



Decision Letter

CreateTO

Meeting No.	9	Contact	Jennifer Lin, Committee Administrator
Meeting Date	Friday, February 16, 2024	Phone	416-338-5089
Start Time	9:30 AM	E-mail	trab@toronto.ca
Location	Video Conference	Chair	Ron Carinci

RA9.6	ACTION	Amended		Ward: All
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The Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation

Confidential Attachment - A proposed or pending acquisition or sale of land by the City of Toronto

Board Decision

The Board of Directors of CreateTO:

1. Recommends that City Council consider a request to both the Provincial and Federal governments to provide financial support for this project in the form of capital and long-term operating funding.
2. Recommends that City Council request the City Manager to provide the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation a non-binding letter of intent, to give assurance to the provincial and federal governments of the City's intention to negotiate a long term lease with the Somali centre once an appropriate city site has been selected, conditional upon receiving the provincial and federal government funding. The letter would also stipulate that the municipal support through a long term land lease would be based on the Provincial and Federal Governments providing financial support for this project in the form of capital and long term operating funding.
3. Recommends that City Council request the Deputy City Manager, Development and Growth to work with CreateTO and the Somali Centre, as part of their exploration of viable sites and funding sources for a community centre, identify potential sites, and development and funding partners, to develop affordable housing in the northwest corner of the City.
4. Recommends that City Council authorize the public release of Confidential Attachment 1 to the report (February 2, 2024) from the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO following the closing of any transaction and at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO.

Decision Advice and Other Information

The Board of Directors of CreateTO recessed its public session to meet in closed session to consider the item as it pertains a proposed or pending acquisition or sale of land by the City of Toronto.

The Board of Directors of CreateTO:

1. Directed the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO, in conjunction with the General Manager, Parks, Forestry and Recreation, the Executive Director, Social Development, Finance and Administration, the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, and the Executive Director of Corporate Real Estate Management, to continue to work with the Somali Centre in a collaborative process; and, to report back once a viable site has been identified with details on site due diligence, the operational model, and the financial strategy.
2. Subject to the approval of Recommendation 4 above by City Council, authorized the public release of Confidential Attachment 1 to the report (February 2, 2024) from the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO following the closing of any transaction and at the discretion of the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO.

Summary

At its meeting on February 16, 2024, the Board of Directors of CreateTO considered Item [RA9.6](#) and made recommendations to City Council.

Summary from the report (February 2, 2024) from the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO:

The Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation ("Somali Centre") is a registered non-profit organization led by a group of Somali Canadian young professionals from across Ontario aiming to create a dedicated cultural recreation and community space for the Somali population in Toronto. According to the organization, there has been a 40-year effort from the Somali community to develop a culture and recreation centre in Toronto to address the needs of this under-served community.

Beginning in the 1970s, the community began working with local leaders and politicians to advocate for this type of facility. The main goal of this centre is to create a "...central space for the Somali community to gather and receive culturally appropriate community services from non-profit service providers and agencies." After decades of advocacy, Toronto City Council adopted a motion in July 2022 to direct City of Toronto and CreateTO staff to work with the Somali Centre on a feasibility study to identify potential sites for this facility.

This report provides an outline of the collaborative process undertaken by CreateTO, the City of Toronto, and the Somali Centre and provides a staff review of their feasibility study. Next steps will include a continued effort to work together and to understand the operating model and long-term financial feasibility of the Somali Centre.

Background Information

(February 2, 2024) Report from the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO on The Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation

(<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/ra/bgrd/backgroundfile-242932.pdf>)

Confidential Attachment 1 - Overview of sites reviewed by CreateTO

Communications

(February 9, 2024) Letter from Letter from Councillor Alejandra Bravo on Support for Moving Forward with Next Steps to Realize the Somali Centre for Culture and Recreation (RA.New) (<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/ra/comm/communicationfile-177585.pdf>)

(February 2, 2024) Letter from Letter from Councillor Vincent Crisanti on Support for Long-Term Land Lease to Develop a Future Somali Community Centre (RA.New) (<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/ra/comm/communicationfile-177586.pdf>)

(February 2, 2024) Letter from Letter from Councillor Josh Matlow on Support for a Long-Term Land Lease for the City-Owned Properties to Develop a Future Somali Community Centre and Housing (RA.New) (<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/ra/comm/communicationfile-177587.pdf>)

(January 31, 2024) Letter from Letter from Councillor Chris Moise on Support for a Long-Term Land Lease for the City-Owned Properties to Develop a Future Somali Community Centre and Housing (RA.New) (<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/ra/comm/communicationfile-177588.pdf>)

(February 14, 2024) Letter from Letter from Councillor Frances Nunziata on Support for a Long-Term Land Lease to Develop a Future Somali Community Centre (RA.New) (<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/ra/comm/communicationfile-177589.pdf>)

(February 12, 2024) Letter from Letter from Councillor Lily Cheng on Support for a Long-Term Land Lease for the City-Owned Properties to Develop a Future Somali Community Centre and Housing (RA.New) (<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/ra/comm/communicationfile-177590.pdf>)

(January 26, 2024) Letter from Letter from Councillor Amber Morley on Support for a Long-Term Land Lease for the City-Owned Properties to Develop a Future Somali Community Centre and Housing (RA.New) (<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2024/ra/comm/communicationfile-177591.pdf>)

Speakers

Rihana Mohamed
Sakariya Ahmed
Fuad Abdi
Sagal Shuriye
Hamdi Ali