

SUMMARY OF COMMUNITY HUB MODELS

Research on Governance, Financial, Program and Service Delivery Models

York Region staff researched and visited numerous existing community hubs to better understand approaches to hub development and governance in 2017 and 2018.

Community hubs take many different forms – from the purpose-built Langs in the City of Cambridge, to The Link operated by the Town of Georgina located in a redeveloped elementary school, to the Scarborough Store Front located in a redeveloped police station in City of Toronto.

KEY PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNITY HUBS

There is no one-size-fits all model for community hubs, however, the following characteristics are foundations for success:

- Strong awareness of local community needs through community and stakeholder engagement
- Establishing a vision and purpose for hub to ensure alignment between partners
- Forging strategic partnerships to offer diverse range of programs and services to meet needs of current and future seniors' population
- Approaching facility design with expertise of architects, designers and product representatives experienced with local population
- Ensuring mechanism for evaluation of programs and services to inform service delivery
- Support from all levels of government to operationalize hub vision
- Careful consideration to determine appropriate hub governance model
- Ensuring financial sustainability through use of innovative financing models including social enterprise, public/private partnerships, and grant funding opportunities

GOVERNANCE MODELS

When planning for a community hub, consideration should be given to governance for developing and operating the hub. Governance models formalize processes used to guide and share leadership and decision-making among various partners and stakeholders with clear lines of accountability.



Sample Governance Models

- **Informal Network** – No lead organization; all members participate in decision-making as equal partners; administration shared or managed by designated organization
- **Single Organization/Friendship Centre/Neighbourhood Centre** – Single organization that functions as a community hub; builds partnerships and shares space; may be part of broader network/umbrella association
- **Partnership Models** – Initial partners share the hub development process through steering committee or similar; may secure development funds through individual members; partners may secure separate leases/agreements to secure space in the hub but develop shared governance structure; may transition to lead agency model or incorporated organization
- **Lead Agency** – One agency takes responsibility for hub related funding for shared functions; principal leaseholder or owner of building; hub vision, structure principles developed collaboratively; may transfer some decision-making authority to an inclusive hub governance structure such as an advisory board. This is the model selected for the Seniors Community Center and Hub at Unionville Commons. Lead agency for Seniors Community Centre and Hub at Unionville Commons will be selected through a competitive procurement process. All types of organizations, including for-profit, registered charity or not-for-profit will be invited to submit a proposal to serve as lead agency for Seniors Community Centre and Hub at Unionville Commons
- **Incorporated Organization** – New organization incorporated to govern/manage hub; can be newly incorporated or trustee by hub partner or outside organization

Source: Community Hubs Ontario, Resource Sheet - Governance (2018)

It is critical, regardless of the governance model chosen, for a continued role for community input into hub operations. This can take the form of an advisory committee with resident and partner representation.

FINANCIAL MODELS

Ongoing funding can be a challenge for community hub sustainability. The Province of Ontario, through the Community hubs in Ontario: A strategic framework and action plan, identified several ways to address financial sustainability including:

- Exploring the use of innovative financing models for community hubs, including social enterprise, social finance and public/private partnerships
- Leveraging provincial programs (e.g., ServiceOntario and Employment Ontario) as anchor tenants to support community hub establishment and long-term sustainability
- Investigating municipal financial tools including municipal capital facilities agreements and development charges, to support the creation of new community spaces

Through community hub research, it was identified that municipalities generally have a role in supporting community hub operations ranging from donating vacant space, providing funding for capital improvements and/or providing ongoing operating funding.

PROGRAM AND SERVICE DELIVERY MODELS

Community hub program and service delivery can vary along a continuum, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Program and Service Delivery Model Continuum

Individual	Cooperation	Coordination	Collaboration	Integration
Organizations providing services operate independently	Organizations providing services operate independently with cooperation	Organizations providing services operate independently with coordination	Organizations providing services work collaboratively	Organizations work alongside one another to delivery integrated services to ensure client-focused service delivery
Separate funding and minimal communication between organizations	Organizations share information, work together on a case-by-case basis, and endorse each other's programs	Some joint planning occurs between organizations including synchronization of schedules, activities, goals, and events	Shared cultures, visions, values, actions between organizations and a willingness to relinquish some autonomy in interest of collective goals	Shared vision, goals, outcomes, funding and consistent policies and procedures across organizations

This continuum also applies to how community hub space is shared, including offices and reception areas.

LOCAL COMMUNITY HUB EXAMPLES

Staff toured and researched local community hubs to help inform hub development in York Region (summarized in Table 2).

Table 2
Summary of Research on Community Hubs

Hub	Location	Services	Features	Governance
Bathurst-Finch Hub	North York, Toronto	Dental, employment, healthcare, legal, newcomer	Community rooms, kitchen, garden	Lead agency model
Dorset Park Hub	Scarborough, Toronto	Child and family, EarlyON, employment, food bank, mental health, newcomer	Computer lab	Lead agency model
Langs Community Hub	Cambridge, Waterloo	Family, legal, mental health, municipal, newcomer, seniors	Bookable meeting rooms, community kitchen, courtyard, gymnasium, walking track	Lead agency model
Malton Community Hub (in development)	Mississauga, Peel Region	In development	Community kitchen, meeting/event space, music recording room, pop-up stage	Lead agency model
OKN Acton Hub	Acton, Halton	Child, education, municipal, police, youth	Kitchen, multi-purpose rooms	Partnership model
Rexdale Multi-Service Community Hub	Rexdale, Toronto	Employment, family, legal, primary care, newcomer, women	Multi-purpose community spaces	Lead agency model
Richmond Hill Youth Hub (located in Housing York Inc. building)	Richmond Hill, York Region	Youth counselling services, drop-in programming, emergency and transitional housing	Indoor and courtyard recreational spaces	Lead agency model
Scarborough Store Front	Scarborough, Toronto	Education, employment, finance, health, legal, mental health, newcomer, recreation,	Community garden, outdoor sports court	Partnership model

Hub	Location	Services	Features	Governance
The Link	Georgina, York Region	social, women, youth Food bank, health, regional, social, trades training, youth	Community teaching kitchen, event hall	Lead agency model (Town of Georgina)
W&M Edelbrock Centre	Orangeville, Dufferin County	Community, education, employment, mental health	Community garden	Lead agency model (Dufferin County)
Welcome Centre Immigrant Services	7 locations in York Region and Durham Region	Newcomer services including family, health, legal, seniors, women, youth	N/A	Lead agency model
York Region Centre for Community Safety	Markham, York Region	Support for survivors of violence and abuse including family, housing, legal, policy, regional, victim and women	N/A	Partnership model

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