

Strategic Priorities & Plan

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Introduction

COMMUNITY CONTEXT

Key social, demographic and economic trends affecting the Centre's catchment area (South Riverdale – the portion of Ward 14 south of the Danforth), which represents both opportunities and threats to the community's culture and has implications for future Centre programming, include:

- Continued gentrification and increased income inequality, signaling displacement of South Riverdale's original working class and low-income populations.
- Continued intense urban redevelopment south of Gerrard Street East, exacerbating the on-going decline in affordable housing generally, and affordable rental units in particular, across many South Riverdale neighbourhoods. Planned redevelopment of lands south of Queen Street East and the the construction of the Ontario Line will likely accelerate the impact of these factors.
- An increased proportion of young families, and continued growth in the population under 6 years of age; little change in the population 15-17 years of age; and a slight increase in the proportion of adults aged 65 and over, a significant proportion of whom live alone in private residences.
- Continued ethno-cultural diversity. While the majority of residents speak English at home, more than one-third of residents have a non-official mother tongue. The vast majority of these residents speak a Chinese language (Cantonese or Mandarin).
- Increased consolidation of community-based organizations, diminishing direct neighbourhood access to programmes and services.



CATCHMENT AREA

The RTCC is mandated by the City of Toronto to provide a range of programming and/or services to the residents of South Riverdale, the boundaries of which are framed by: the Don River to the West, Danforth Avenue to the North, Lake Ontario to the South and Coxwell Avenue on the East. However, as a City of Toronto agency, any resident of the City of Toronto is welcome to participate in RTCC programming or use its facilities.

CURRENT STATE

RTCC is located in the east end of Toronto, which has undergone significant demographic changes over the past few years. The area is now home to a diverse and growing population, including a large number of newcomers, low-income families, and seniors.

RTCC is managed by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers who work hard to ensure that the Centre remains responsive and relevant to the evolving needs of its communities. Despite its long-standing presence in the community, RTCC faces several challenges due to the changes taking place within the community.

RTCC is committed to building a strong and sustainable future for the Centre and the communities it serves. The Centre has developed a multi-year strategic plan that outlines key goals and objectives in several areas, including community engagement, organizational capacity building, and revenue generation. With the support of its staff, volunteers, and community partners, RTCC is well-positioned to meet these challenges and continue serving as a vital hub for the East end community.

VISION

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

MISSION

The Ralph Thornton Community Centre is a gathering place that welcomes, connects and engages the community in all its diversity.

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, procurement 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-focussed 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.

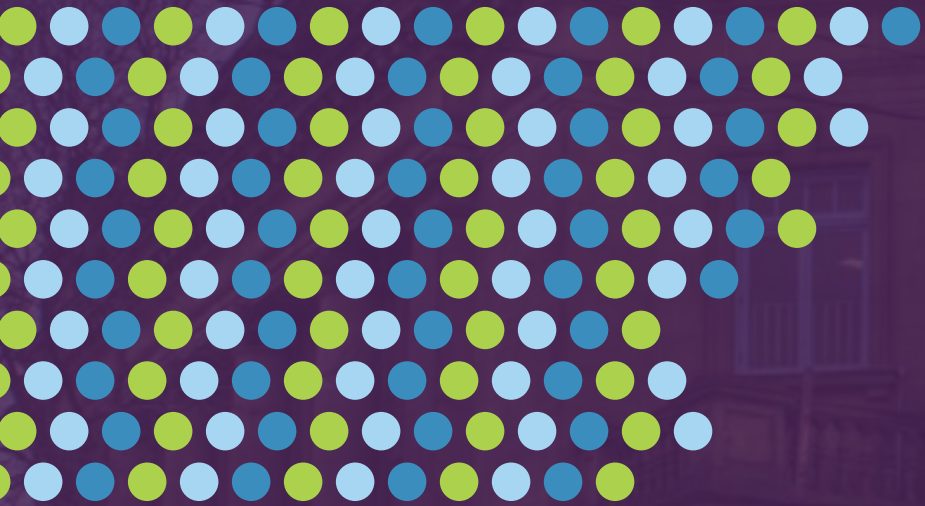


HOW WE WILL WORK

In implementing its programme priorities, the RTCC may play one or more of the following three roles.

RTCC Will...

Provide	As appropriate and feasible, RTCC will fund, deliver, manage, and be accountable for activities and use of its resources to achieve identified RTCC programme and organizational objectives and outcomes.
Enable	The RTCC will provide support, including space, access to information, skills/knowledge, opportunities, and resources to both agency partners and informal groups of community residents who share our values and objectives. As appropriate, RTCC may also facilitate or coordinate stakeholder action to build consensus and support collective action to achieve community priorities.
Advocate	The RTCC will foster and promote good public policy and actions that support and advance community well being by sharing information, engaging community, fostering collective action, or communicating support to political or institutional decision makers and/or media.



Directions & Priorities

STRATEGIC PILLAR 01

Increase RTCC's Connection to Community

By prioritizing community engagement, RTCC aims to re-establish a strong and lasting connection with its stakeholders. This will be achieved by creating opportunities for meaningful participation and collaboration, and by ensuring that the organization remains responsive and relevant to the evolving needs of its communities.

RTCC will increase community engagement through:

OBJECTIVES

1

Serving our communities through direct programming

2

Serving our communities through partnerships and space provision

3

Serving our communities through convening and connection

1

Serving our communities through direct programming

Priorities

Year 1

Year 2

Year 3

Continue to provide quality, in-demand programming (Maintain existing programs and services that continue to demonstrate that they are valued and needed by continued high registration, wait lists, or other indicators)

Maintain existing programming (paying attention to demand and evaluation results)
Explore opportunities to enhance existing programs (e.g. community events)

Establish evaluation frameworks and processes for all RTCC delivered programs (Ensure we can demonstrate the impact of RTCC programs to funders, Board, and others)

Identify base measures and audit current evaluation practice for all RTCC programs
Identify evaluation framework and strategy and corresponding resource needs.
Secure necessary resources to implement strategy

Develop impact, quality and satisfaction measures for each program to ensure meeting needs and having impact.
Pilot evaluation program against new measures.

All existing programs evaluated against measures, with overall impact report being produced.

2

Serving our communities through partnerships and space provision

Priorities	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Offer flexible, affordable space to community groups and small entrepreneurs (Continue RTCC’s tradition of providing a diverse range of local community groups with affordable, accessible space, and acting as a small business incubator)	Re-establish process and procedures for tracking space use and occupancy Update marketing materials	Establish clear agreements and protocols for partnership and space provision	
Maximize space use / occupancy rates (Ensure that RTCC space is used as much as possible, while maintaining a balance among community use, partner programming, and space for RTCC’s own programs)	Establish a formula (with some priorities) to allocate room use among programming, revenue generation and partner programming	Implement formula and collect feedback on how it is working	Review impact and efficacy of new strategy
Explore additional opportunities to partner on program and service delivery (What are the possibilities to work with community partners to better serve our local communities? How do we leverage our space and resources to make this happen?)	Ensure new RTCC leadership has strong relationship with existing building and other external partners	Explore expanding existing or establish new partnerships for program and service delivery Identify and pursue necessary resources Establish framework to assess impact of partnership	

3

Serving our communities through convening and connection

Priorities	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<p>Carry out environmental scan to identify service, program and advocacy gaps in our community (What services and programs are not available in our community? Whose voices/concerns are not being heard? How might RTCC help fill these gaps?)</p>	<p>Introductory consultation with other organizations serving the community</p> <p>Develop a plan for a robust environmental scan</p> <p>Identify necessary resources to secure, and secure resources.</p>	<p>Execute environmental scan</p>	<p>Deliver new Strategic Plan</p>
<p>Convene social service providers in the catchment area on a regular basis (RTCC is well suited to bring together the organizations that provide services in our community to share information, resources, challenges, and opportunities).</p>	<p>Convene one event with social service providers in catchment area involving both outgoing and incoming ED</p>	<p>Establish ongoing network of social service providers in the catchment area</p>	
<p>Support initiatives to convene and connect our community on issues of importance to the community (As a “Town Hall, RTCC has a long tradition of providing a space for community to learn, strategize, advocate and organize around environmental, social justice, and equity issues)</p>	<p>Establish preliminary strategy, identify and pursue necessary resources</p>	<p>Begin to execute against preliminary strategy</p>	<p>Secure resources to support execution of more robust strategy</p>

STRATEGIC PILLAR 02

Strengthen Organizational Capacity

By prioritizing organizational capacity, RTCC aims to better serve and engage its communities by investing in staff development, infrastructure, technology and partnerships that generate sustainable funding.

RTCC will build organizational capacity through:

OBJECTIVES

4

Modernizing and upgrading our systems and processes

5

Embedding diversity, equity, inclusion and access within our organizational culture

6

Building a foundation for sustainable, growing funding

4

Modernizing and upgrading our systems and processes

Priorities	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Implement modern, efficient processes (Many areas of RTCC's operations have not kept up with the times. How can RTCC take advantage of changes that will make us more efficient without becoming impersonal?)	<p>Audit and document existing processes to identify areas requiring attention</p> <p>Identify necessary resources, and begin to pursue securing them</p>	<p>Implement process changes for which resources have been secured</p> <p>Continue to pursue securing necessary resources</p>	
Upgrade technology systems (Many of RTCC's systems - telephone, computer, financial, communications, security - need to be updated.)	<p>Audit existing technology systems to identify needed upgrades</p> <p>Identify necessary resources, and begin to pursue securing them</p> <p>Pursure City on outstanding commitments to technology upgrades (e.g. phone system)</p> <p>Ongoing staff training on existing technologies</p>	<p>Implement technology systems upgrades for which resources have been secured</p> <p>Continue to pursue securing necessary resources</p> <p>Ongoing staff training on new and existing technologies</p>	
Develop and implement a digital communications strategy (In an increasingly virtual world, RTCC needs the capacity to connect with its community, partners, participants, staff, and volunteers on a variety of digital platforms)	<p>Re-activate social media presence for RTCC</p> <p>Establish and monitor analytics tools on website and social media platforms</p> <p>Continue to identify and develop cybersecurity policies and procedures, and pursue City funding to enable robust implementation.</p>	<p>Build digital communications strategy and begin implementation</p> <p>Identify and secure necessary resources</p> <p>Establish evaluation metrics</p>	<p>Ongoing monitoring of impact of strategy</p>

5

Embedding diversity, equity, inclusion and access within our organizational culture

Priorities	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<p>Build strategy around the implementation of the Relationships, Belonging & Anti-Oppression Charter. (RTCC has made an organizational commitment to become a more inclusive organization, through our endorsement of Toronto Neighbourhood Centres’ “Relationships, Belonging, and Anti-Oppression Charter. Now we need to make that commitment a reality)</p>	<p>Establish joint Board and staff working group to establish an implementation strategy around the Relationships, Belonging & Anti-Oppression Charter</p> <p>Identify and secure necessary resources</p>	<p>Implement strategies</p> <p>Establish metrics for ongoing monitoring of strategies effectiveness</p>	
<p>Review organizational policies from a DEIA lens. (RTCC needs to make sure that all of its policies and procedures promote, rather than discourage, diversity, equity, inclusion and access)</p>	<p>Ongoing review of organizational policies from a DEIA lens</p>		<p>All policies have been reviewed at least once from a DEIA lens</p>

5

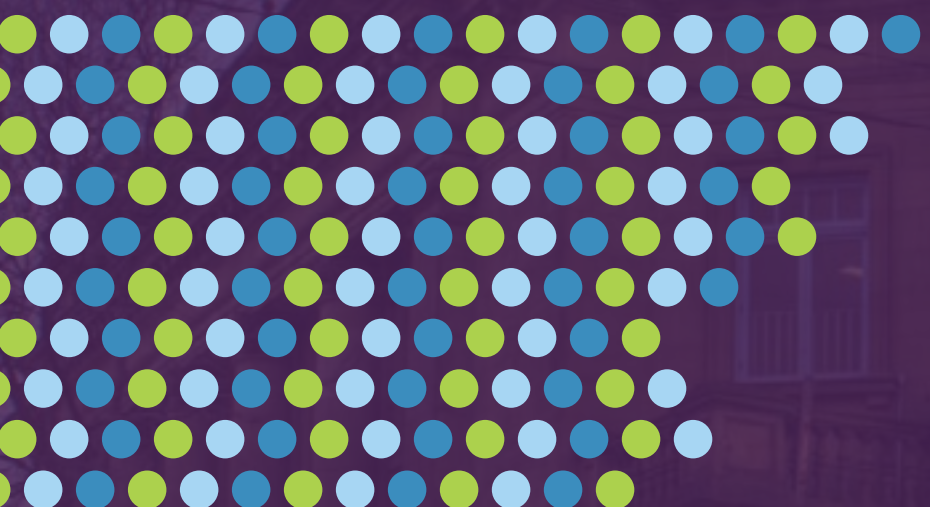
Embedding diversity, equity, inclusion and access within our organizational culture

Priorities	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Develop deliberate strategies to engage diverse communities (In order to effectively serve the diversity of our community, RTCC needs to reach out and connect with the communities that comprise our catchment area).	Completion of the Indigenous relationship audit	Leverage the lessons from the process utilized for the Indigenous relationship audit to identify lessons to more effectively engage with the Chinese community	Leverage the lessons from the process utilized for the Indigenous relationship audit to identify lessons to more effectively engage with the other target communities.
Work towards a goal of having a staff, leadership and governance teams that reflect the diversity of the community	Document, revise and implement hiring and recruitment procedures for staff, board and volunteers with lens to DEIA Using the information from RTCC's 2022 DEI audit as a benchmark, measure and report annually on diversity of staff, board and volunteer teams compared to available community demographics (At minimum establish metrics around: race, gender, sexual orientation, disability, language)		Review and revise hiring and recruitment procedures as needed to address remaining gaps in inclusion
		Explore alternative governance mechanisms and processes to promote greater inclusion	

6

Building a foundation for sustainable, growing funding

Priorities	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
Develop a financial plan (In order to achieve our strategic goals, RTCC must establish a plan that identifies what resources are required, potential sources, and a clear strategy for securing the necessary funding and other supports)	<p>Ensure board and staff leadership have an adequate understanding of the financial resources and needs of the organization</p> <p>Engage in financial planning exercise to identify resources necessary to execute on the strategic and operational plan</p>	<p>Align financial reporting to financial and strategic plans</p> <p>Ensure all strategic decisions are weighed against financial plan</p> <p>Ensure Financial Plan is up to date and current</p>	
Develop and implement an earned income strategy (A substantial portion of RTCC’s funding will continue to come from registration fees, room rentals, and similar sources. How can RTCC maximize its income from these sources while maintaining equitable access to our space and programs?)	<p>Identify potential strategies and engage in preliminary feasibility assessment</p>	<p>Piloting of most promising strategy(ies)</p>	<p>Continued execution and exploration of earned income strategies</p>
Develop and implement a fundraising plan (Other funding sources - grants, event-based fundraising, and ‘direct ask’ revenue generation will play an important role in growing our resource base).	<p>Audit existing fundraising activities with a lens to understanding true cost per raised (and additional non-monetary benefits)</p> <p>Develop a comprehensive fundraising plan (with goal of increasing fundraising revenues by 50% within 3 years)</p> <p>Pursue 3-5 new funding sources</p>	<p>Implement Fundraising Plan</p> <p>Continue to evaluate all fundraising activities to understand cost per dollar raised</p> <p>Secure 2 - 3 new funding sources</p>	<p>Overall increase in fundraising revenues of over 50% from 2022 figures</p>



Strategic Priorities & Plan

