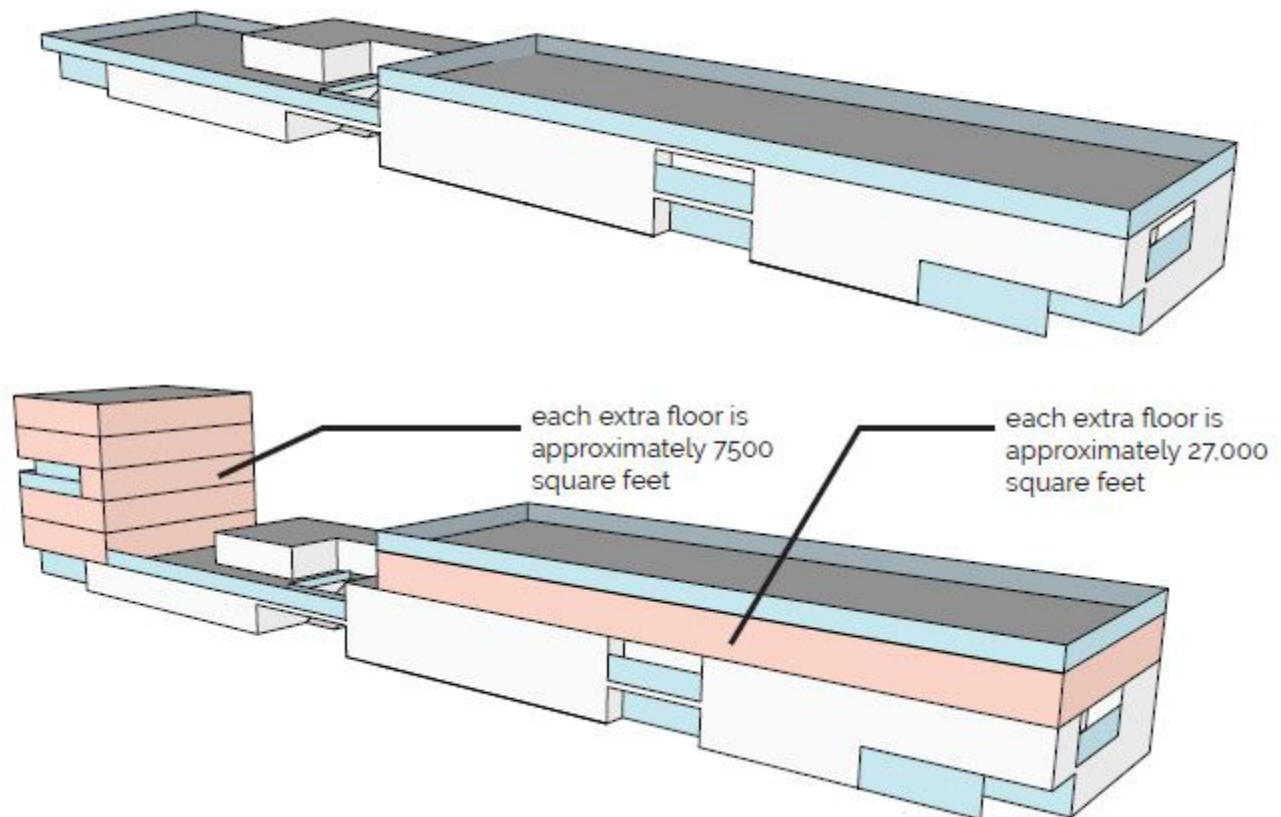
Nonetheless, the concept design could accommodate further uses and third-party agencies through the addition of extra floors as shown in the diagrams on this page. The extra space may be required for revenue generation and/or based on partnerships and requirements that are developed over the next phase of the project.

Through the feasibility study, CAPG identified the potential need to add 65,000 square feet of space for organizations or groups to collocate at the site.

Office Space

In order to run programs and services, office and administration space must be considered. For organizations and agencies that may run out of the neighbourhood, office requirements could vary.

The diagrams on this page show how approximately 65,000 square feet extra space could be added, beyond the list of program spaces that have been identified for the hub.



Revenue Generating Spaces

- Social enterprise space
- Micro commercial/retail units (interior access)
- Ground floor rental spaces (external access)
- Community kitchen
- Art Rooms
- Theatre/Multipurpose Room
- Recording studio
- Music rooms
- Dance studio
- Program and Group Storage

External Operations

- Community cafe/restaurant
- Childcare drop-in
- Art gallery
- Indoor pool
- Parking

Program and Construction Cost Summary

The programming chart was developed based on reviewing comparable buildings in the Greater Toronto Area and in consultation with community members and the Stakeholder Advisory Group.

The programming list and budget does not account for other potential collocated organizations or partnerships which are still in development. These spaces can add capital funds and operating revenue to the project, but they also add to the construction costs estimated in this chart.

In the next phase of the project's development, further detailed design and decisions will refine the program space priority list, the space allocation for each use, and the budget figures.

The budget is a high level estimate of a minimum budget for all the program requirements in 2019 dollars. As a comparison, construction budget of a typical new community centre in the City of Toronto is currently \$55 million.

NOTE: Mosaic Transit Constructors, the consortium selected by Metrolinx to construct the Finch West LRT, will be using the community hub site for staging, so construction on the community hub will not be able to start until the corresponding LRT construction is complete. The full LRT construction is currently expected to be completed by 2023.

Program Priorities & Budget Estimate

PROGRAM	MINIMUM SIZE	MIN. BUDGET	PRIORITY	NOTES	
PHASE 1					
1	Youth lounge (with study + computer lab)	3000 sqft	\$1,000,000	HIGH	separate entrance (24hr staff) and can connect to rest of hub, comfortable seating, games, quiet/group study rooms, music room.
2	Community kitchen	600 sqft	\$250,000	HIGH	teaching and food production, secure separate off-hours access; consider equipment if vegetarian or not, or both, professional grade
3	Community café/restaurant	1500 sqft	\$525,000	HIGH	common area with gallery space, also a flexible open space for other events/rental, needs wall space with lockable gallery hanging system
4	Common area/lobby with gallery	1200 sqft	\$200,000	MEDIUM	connects/combines with community kitchen and/or child play/family area
5	Multi-purpose Room/Theatre	8400 sqft	\$5,000,000	HIGH	design to 600 seat theatre specifications (acoustics and site lines), box office, divide into 3 rooms, fit basketball as second any use (120x70ft.), to connect to kitchen, greenroom
6	Catering kitchen for multi-purpose room	300 sqft	\$100,000	HIGH	light cooking, warming, food storage prep and cleaning
7	Green room for theatre (also a flex rental)	600 sqft	\$210,000	HIGH	dance studio/rental flex space when not used for theatre
8	Multi-media/Computer lab	600 sqft	\$250,000	HIGH	can be accessed from youth room and also from employment services/social enterprise areas
9	Service Spaces	3 x 600 sqft	\$630,000	HIGH	smaller space to rent for services, art education, community or commercial use. With dedicated storage for regular groups to us
10	Storage dedicated for groups/orgs	800 sqft	\$250,000	HIGH	basement space, near elevator and/or near multi-purpose and rental spaces
11	Music recording booths	2 x 250 sqft	\$175,000	HIGH	basement space, near youth room
12	Social enterprise/bus. incubator	3000 sqft	\$1,000,000	HIGH	offices and programming for employment and entrepreneurial supports, include a computer lab (to be further developed)
13	Child play/family space	600 sqft	\$210,000	MEDIUM	not daycare, but drop-in/emergency child minding and parent and child play
14	Washrooms (including space for changing)	600 sqft	\$210,000	REQUIRED	male, female and all gender/family - all with changing stations; doubles as changerooms
15	Dressing room/change room	500 sqft	\$175,000	REQUIRED	male, female, with washroom and shower
16	Outdoor furnishings (e.g. benches) and garden	1000 sqft	\$200,000	MEDIUM	Programming for community kitchen/mental health services. Should be accessible. Could be on a roof or in a courtyard.
					Partnership potential with City of Toronto Culture, StreetARToronto and/or North York Arts. Art could be integrated into facade and/or multiple locations.
18	Parking and drop-off, bike parking/repair	N/A	\$100,000	REQUIRED	Includes accessible spaces, pick-up and drop-off and loading zone
19	Underground parking	TBD	\$500,000	REQUIRED	City of Toronto requirement, parking may be relaxed/an agreement with Yorkgate Mall, but there will need to be some on-site parking
20	Loading/garbage enclosure	1200 sqft	\$100,000	REQUIRED	
21	5 commercial/retail rentable	5 x 600 sqft	\$1,000,000		small spaces to rent for services, art, community or commercial use. Can be combined.
Phase 1 cost estimate subtotal		26,200 sqft	\$12,585,000		
Phase 1 estimated soft costs, gross up (20% of total area for hallways etc.), services/site work + contingency (50% of subtotal)		5300 sqft	\$6,292,500		
Phase 1 minimum cost estimate		31,500 sqft	\$18,877,500		

PROGRAM	MINIMUM SIZE	MIN. BUDGET	PRIORITY	NOTES	
PHASE 1B (Will be included in Phase 1 if budgets allow. Otherwise in Phase 2.)					
21	Indoor pool and deck	12,000 sqft	\$6,000,000	HIGH	120x100 feet, swimming lessons, swim fitness, recreational swim, opens to outdoor deck in summer. This phase removed/replaced with gym if other City pool built at Firgrove.
22	Changerooms with washrooms	1200 sqft	\$500,000	REQUIRED	shared for multiple uses: pool, dance. Male and female, or non-gender.
Phase 1B cost estimate subtotal		13,200 sqft	\$6,500,000		
Phase 1B estimated soft costs, gross up, services/site work + contingency (50% of subtotal)		2600 sqft	\$3,250,000		
Phase 1B minimum cost estimate		15,800 sqft	\$9,750,000		

PHASE 2					
23	Music Practice Room	600 sqft	\$210,000		sound proof practice studio for musicians and music classes (large enough to hold a variety of instruments including a piano), lockable storage for groups
24	Music Recording expanded	600 sqft	\$300,000		for training and production
25	Arts Studio	600 sqft	\$210,000		studio space with storage (lockable and dedicated to different groups) and equipment for artists and arts classes, needs a sink, north-facing windows preferred
26	Dance studio	1000 sqft	\$350,000		connected to youth lounge
27	Daycare space (includes outdoor play)	1500 sqft	\$750,000		three-room daycare to meet ministry standards. 1500 sqft plus dedicated outdoor space
28	Multi-faith meditation room	300 sqft	\$100,000		
29	Mental Health Program Space	900 sqft	\$300,000		dedicated/shared space for group social/rec mental health programs (w/kitchenette?) and private room for one-on-one counselling
30	3 commercial/retail rentable	3 x 600 sqft	\$630,000		small spaces to rent for services, art, community or commercial use. Can be combined.
31	Washrooms	600 sqft	\$210,000	REQUIRED	male, female, all gender - all with changing stations
32	Outdoor features on roof (could be moved to Phase 1)		\$1,000,000		outdoor rink or skating loop, sports courts, tropical greenhouse
33	Underground parking	TBD	\$500,000	REQUIRED	City of Toronto requirement, parking may be relaxed/an agreement with Yorkgate Mall, but there will need to be some on-site parking.
34	Garbage enclosure and loading area	1200 sqft	\$100,000	REQUIRED	additional space required
Phase 2 cost estimate program spaces		12,100 sqft	\$4,660,000		
Phase 2 estimated soft costs, gross up, services/site work + contingency (50% of subtotal)		2400 sqft	\$2,330,000		
Phase 2 minimum cost estimate		14,500 sqft	\$6,990,000		

TOTAL MINIMUM COST ESTIMATE	60-65,000 sqft	\$35-40 million
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Key Considerations for the Hub's Development

Program Spaces

Flexible Space

The building structure is a 6m grid of columns. Therefore, walls are not load-bearing and can be more easily moved to change room sizes and configurations. For example, a dedicated gallery space may be a desired addition to the programming in the future, and other uses may become less of a priority.

There were diverging ideas of whether a theatre or gymnasium was a priority and if these uses could share a multi-purpose space or not. If they are shared, the space could fit a basketball court but be designed for the more stringent acoustic and view requirements of a theatre first. If a dedicated theatre is included, the types of performances, stage and fly requirements, lighting and sound systems and seating capacity must be determined. If the theatre venue is something that will not have heavy use, then a multi-purpose space could be considered and designed to meet the sound and viewing requirements of a theatre, but it could also fit community events, be divided into multiple rooms and/or be used as a gymnasium. Due to a range of high-quality products that support flexible spaces, new multipurpose spaces are more suited to purpose than they were in earlier era.

These large spaces in the plan are also sized to be interchangeable while final decisions still need to be made about priorities and programming. For example, the City may be including an indoor pool in another local community building redevelopment, in which case the hub would not include a pool. The concept plans as shown could either be shortened the length of the pool, or a dedicated theatre space and/or gymnasium could be moved to this location.



Youth Lounge

The Youth Lounge is connected to the hub, but has a separate entrance and universal washroom for 24hr access. This space will need to have a staff member when it is open. Access to music and study spaces are important after hours, but not access to the entire hub.

Seating should be in multiple groups and styles; some couches and movable chairs, a counter area along a wall (for eating, laptop, desk). The lounge should also include TVs, video games and other games like pool/ping pong. Both quiet study and group study spaces should be in separate rooms nearby.

Youth should be further engaged in how to make the space safe and welcoming.

Community Kitchen

It is important to determine what type of food will be made in the kitchen (ie. vegetarian or not) to determine equipment and storage requirements (dry, fridge and freezers). Also, the kitchen should be located for after-hours access and near the garbage and loading area.

Rooftop Amenities

Running Track

The rooftop track will not be professional size (ca. 200m), but it is a place where people can run or walk outdoors. Outdoor fitness equipment or seating may also be incorporated.

Soccer Field

Rooftop soccer would have a simple net structure or tall fence to keep stray balls within the field. This could be detailed to work visually with the building facade. The field could either be a planted green lawn or artificial turf. The latter is available in an array of colours, and is easier to maintain. The field could be used for events/markets and as a space to get a panoramic view of the surrounding neighbourhood.

Community Garden and Greenhouse

The garden is sheltered and south-facing to extend the outdoor growing season as much as possible. The greenhouse helps to provide potential for newcomers to grow food from their home countries with warmer climates. Both the garden and greenhouse can also be used for growing food for the cafe, as an educational tool or therapy, or they can be places for community members to relax.

Additional rooftop uses could be added at a later date if budget requires.

Indigenous Values and Forms

Due to the important and rich Indigenous history in the area Indigenous values, educational material and/or forms could be considered within the next phase of the hub's development. This will require an Indigenous designer or liaison to be included as a member of the team and to liaise with local First Nations groups.

Restorative Approach

The Community Hub & Centre for the Arts will embody a restorative approach in reducing harm and restoring hope in those who call Jane-Finch home. It will model the framework of a peacemaking circle by bringing people together to foster and rebuild relationships, create cohesiveness, and restore trust. A safe space to support voice, choice, and expression through an individual lens. A community empowerment centre that enriches lives through the sharing of stories and wisdom in a way that champions community resiliency. The design of the hub should reflect and support this approach.

Child Friendly Design

In general, child-friendly features were raised as being important to many residents. Having engaging features that encourage children to explore and play would make the hub more inviting and welcoming for families. Many participants on our field trip to Parkway Forest Community Centre raved about the child-friendly features in the community centre's lobby space and child-minding space. These simple, yet effective features invited children to play and enjoy the space.

Public Art

As a centre for the arts, it will be important to integrate artwork into the building. An artist may work with the design team to develop the screen facade or they may be commissioned to create a stand-alone artwork on the exterior or interior of the building.

For the concept design phase, \$500,000 has been included in the budget for public art - this may be one larger commission or a number of small to medium-scaled commissions. Involving the local arts community and arts organizations will be important in developing this aspect of the project.

Parking And Loading

Accessible ground level parking, a drop-off area and loading area to accommodate waste collection will be required. As the building is long, there may need to be accessible parking and loading areas at both ends. Although there is a desire to reduce the amount, further parking will also likely be required by City Planning. These will be accommodated underground.

Once parking requirements are determined, if there is extra basement space it could be used for dedicated storage space for the various groups that use the hub; expanded music recording spaces and/or other programming uses that do not require natural light.

Next Steps

The planning, design, and development of the community hub is a long-term project. The Jane/ Finch Centre has committed to sharing the recommendations for program spaces and design features widely with local residents, partner organizations, and other stakeholders to continue to bring awareness to the project and ensure future work is reflective of the community.

BUSINESS & GOVERNANCE PLANS

CAPG received a Community Project grant from the City of Toronto in the summer of 2018 to hire a business consultant and produce a business plan and governance model for the hub. The plans will be based on the information collected through the community engagement process and feasibility study, but involve additional outreach to residents and partners to further refine priorities.

