



2017-2018 ANNUAL REPORT



RALPH THORNTON
COMMUNITY CENTRE



VISION MISSION VALUES



OUR VISION Working to ensure a more vibrant, diverse, inclusive, liveable, participatory, healthy, and equitable Riverdale.

OUR MISSION The RTCC is a gathering place that welcomes, connects and engages the community in all its diversity.

OUR VALUES

- **Inclusion and Respect:** The RTCC supports and adheres to the City of Toronto Human Rights and Anti-Harassment Policy. We operate in a manner which models ethical, respectful and inclusive service delivery and employment practices, encourages diverse perspectives, and ensures equitable treatment for all. The RTCC promotes social inclusivity in all its activities and programming.
- **Equity and Social Justice:** The RTCC supports, acts and advocates for solution-focused policies and systemic changes that create long term improvement and fairness for all within our community and the larger society.
- **Collaboration and Partnership:** The RTCC works collaboratively and in partnership with individuals, groups and organizations to achieve our mission and vision. We work in ways that engage community members, foster on-going relationships and build the strengths of the whole community.
- **Capacity Building:** The RTCC supports community members, especially the more marginalized, to increase their ability to solve problems, define and achieve their objectives and fully participate in and contribute to community life.
- **Community Building:** The RTCC actively promotes the building of relationships and collective action across and between our diverse communities to strengthen the whole.

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

As I am about to complete my term as a member of the Board of Management, I thought that it was worth reflecting on our experience and many accomplishments over the last six years.

Like all community-based organizations, the Ralph Thornton Community Centre has experienced some challenges and turbulence over the last decade. Today, because of the commitment and incredible contribution of Board members and staff over the years, the Centre is once again stable, productive and continues to evolve and be responsive to our community.

In 2014 and 2018 we undertook strategic planning processes. Our 2014 Renewal Plan took us through the next three years. The 2018 Strategic Priorities will frame our work over a five-year period until 2022. In both strategic planning processes, we had the assistance of Ryerson University's School of Urban and Regional Planning and Social Planning Toronto. We created planning-related data bases, which we share widely; assessed demographic changes in the many communities in our catchment area; consulted with a wide range of community members and partners; and identified strategic priorities as well as issues to be addressed. This allowed us to establish annual operating plans that responded to the needs of the community, Centre users and our organizational partners, taking into consideration our resource limitations and opportunities.

Communicating our strategic plans and on-going activities, being clear about the roles that we can play in various initiatives (i.e., to advocate, enable or deliver), and meeting our commitments, have allowed us to rebuild the credibility of the Centre (which had been challenged) in the community and with community partners and funders. We reconnected and renewed partnerships with the *Ralph Thornton Community Organization*; *Riverside BIA* and local businesses; *South Riverdale*

Community Health Centre; *Nellie's Shelter* and Rivertowne resident associations. We made our web site user friendly and introduced a biweekly newsletter. We participated in or co-sponsored community celebrations, including the *Antler Breakfast* and Lunar New Year celebrations, and we host events such as the annual *Craft Beer and Wine Festival*.

Stabilizing the organization was identified as a strategic priority in both processes. We undertook a three-pronged strategy:

- ❶ We recruited diverse, talented and engaged board and committee volunteers, and provided them with governance training. The Board then developed gala events, such as the Spring Affair and Royal Thornton Galas, to ensure discretionary funding to support our children's programming, which is not covered by the City operating grant.
- ❷ We renewed our management and programme staff. We recruited an enthusiastic new executive director, program director, business manager and programme staff; improved staff morale, training and working conditions; and
- ❸ We assessed and made necessary changes to the programming we deliver and host. Thus, we were able to re-boot our children's programming, including the Mentor and after-school programmes; significantly expand services of the Exchange Loft; and expanded our building open hours.

At the same time, the Board established new or updated governance and administrative policies and procedures, which were systematically implemented. These policies and procedures will help the Centre to recover should it again experience turbulence in the future. In 2015, we undertook extensive discussion and action to foster inclusivity at the Board, committee and staff levels.

Despite flat-lined funding from City, we are

able to collaborate on new programming, such as the *WEAV pilot project* with *Nellies*; the *Tax Filing Clinic* with *Toronto Neighbourhood Centres*, and *Rivertowne community development projects*. We continue to explore new programming opportunities that align with our strategic plan and resources.

Significant efforts were also made to improve the building's infrastructure, which is a challenge in a historic building, where updates are subject to stringent conditions. Nevertheless, we have updated the fire prevention system; updated all lighting to LED lights, which generates savings on our utility costs; introduced waste management strategies; opened our historic stairwell as a display space for local artists; repainted our function rooms; and replaced our aging and very tired elevator.

It has been an eventful, but successful six years. We could not have succeeded without the support and collaboration of the whole team: board colleagues, committee members and staff.

As usual, board renewal occurs at an AGM. Glenn Ewald and Elizabeth Doyle made unique contributions, but were unable to complete their full terms due to employment changes. Jeff Garkowski, Vice-President, and Graham Chernoff, Secretary, will also retire having completed their full terms. We thank them for their outstanding and creative contributions over the years.

Finally, I thank all of you – past and present – for your commitment, your many contributions and your friendship.

Michèle Harding,
President

LOOKING BACK

The 2015-2017 Renewal Plan identified six priorities to be addressed over the three years of the plan. Here's what we've accomplished in each of them to date:

STRENGTHEN OUR NEIGHBOURHOODS

WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE

The RTCC will cultivate vibrant, diverse, and engaged communities to strengthen community inclusivity, resident engagement, and community building, and to advance equitable social development outcomes.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Continued support to the Rivertowne community.
- Provided transitional leadership on a variety of Rivertowne governance structures and continuity on the Rivertowne Project Management Team.
- Supported the **Rivertowne annual BBQ and Holiday Party**, including trusteeship of the CHUM Christmas wish gift distribution in Rivertowne.
- **Facilitated a trusteeship and fundraising partnerships** with the *Riverside BIA*, *Safety 1st*, and *Toronto Food Tours*, ensuring the "Antler Breakfast" and other fundraising initiatives guarantee the long-term sustainability of the breakfast program.
- Leading documentation of Rivertowne community work via a **\$40,000 City of Toronto Access and Equity grant**.
- **Under the Community Matters banner**, hosted a well-attended All-Candidates meeting for the provincial election, a number of *Children's Services Forums*, and partnered to host public meetings focusing on issues such as the gentrification of the Queen Street retail strip and the overdose crisis.
- RTCC was a **lead partner in a wide range of community events and festivals**, including: the Lunar New Year celebration at Gerrard Square, the annual *Riverside Craft Beer and Wine Festival*, *Eats and Beats*, the *Leslieville Tree Festival*, the Canada Day celebration in Riverdale Park, the *RTCC Halloween Party*, *Open Doors Toronto*, and *Community Clean-up Days*.
- **Partnered with Toronto Neighbourhood Centres** to host a number of city-wide community engagement initiatives, including the *Commitment2Community* campaign supporting the City's investment in community services and a City of Toronto poverty reduction strategy.
- Engaged with over **130 volunteers each year, who donated more than 4,000 hours annually** to the Ralph Thornton Community Centre.





PROVIDE ACCESSIBLE COMMUNITY SPACE

WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE

The RTCC will provide affordable, accessible community public space where the community can meet, gather, and participate in activities, events, and services that are beneficial to them.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Provided space to **200 organizations and individuals, for a total of over 15,800 hours in 2017.**
- The Exchange Loft had over **5,100 visits by over 1,450 visitors in 2017.**
- **Upgraded the Betsy Swift kitchen** to Public Health's commercial kitchen standards, and outfitted it with a full range of glassware, cutlery, and dishes.
- Creative scheduling has improved security and service in the building.
- Our **elevator replacement project will improve reliability and enhance accessibility** for all users of the Centre.



DELIVER HIGH QUALITY PROGRAMMING

WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE

The RTCC will enable and/or deliver high quality programming for the community.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Continued to offer the Mentor Program for Chinese-speaking newcomer children from ages 6-12. **Strengthened programming** by hiring and training relief staff, guaranteeing program continuity.
- Expanded traditional summer **RAC Camp**, by adding an extra 16 spaces to children from LGBTQ families and children from local low-income families.
- Assumed full responsibility for **After School Program** operation in 2017, with over 20 children enrolled.
- **Use of the RTCC Exchange Loft community access computer space has increased significantly.** Hours have been expanded to include Thursday and Friday evenings and full Saturday and Sunday day-times – this has proven very popular, and is now part of our regular schedule.
- RTCC **piloted the WEAV Program (in partnership with Nellie's)** – a pre-employment program for women who have experienced domestic violence.



STABILIZE / DEVELOP THE ORGANIZATION

WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE

The RTCC will stabilize and develop its organizational infrastructure and capacities through development and implementation of effective management and admin structures, and recruitment and retention of competent management and staff.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- **Adopted a range of Human Resources policies and procedures** which are consistent with both best practices and the City's expectations of the Centre.
- **Developed operational planning and budgeting plans** which provide a clear framework for the operation of the Centre and the activities and accountabilities of all staff.



IMPROVE AND DIVERSIFY OUR RESOURCE BASE

WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE

The RTCC will develop a strategic approach to resource development in order to effectively and efficiently generate revenue and resources from diverse sources to support the Centre's ability to meet its strategic objectives and priorities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Created a fundraising strategy for RTCC which was approved by the Board in Jan 2018

Held fundraisers which raised over \$15,000 in 2017, and established a platform for future fundraising progress.



Fundraising in conjunction with Riverside Craft Beer and Wine Festival and **'Eats and Beats.'**

Participation in the **Scotiabank Waterfront Marathon "Charity Challenge."**

Held the annual fundraising reception and silent auction in May 2018, linked to the anniversary of the "Cornerstone" laying of the building on May 18, 1914 – **raising over \$11,000 in 2018.**

Increased the funds generated from space rental, strengthened existing funding relationships and initiated new relationships.

Successfully applied for funding from the City of Toronto's CSP initiative, **Toronto Neighbourhood Centre's Financial Literacy Initiative**, and maintained existing funding relationships with other government and charitable funders.

RTCC continues to benefit from the relationship with the **Ralph Thornton Community Organization**, and is collaborating closely with this charitable arm.



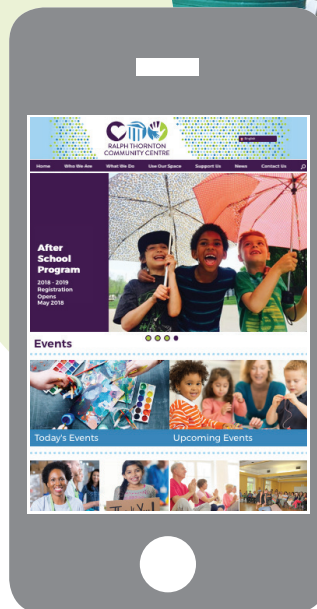
COMMUNICATE EFFECTIVELY

WHAT WE SET OUT TO ACHIEVE

The RTCC will develop and implement an effective communications infrastructure and strategies to communicate with and engage its members, funders, community, user groups, and staff.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS

- Strengthened our social media presence, with a steady increase in the Centre's Twitter and Facebook following over the past three years.
- Established a new web presence which is regularly updated with new content, and is an increasingly useful repository for the Centre's event notices, policies, and other important documents.
- The bi-weekly Ralph Thornton Community Centre Update has been well-received, providing members, volunteers, partners, and other stakeholders with regular info on current activities and program at the Centre.
- A series of promotional posters and social media posts have been developed, to be released in conjunction with our Open House in September 2018.



LOOKING FORWARD

THE 2018-2022 STRATEGIC PLAN

RTCC's strategic plan identified six programme priorities for the next five years. We've already started to move on a number of them:



Civic Engagement

RTCC has made this our initial priority – working with community partners to host a well-attended

Provincial Election All-Candidates Meeting, hosting a “pop-up” kids vote at “[Eats and Beats](#),” planning to offer the Democracy FUNdamentals course this fall in collaboration with [North York Community House](#), and making civic engagement the theme of our 2018 Annual General Meeting.

RTCC's leadership role in the “[Fair Fare Coalition](#)” helped win the battle for a low-cost Metropass for low-income Torontonians. RTCC also endorsed the “[Ontario For All](#)” campaign led by United Way Toronto. RTCC has also been represented in community consultations on the Unilever and port lands developments, helping ensure that local voices are heard in these important processes.



Educational Supports

RTCC continues to support the [Chinese Mentor Program](#), our After School Program and PA

Day and March Break camps, as well as our summer [RAC Camp](#), in addition to providing free or low-cost space to a wide range of children's programming at the Centre. We continue to partner with [Toronto Public Library Queen/Saulter Branch](#), [Literacy East Toronto](#), and the [South Riverdale Child-Parent Centre](#) to support their programming in our building.



Financial Literacy

This spring, RTCC was able to assist over fifty low income individuals and families with filing their income tax – returning over [\\$120,000 in benefits](#)! We appreciate the volunteers who donated their time to make this possible. Thanks also to [Toronto Neighbourhood Centres](#) for their support in returning this valuable service to RTCC, as part of a three-year initiative funded by [United Way Toronto](#).



Health and Wellness

In partnership with the **South Riverdale Community Health Centre**, RTCC hosted a “**Community Matters**” forum on the overdose crisis, providing an opportunity for local residents to gain a fuller understanding of the local, national, and global impact of changing drug use, and the important work being done by SRCHC’s safe injection site.



Technological Aptitude

RTCC’s **Exchange Loft** offers an opportunity for individuals to access computer, internet, and other office services, coupled with one-on-one support from our Exchange Loft volunteers. In addition to providing access to computer technology, the Exchange Loft reduces social isolation and helps link users with other community supports.



Affordable Housing

While it is anticipated that RTCC’s role on this priority will be primarily advocacy, we have been working with a number of the agencies who provide shelter and supportive housing in our neighbourhood to develop a coordinated emergency response plan, improving safety and security for some of our most vulnerable residents.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR's REPORT

The past year at RTCC has been about managing transitions – moving from a “Renewal Plan” that focused on rebuilding the Centre’s administrative, governance, and operational infrastructure into a “Strategic Plan” that addresses a number of programme priorities. I’m excited that we have already been able to make significant progress on our priorities of civic engagement, educational supports, and financial literacy.

It has been about short-term pain for long-term gain – an elevator replacement project that has had its ‘ups and downs,’ has taken much longer to complete than anticipated (thanks to everyone who has been so patient with the delay!)

It has been about our changing relationships in the community – strengthening partnerships with our local business community, agency partners, and the diversity of the residents who comprise our catchment area. It’s been gratifying to see our community step up to support events like the “Antler Breakfast,” the “Riverside Craft Beer and Wine Festival” and “A Royal Thornton Affair” – raising funds and building community at the same time.

I’m grateful for the continued support of a dedicated, creative, diligent staff, an extremely hard-working Board of Management (with particular thanks to outgoing Board President Michèle Harding for her enormous contribution of time and expertise over the past six years). Much thanks to our outgoing Program Director, Maria Moutsatsos, who is moving on after five years of leadership at the Centre. And as always, thanks to our partners and funders – particularly the City of Toronto, which provides our core funding.

John Campey,
Executive Director



RTCC FINANCIAL REPORT

	2017	2016
Administration Revenue*		
City of Toronto	713,052	667,731
Toronto Public Library	39,364	39,364
Total Administration Revenue	752,416	707,095
Program Revenue		
Grants		
City of Toronto	52,010	90,320
Government of Canada	39,174	24,403
Foundations	10,000	10,000
Other	4,056	24,193
Donations	21,059	31,706
Fundraising	23,079	11,328
Rental Income	26,123	24,005
User Fees	70,663	24,909
Other Revenue	20,065	12,503
Total Program Revenue	266,772	253,367
TOTAL REVENUE	1,019,188	998,754
Administration Expenses*		
Salaries and Benefits	606,311	584,679
Materials and Supplies	67,637	76,558
Purchase of Services	78,468	45,858
Total Administration Expenses	752,416	707,095
Program Expenses		
Salaries and Benefits	225,123	172,752
Materials and Supplies	17,968	16,232
Purchase of Services	84,034	98,830
Amortization of Capital Assets	2,789	10,653
Amortization of Deferred Capital Contributions	(543)	(8,210)
Total Program Expenses	329,914	290,257
TOTAL EXPENSES	1,082,330	997,352
TOTAL SURPLUS / (DEFICIT)	(63,142)	(36,890)

* Administration/Core Funding: This is the funding RTCC receives from the City of Toronto to keep the building open and accessible to the community – it covers basic salary and benefits as well as hard costs such as insurance, utilities, and maintenance costs.



FUNDRAISING

INCREASED TOTAL
REVENUE FOR 2017



EXCHANGE LOFT

5,100
visits



CHINESE MENTORING PROGRAM

CONTINUED SUCCESS

COMMUNICATION AND PROMOTION

INCREASE SOCIAL MEDIA
PRESENCE • WEBSITE
• BIWEEKLY EMAIL
OUTREACH • PROMOS





NEW PROGRAMS

WEAV FINANCE
LGBTQ+ friendly
RAC Camp

DIVERSITY *stabilize* STRENGTHEN
NEIGHBOURHOODS *accessibility*
quality *communicate*

MANY THANKS!

*Thanks to our Board of Management,
Centre staff, Funders, Partners, Volunteers and
Community Members for your continued support.*

Ralph Thornton Community Centre Board of Management: Ryan Acayan, Graham Chernoff (Secretary), Elizabeth Doyle*, Caleb Edwards, Glenn Ewald *, Councillor Paula Fletcher, Jeff Garkowski (Vice-President), Yang Han, Michèle Harding (President), Sharon Ho, Alan Lennon (Treasurer), Julia Peters, Janet Routliffe

Ralph Thornton Community Centre Staff: John Campey (Executive Director), Felix Chuang (Children's Program Support), Ella Clark (Weekend Maintenance), Lucille Durand-Smith (Children's Programs Coordinator), Susy Glass (Volunteer Coordinator), Glenn Gustafson (Business Manager), Wenlin Huang (Weekend Reception), Mark Johnson (Maintenance), Sajida Kadri (Weekend Reception), Bridget Marzin (Children's Program Support), Maria Moutsatsos (Program Director), Jason Oulds (Weekend Maintenance), Rose Scher (Reception), Ian Sieunarine (Maintenance), Mariah Wheeler (Children's Program Support), Janice Zhang (Mentor Program Coordinator)

Casual and Relief Staff: Grace Cameron, Drew Dopwell, Conley Downey, Peter Dyett, Andrew Fuller, Nicoletta Ioannidis, Joan King, Lainey Little, Michael Symonds, Mark Kovats (Bookkeeping), Stephen Bunt (IT)

Funders and Partners: City of Toronto, Eastview Neighbourhood Community Centre, Human Resources Development Canada, Jimmie Simpson Recreation Centre, Nellie's, Ralph Thornton Community Organization, Riverside BIA, Riverdale Share, South Riverdale Community Health Centre, South Riverdale Child-Parent Centre, Toronto Community Housing, Toronto Foundation for Student Success, Toronto Star Fresh Air Fund, Toronto Neighbourhood Centres, Toronto Public Library- Queen/Saulter Branch, WoodGreen Community Services

* Resigned during the year.



765 Queen St. East
Toronto, ON M4M 1H3
416-392-6810
Fax 416-392-0025
www.ralphthornton.org

RalphThorntonCommunityCentre @ralphthornton