TORONTO

REPORT FOR ACTION

Strategic Expansion of the Association of Community Centres in New Development Projects to Strengthen Toronto Communities

Date: October 16, 2025
To: Economic and Community Development Committee
From: Executive Director, Social Development
Wards: All

SUMMARY

Toronto's growth and persistent inequities highlight the urgent need for community development infrastructure that fosters inclusion, resilience, and local leadership. Community facilities are linked to improved mental health, stronger social ties, and a greater sense of belonging.[1] In 2024, more than 80% of community organizations reported rising service demand amid escalating financial and real estate pressures.[2] To help address this need, the City can expand its network of community development infrastructure through the proven Association of Community Centres (AOCCs) model.

Currently, there are ten AOCCs, operated by volunteer Boards of Management, delivering local programs and services on behalf of the City. AOCCs play a critical role in advancing City policies to support equity-deserving communities and strengthen local neighbourhoods. Each Centre functions as a local Board under the *City of Toronto Act, 2006*, with a Relationship Framework that outlines Council's expectations and delegated authority. The City provides access to City-owned or leased facilities and core administrative funding, while the AOCC Board generates and oversees program funds through fundraising, space rentals, membership and programming fees.

This report outlines an Implementation Strategy to advance the *AOCC Expansion Framework*, as directed by Council (2024.EC14.7). It introduces AOCCs as a viable community development option within Toronto's broader network of social infrastructure. The Strategy includes place-based assessment guidelines, scalable facility models, and a multi-year Facilities and Operations Plan to align capital investment and operational planning. These measures will modernize existing AOCCs and integrate new ones into development projects, co-located with municipal services to promote equity, sustainability, and complete communities.

---

[1] Toronto Foundation. Toronto Social Capital Study 2022.

[2] Ontario Nonprofit Network. 2024 State of the Sector.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Director, Social Development recommends that:

1. City Council request the Executive Director, Social Development, the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, the Chief People Officer, People and Equity, the Executive Director, Financial Planning Division, and the Chief Executive Officer, CreateTO, in consultation with the City Manager's Office, the City Solicitor and other relevant divisions and agencies to develop a multi-year Association of Community Centres Facilities and Operations Plan to guide facility planning, asset management and required operational costs to advance existing and any newly created Association of Community Centres, with consideration of the City's broader Capital Budget and Plan, and report back to the Economic and Community Development Committee in the first quarter of 2028.

2. City Council request the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer, in consultation with the Executive Director, Social Development and Corporate Real Estate Management, to explore funding opportunities to support the future growth and expansion of the Association of Community Centres, considering City priorities and available resources.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

The City currently supports ten community centres governed, operated, and maintained by volunteer Boards of Management, collectively known as the Association of Community Centres (AOCCs). These multi-purpose facilities provide public space, programs and services that advance the social objectives of local communities on behalf of the City. To ensure the strategic growth and long-term sustainability of the AOCC model, this report provides City Council with an update on the development of an Implementation Plan and Resourcing Strategy, along with recommendations to advance the *AOCC Expansion Framework* adopted by City Council on July 24-25, 2024.

Under the existing Council-approved Relationship Framework, Corporate Real Estate Management is responsible for budgeting and overseeing most capital work in City-owned AOCC facilities, unless otherwise directed by Council. The City also funds core administrative operations such as salaries, benefits and rent, while AOCCs support program delivery through membership fees, programming fees, space rentals, fundraising, and grants. A critical next step in supporting AOCC expansion is the development of a comprehensive Facilities and Operations Plan.

To support the strategic growth of AOCCs, Social Development, in collaboration with Corporate Real Estate Management, must lead the development of a scalable multi-year AOCC Facilities and Operations Plan as part of the broader Implementation Plan. This would include hiring a qualified vendor to deliver professional and technical services that will guide long-term facility planning, asset management, and capital investment decisions supporting both the renewal of existing AOCCs and equitable expansion across Toronto.

Longer-term funding needs, including capital and operating projections for each AOCC model, are outlined in Attachment 3 and will require further review with interdivisional partners to ensure alignment with City-wide priorities, affordability, and feasibility.

The Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer have reviewed this report and agree with the information as presented in the Financial Impact section.

EQUITY IMPACT STATEMENT

The City's Social Development Strategy (2001) recognized the essential role of community programs in advancing equity, wellbeing, and civic engagement. AOCCs directly support this mandate by serving equity-deserving populations. The proposed expansion of AOCCs is designed to improve access to inclusive, high-quality programs and community development facilities in underserved areas. By investing in new AOCC sites and renewing existing ones, the City is actively addressing service gaps and systemic barriers. The Implementation Strategy and associated funding requests (including resources for planning, staffing, and infrastructure) are critical to ensuring that AOCCs continue to deliver equity-focused services and remain responsive to diverse community needs.

DECISION HISTORY

On July 25, 2024, City Council adopted the report, entitled “Targeted Expansion of the Association of Community Centres to Support Community Development in Toronto”, and directed Executive Director, Social Development and other relevant divisions and agencies to report back in the third quarter of 2025, with recommendations to advance the City of Toronto’s *Association of Community Centres Expansion Framework*, including an Implementation Plan and Resourcing Strategy.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2024.EC14.7

On November 8, 2023, City Council adopted the report, entitled “Association of Community Centres Settlement of Operating Results for the Year Ended 2021”, and directed the Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services to undertake a feasibility study on opportunities to add new AOCCs in the City, funded from unspent AOCC funds for 2021, and to report on the scope of the study to the January 11, 2024 meeting of the Economic and Community Development Committee.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2023.EX9.6

At its meeting on December 9 and 10, 2015, City Council adopted the report, entitled “Association of Community Centres Settlement of Operating Results for Year 2014” and requested the City Manager to write to the AOCC Boards to reaffirm with the Boards the need to seek approval from the Executive Director of Financial Planning (as delegated by City Council in 2008) prior to incurring any over expenditures and remind them of their responsibility to comply with the City’s financial policies.
https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2015/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-85658.pdf

At its meeting on April 12 and 13, 2011, City Council adopted the report entitled "Managing Through Agencies and Corporations" which requested the City Manager review the practices and governance of a number of City agencies including AOCCs. Council endorsed accountability mechanisms such as requiring Council to approve the board bylaws of all agencies that regulate the internal conduct of the business and affairs of the agency.
https://secure.toronto.ca/council/agenda-item.do?item=2011.EX4.6

At its meeting on September 25, 26 and 27, 2006, City Council adopted the Relationship Framework for the City and AOCC Boards of Management. The main purpose of the Relationship Framework is to delegate authority to the Boards of Management to oversee the business and affairs of the community centre; set out delegations of authority, responsibilities and obligations of the Boards and reporting requirements; and the conditions that promote an effective and collaborative relationship between the City and the Boards and supports provided by the City to the Boards.
https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/971c-spc-community-centres.pdf

On April 14, 15, and 16, 2003, City Council adopted Policy and Finance Committee Report 3, Clause 11, entitled "Governance Review of the Association of Community Centres (AOCCs)". Among other decisions, Council determined that the City would continue to provide core administration funding to the AOCCs, that AOCC Boards are expected to operate within their approved budgets and that any administrative surpluses be returned to the City while deficits may be covered by the City, subject to Council approval.
https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2003/agendas/council/cc030414/pof3rpt/cl011.pdf

On July 24, 25 and 26, 2001, City Council adopted Policy and Finance Committee Report 11, Clause 6, entitled "Association of Community Centres (AOCCs), Community Centres Deficits". Council directed that the Chief Financial Officer and Treasurer report on the AOCCs surplus/deficit upon receipt of the annual audited financial statements, as was the practice in the former City of Toronto.
https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/2001/agendas/council/cc010724/pof11rpt/cl006.pdf

COMMENTS

A. Advancing Community Development Through the AOCC Model

Existing AOCC Network

The City operates ten community centres, known as Association of Community Centres (AOCCs), managed by volunteer Boards of Management appointed by City Council. These multi-purpose community development facilities serve as catalysts for neighbourhood transformation—providing inclusive spaces that strengthen civic engagement, build local leadership capacity, and advance equity-focused and community development outcomes.

Table 1. AOCC Community Development Outcomes

Outcome	Description
Social Connectedness and Cohesion	Fosters cross-cultural understanding, barrier-free access, diverse programming, volunteer opportunities, and local engagement.
Community Resilience	Strengthen resilience by increasing access to health-related resources that prioritize vulnerable groups and maintain long-term resident relationships.
Local Leadership and Collaboration	Builds partnerships with local agencies, grassroots groups, educational institutions, BIAs, and City divisions to strengthen community capacity.
Improved Health and Wellbeing	Offers responsive programs, services, opportunities for community economic development, and support networks to meet the needs of equity-deserving populations.

Each year, AOCCs deliver over 1,220 inclusive programs and services in more than 25 languages, reaching more than 235,000 unique individuals across Toronto. Centres are vital civic hubs that foster community leadership and volunteerism, demonstrated by the engagement of over 3,500 dedicated volunteers and 98 community members serving on Boards of Management.[3]

AOCCs demonstrate strong financial leverage: every $1 of core City funding attracts an additional $3.35 from external sources, resulting in $4.35 that expands programs, enhances services, and strengthens community impact. The City funds the core administrative activities of AOCCs, while program delivery is supported through a mix of membership and programming fees, donations, grants, and space rentals. According to the latest audited financial statements from 2024, the City's operational contribution accounted for 23% of the total funding for the Centres. The remaining 77% was generated through strategic fundraising initiatives, fees, grants and space rentals.

AOCCs are distinct from the City's 127 Community Recreation Centres, which are staffed, maintained, funded and operated by Parks and Recreation and provide a wide range of high-quality registered and drop-in City programming and services for all ages. Other models exist in Toronto that are not City-funded, including non-profit organizations providing community spaces, such as the Young Men's Christian Association (YMCA) and others.

Table 2. List of Current Association of Community Centres Locations and Sizes

Community Centre	Address	Size (Square Feet)	Ward
The 519 Community Centre	519 Church Street, Toronto, ON. M4Y 2C9	28,255	13
Applegrove Community Complex	60 Woodfield Road, Toronto ON. M4L 2W6	7,911	14
Cecil Community Centre	58 Cecil Street, Toronto, ON. M5T 1N6	5,764	11
Yonge Eglinton Community Centre (formerly Central Eglinton Community Centre)	160 Eglinton Ave. East, Toronto, ON. M4P 3B5	15,980	12

[3] Source: 2024 Association of Community Centres Report, administered by Social Development.

Community Centre	Address	Size (Square Feet)	Ward
Community Centre 55	97 Main Street, Toronto ON. M4E 2V6	9,000	19
Eastview Neighbourhood Community Centre	86 Blake Street, Toronto, ON. M4J 3C9	19,901	14
Ralph Thornton Community Centre	765 Queen Street East, Toronto, ON. M4M 1H3	18,277	14
Scadding Court Community Centre	707 Dundas Street West, Toronto, ON. M5T 2W6	35,530[4]	10
Swansea Town Hall Community Centre	95 Lavinia Ave., Toronto ON. M6S 3H9	11,695	4
Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre (formerly Harbourfront Community Centre)	627 Queens Quay West, Toronto, ON. M5V 3G3	44,950[5]	10

Council Adopted AOCC Expansion Framework

On July 24, 2024, City Council adopted the *Association of Community Centres (AOCC) Expansion Framework* (2024.EC14.7), establishing a clear goal, guiding principles, and actionable steps to expand the AOCC model and advance community development outcomes. As a result of the Framework, for the first time in over 30 years, AOCCs can now be considered in City decision-making when a new, expanded or redeveloped community infrastructure is required to support residents. The Framework is anchored in four core principles, which guide the expansion of AOCCs city-wide and are intended to promote long-term community resilience and adaptability:

1) **Equity and Inclusion**, to prioritize underserved populations and address disparities in access to community services;

2) **Community Participation and Leadership**, to ensure expansion reflects local needs and fosters ownership and empowerment;

3) **Collaboration and Partnerships**, to leverage relationships with organizations, stakeholders, and government to support growth; and

4) **Transparency and Accountability**, to maintain consistent, transparent processes with mechanisms for stakeholder feedback.

Since July 2024, the City has advanced the *AOCC Expansion Framework* through a coordinated, interdivisional effort involving over ten divisions. An Interdivisional Working Group was established to design an Implementation Strategy focused on site selection, resource planning, and governance. This work is guided by best practices from the Toronto Public Library and Parks and Recreation Master Plans, with an emphasis on equity, sustainability, and flexible service delivery.

[4] The Scadding Court Community Centre facility includes an indoor pool managed by Parks and Recreation. The pool, tot pool, pool storage area, change rooms, sauna, staff change room and office are 11,162 square feet in size and have been excluded from the calculation of square footage.

[5] The Waterfront Neighbourhood Centre facility includes a TDSB elementary school and childcare space, which are 78,265 square feet in total and have been excluded from the calculation of square footage.

B. Shaping Future Facilities by Establishing Scalable Models for Expansion

Designing Future AOCCs with Insights from Legacy Centres

A review of AOCC facilities identified key planning principles to guide the development of future AOCCs and ensure they are scalable and responsive to community needs.

New centres should be at least 15,000 square feet, with larger facilities of up to 40,000+ square feet recommended in opportunity-driven high-growth areas, to enable additional services, with satellite locations for existing AOCCs being approximately a minimum of 5,000 square feet. Spaces must be designed to support diverse programming, administration and public engagement. Flexible-use community areas are essential to ensure residents, grassroots groups, and local agencies can book and access space—supporting both inclusive service delivery and revenue generation through rentals, programming and membership fees.

While leasing may offer short-term cost savings and flexibility, it poses risks such as lease termination, limited adaptability, and higher long-term costs. City ownership should be prioritized for AOCC expansion, to ensure stability, control over improvements, and alignment with community development goals—making it a more resilient and sustainable foundation for AOCC service delivery.

AOCC Models for Strategic and Scalable Expansion

To support the strategic growth of AOCCs across Toronto, three facility models have been developed to guide both the creation of new centres and the expansion of existing ones. These models are grounded in insights from current AOCCs and offer a scalable approach tailored to different community needs, development contexts, and service delivery goals. A detailed comparison of each model, including space components and benefits, is provided in Attachment 1.

1. **Standalone Facility Model**: Offers a purpose-built approach to delivering accessible, integrated community development infrastructure through dedicated AOCC facilities. It responds to the diverse needs of Toronto's neighbourhoods by offering scalable, co-located spaces that support both essential and specialized programming. Within this model are two distinct facility tiers, each tailored to different urban contexts and service demands. The Neighbourhood Facility is a mid-sized AOCC model, designed to deliver a broad range of programs while maintaining space efficiency, with a minimum footprint of 15,000 square feet—ideal for communities with moderate population density and growing service demand. The District Facility, ranging from 25,000 to 40,000+ square feet, is designed for high-growth areas and large populations, offering advanced amenities such as gyms, training kitchens, and outdoor spaces. Both facility tiers are well-suited for integration into mixed-use developments, Toronto Community Housing revitalization areas, and surplus City-owned properties, and support co-location with municipal services—such as libraries, childcare centres, and public health offices—to ensure integrated service delivery and long-term community access to purpose-built infrastructure.

2. **Integrated Facility Model**: Located within Parks and Recreation Community Recreation Centres, the Integrated Facility Model embeds an AOCC into newly developed or redeveloped recreation facilities. Dedicated and exclusive-use spaces are provided for AOCC programming and administration, including meeting and multi-purpose rooms, administrative offices, EarlyON spaces, computer labs, and storage areas. This model promotes seamless integration of social and recreation services, offering residents convenient access to a wide range of programs within a single, multifunctional facility—advancing both recreation and community development outcomes through co-location and shared infrastructure.

3. **Satellite Facility Model:** Enables the expansion of existing AOCCs to meet growing community needs by providing additional locations which the AOCC would govern.[6] These smaller, strategically located sites help manage increased programming demands, staffing overflow, and broader catchment areas. With a minimum size of 5,000 square feet, Satellite Facilities are well-suited for mixed-use developments, underutilized City-owned spaces, and storefronts in high-density neighbourhoods. It is ideal for existing AOCCs requiring modest program expansion or additional administrative capacity inside or beyond their existing catchment areas. Where established, the AOCC Board of Management would assume responsibility for the satellite location, ensuring consistent governance, programming oversight, and alignment with the AOCC's mandate across sites.

These three models are designed not only to provide space, but to deliver measurable community development outcomes—such as reducing social isolation, supporting grassroots leadership, advancing community economic development, and enabling integrated service delivery that responds to local priorities. They emphasize co-location with municipal assets, revenue generation opportunities, and improved access to programs and services. Selecting the appropriate AOCC facility model depends on a combination of community and program needs, available space, development context, and long-term strategic goals. Each model offers distinct advantages and is adaptable to a variety of urban development scenarios.

The Standalone and Satellite models also include flexible-use community spaces designed for grassroots groups to book, access, and use—reinforcing the AOCC's commitment to inclusive, community-driven infrastructure. Additionally, while the Integrated Facility Model is located within City-run Community Recreation Centres, all of these models are well-positioned for co-location alongside other municipal services such as Toronto Public Library, Toronto Children's Services, Toronto Employment and Social Services, and Toronto Public Health.

C. Place-based Assessment Guidelines for Strategic AOCC Expansion

To guide the equitable and strategic expansion of AOCCs, Place-based Assessment Guidelines have been developed to offer a consistent, evidence-based framework for

[6] Expansion of existing AOCCs to additional location(s) requires amendments to the Relationship Framework and City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 25, Community and Recreation Centres.

identifying high-priority areas for AOCC investment, where facilities can generate the greatest impact on community development outcomes, including equity, participation, and resilience. These guidelines align with the City's broader planning and equity objectives, and are grounded in the Council-adopted *AOCC Expansion Framework* (2024.EC14.7). The Guidelines are organized into four strategic criteria outlined in Table 3, and described in greater detail in Attachment 2.

Table 3. The Strategic Criteria of the AOCC Place-based Assessment Guidelines

Strategic Criteria	Focus	Purpose
Enhancing Neighbourhood Equity	Uses equity data such as unemployment, income, housing, youth development, and health	Identifies service gaps in neighbourhoods facing systemic barriers to community services
Targeted Investment in Underserved Areas	Evaluates infrastructure assets, service access and service-to-population ratios	Pinpoints areas lacking facilities and services, especially historically underserved communities
Enhancing Community Leadership	Assesses local leadership capacity, presence of resident groups and grassroots associations	Ensures AOCCs are supported by strong community networks
Planning for Growth	Aligns expansion with population growth, major transit hubs, housing initiatives and revitalization areas	Supports expansion in areas of urban growth to build complete communities

The Place-based Assessment Guidelines (Attachment 2) are intended to inform and guide decision-making and are not intended to serve as rigid threshold criteria. A set of measurable indicators supports each criterion. Indicators will be regularly reviewed and updated to ensure the most advanced, effective and relevant datasets are used for neighbourhood assessment. This approach provides flexibility and responsiveness to local context, while maintaining a transparent, replicable, and equity-centred framework for evaluating future AOCC expansion.

Assessing Current and Future City-Owned Real Estate for AOCC Expansion

A multi-year AOCC Facilities and Operations Plan is the next step in the AOCC Expansion Implementation Strategy to guide reinvestment in existing centres and address future infrastructure needs. The Plan will integrate policy direction, financial strategy, and lifecycle asset management. The following actions will shape its development—ensuring it is evidence-based, aligned with City priorities, and responsive to evolving community needs:

Conduct Building Condition Assessments (BCAs): Currently underway by Corporate Real Estate Management for all City-owned properties, including AOCC facilities, the assessments will establish the state of good repair (SOGR) baseline and inform prioritization of lifecycle maintenance separate from growth-related improvements. The findings will directly shape the Facilities and Operations Plan and include strategies to support AOCC Boards in leased spaces by identifying suitable infrastructure for service delivery.

Undertake a Strategic Real Estate Review: To enable strategic growth, Corporate Real Estate Management and CreateTO, in collaboration with Social

Development, will lead a comprehensive review of the City's real estate portfolio. Guided by the AOCC Place-based Assessment Guidelines, this review will identify sites aligned with AOCC program needs and City priorities. Shortlisted sites will undergo rigorous due diligence, including alignment with Council-approved priorities and the Official Plan, site-specific conditions, planning policies, building conditions, and financial feasibility. Opportunities for co-location with other municipal services will also be prioritized.

Integrate AOCCs into Community Recreation Centre Planning: Parks and Recreation, Social Development, and Corporate Real Estate Management will explore and identify opportunities for integrating AOCCs within newly planned Community Recreation Centres, and those identified for revitalization through the Parks and Recreation Facilities Plan Implementation Strategy. Future Parks and Recreation Facility Plans will also consider embedding AOCC Expansion priorities into capital planning and facility design.

Implement a Rolling Review to Capture Emerging Opportunities: To remain responsive to emerging opportunities, staff will evaluate sites arising from new developments, surplus property declarations, and co-location opportunities, with open-market acquisitions considered where appropriate. All evaluations will be conducted in consultation with local Councillors to ensure alignment with community priorities. Viable sites will be brought forward to City Council for approval, enabling prioritization for future capital investment and integration into the City's long-term planning and budget cycles. This approach ensures AOCC expansion remains both strategic and adaptable to evolving community needs and urban development opportunities.

D. Strengthening the AOCC Model for Expansion

AOCC Governance Model

As an important community development tool, each new AOCC will continue to operate under the current governance structure: a Board of Management established as a local and City board under the City of Toronto Act, 2006, and operate in accordance with former City of Toronto Municipal Code Chapter 25, Community and Recreation Centres, and the AOCC Relationship Framework.

AOCC Boards will be comprised of Community Council-appointed members of the public and the local City Councillor by-right-of-office. Public members appointed to an AOCC Board must meet requirements, including that a majority of public members must be residents of the Centre's catchment area. The City supports the AOCC Board by providing a facility, core administrative funding, and other supports outlined in the Relationship Framework.

Insights from Existing AOCCs

A review of different AOCC fundraising models and facility arrangements under the Relationship Framework informed the Implementation Strategy. Case studies examined Boards with varying fundraising approaches operating in both City-owned and

City-leased facilities. Findings highlight key strengths, systemic challenges, and opportunities for improvement:

Table 4. Operational Insights and Recommendations from Existing AOCCs

Category	Description	Insights	Recommendation
Fundraising and Charitable Status	Fundraising is integral for AOCC Boards to fund programs, as per the Relationship Framework. Charitable status from Canada Revenue Agency (CRA) is a critical factor in attracting donations, as it enables the ability to issue tax receipts.	Most Boards do not hold charitable status. Instead, they partner with external organizations to maximize donations. Some AOCC Boards receive donations through the City, which issues tax receipts under its own charitable status and transfers funds to the Boards. This results in administrative burdens, engagement challenges and confusion, limiting fundraising.	All new AOCC Boards are encouraged to pursue CRA charitable status to be able to issue tax receipts, increase eligibility for grants, and engage in fundraising to support programming and capital improvements.
Facility Ownership and Maintenance	AOCCs operate in both City-owned and leased facilities, each with distinct operational challenges.	AOCCs in leased spaces report poor accessibility, restricted hours, and inadequate infrastructure for programming. Many AOCC Boards in City-owned facilities are expected to manage maintenance costs of less than $50,000, but lack a dedicated facilities management budget.	A multi-year AOCC Facilities and Operations Plan is recommended to support lifecycle planning, prioritize upgrades, and sustain service delivery over time.

Enhanced Coordination Systems for a Growing AOCC Network

As key partners in delivering community services and advancing Council priorities, AOCCs play a vital role in Toronto's social infrastructure. With the network growing, the City is implementing a coordinated approach to enhance operational practices and ensure consistency, accountability and impact across all Centres.

City staff are implementing measures to improve coordination, strengthen oversight, and increase responsiveness across the AOCC network. Key actions include establishing communication channels through a calendar of touchpoints—such as monthly AOCC Executive Director meetings, coordinated budget submissions, and annual reporting. In addition, standardized templates will support core processes, including AOCC Executive Director recruitment and onboarding, acknowledgement of City funding, facility repairs and enhancement requests. Together, these measures enhance accountability, improve operational efficiency, and enable AOCCs to demonstrate impact while operating with greater clarity and consistency.

Defining Catchment Areas to Support Equity and Local Responsiveness

Under the Relationship Framework, AOCC operations focus on serving a defined catchment area, established by each Board, to ensure services are locally responsive and accessible. City Council approval is required whenever a change to the catchment area would result in material financial impacts to an AOCC's administrative funding, including a 10 per cent increase or decrease in the catchment population.

Currently, there is no standardized method for defining catchment boundaries, and models from other City divisions, agencies and corporations are not directly transferable due to the hyper-local nature of AOCC services. City staff recommend a flexible, case-by-case approach to propose initial catchment areas for new Boards, taking into consideration the four factors outlined in Table 5.

Table 5. Consideration Factors for Defining AOCC Catchment Areas

Factor	Purpose
Geographic Reach	Evaluates walking and public transit access of the proposed location and any natural and built barriers affecting mobility.
Service Gaps	Identifies areas with limited access to similar community-based services to avoid duplication of services while maximizing reach and impact.
Planning Considerations	Aligns with current and future city planning priorities, including secondary plans and other strategic frameworks, while considering population growth, development pipelines, and revitalization plans.
Community Input	Incorporates feedback from residents, local organizations, and stakeholders to understand community preferences and usage patterns of existing service providers.

E. Financial Planning and Strategic Resourcing for Expansion

AOCC expansion requires a financial strategy that ensures long-term viability and aligns with the City's fiscal frameworks. This section outlines capital and operating cost projections, identifies potential funding mechanisms, and highlights systemic constraints impacting scalability. Operational and capital cost estimates for each AOCC model—including five-year projections for state of good repair (SOGR) and operating expenses—are detailed in Attachment 3.

Capital Funding Requirements for New AOCCs

New AOCCs will be delivered through a combination of purpose-built facilities, integrated models within municipal infrastructure, and adaptive reuse of City-owned assets. Each approach comes with unique capital cost implications, depending on factors like facility size, design complexity, and site conditions. These varying capital needs will be planned for in Corporate Real Estate Management's 10-Year Capital Plan. Preliminary capital cost estimates for new AOCCs vary by facility type, ranging from $16.2 million to $74 million.[7] These figures, based on 2025 construction rates and informed by comparable City projects and industry benchmarks, include both hard

[7] Valuation is based on 2025 capital construction rates and informed by previous City of Toronto capital projects, as well as the *Altus Group's 2025 Canadian Cost Guide*, a recognized industry benchmark for real estate development and infrastructure construction hard costs across major Canadian cities and asset classes.

construction costs and soft costs such as design, permitting, and project management. To ensure long-term asset sustainability, the annual state of good repair (SOGR) budget is recommended to be increased to include an average annual allocation of 2–3% of the facility's replacement value. More detailed capital cost projections for each facility type, including state of good repair forecasts, are available in Attachment 3.

Where appropriate, co-locating AOCCs with other municipal services such as childcare, recreation (aquatics and fitness), libraries, or housing may offer cost efficiencies through shared common areas. Similarly, repurposing existing City-owned facilities might reduce initial capital outlay by eliminating land acquisition costs, while still requiring investment to meet accessibility, safety, and programming standards.

The capital funding required for AOCC expansion will be submitted through future budget processes. These requests will be carefully evaluated against the City's broader capital priorities as part of the 10-Year Capital Plan's strategic allocation of resources. A phased, multi-year approach is essential to align project delivery with available funding and ensure the long-term sustainability of the AOCC portfolio.

Operational Cost for New AOCCs

Operational sustainability is predicated on a hybrid funding model. The City will continue to provide core administrative support—including staffing, maintenance, utilities, and insurance as outlined in Sections 2.2 and 11.2 of the AOCC Relationship Framework—while AOCCs are expected to generate supplementary revenue through membership fees, programming fees, space rentals, fundraising, and grants.

Preliminary operating cost projections for new AOCCs vary by facility type, ranging from $1.3 million to $3.1 million. New AOCCs, particularly those aligned with larger models, require proportionally higher allocations based on the size, types of amenities, and programming offerings. Projected operating forecasts are detailed in Attachment 3.

Operational funding for new AOCCs will be considered through future annual budget processes. These requests will be weighed against the City's broader operating priorities, emphasizing a phased, multi-year approach to ensure new AOCCs are not only established, but also sustainably maintained and programmed over the long term.

Available and Potential Revenue Streams

To support the sustainable growth of the AOCC network, City staff may leverage funding mechanisms that blend internal capital planning, external funding sources, and development-based tools. Each pathway offers distinct advantages and constraints, and together form a flexible but evolving resourcing framework. Core operational and capital costs may be supported through the City's Budget and 10-Year Capital Plan, with specific allocations for AOCC development.

External funding opportunities include federal and provincial programs such as the Green and Inclusive Community Buildings Program, Ontario Building Fund, and Community Building Fund (Trillium). Philanthropic partnerships can also be explored to support both capital and operational needs, particularly for energy-efficient and inclusive infrastructure. These sources are competitive and not guaranteed, and should be viewed as complementary strategies.

Currently, reliance on opportunity-driven development limits proactive planning and equitable expansion, especially in areas with low development activity. To address this, City staff will implement a diversified funding strategy that draws on public, private, and intergovernmental sources to ensure the AOCC portfolio remains sustainable and responsive to community needs.

F. Next Steps for Implementation

City staff have embedded the expansion of the AOCC model within broader municipal development initiatives to maximize impact, leverage investments, and build complete communities. Expansion will be pursued through affordable housing projects, Toronto Community Housing revitalizations, and new municipal facilities such as libraries and community recreation centres, as well as through development activity, surplus property declarations, and strategic acquisitions. Corporate Real Estate Management, CreateTO, and Social Development will assess sites, with input from local Councillors, to ensure alignment with community needs. A coordinated interdivisional approach (Attachment 4)—led by Social Development will guide planning and decision-making. Staff will also explore funding opportunities to support AOCC growth in line with City priorities.

To guide long-term planning, Social Development and Corporate Real Estate Management will develop a multi-year AOCC Facilities and Operations Plan to address infrastructure renewal, modernized facility management practices, and alignment with City priorities such as equity, sustainability, and climate resilience. A foundational Term Sheet will also establish clear expectations for agreements with development partners, covering design excellence and sustainability, construction, commissioning, and transfer protocols for operational readiness.

Looking ahead, City staff will continue to provide strategic and operational support for new AOCC sites while continuing to support existing AOCCs. A city-wide Community Infrastructure Advisory Group will be established to enhance coordination, bringing together community organizations, funders, developers, governments, and equity-deserving groups to ensure AOCC expansion is inclusive, viable and continues to deliver tangible community development outcomes—such as fostering local leadership, improving access to essential services, and strengthening neighbourhood networks.

CONTACT

Zenia Wadhwani, Director, Community Resources, Social Development, Zenia.Wadhwani@toronto.ca, 416-392-8641

Alison Folosea, Director, Real Estate Services, Corporate Real Estate Management, Alison.Folosea@toronto.ca, 416-338-2998

Kevin Lee, Senior Corporate Management Policy Consultant, City Manager's Office, Kevin.K.Lee@toronto.ca, 416-397-4190

Ashmeed Ali, Vice President, Portfolio Strategy and Asset Management, CreateTO, AAli@createto.ca, 647-213-4852

Paul Farish, Director, Parks Planning and Development, Parks and Recreation, Paul.Farish@toronto.ca, 416-392-8705

SIGNATURE

Mohamed Shuriye
Executive Director, Social Development

ATTACHMENTS

Attachment 1: Association of Community Centres Facility Models

Attachment 2: Place-based Assessment Guidelines

Attachment 3: Projected Association of Community Centres Expansion Capital and Operating Costs

Attachment 4: Matrix of Responsibilities Across City Divisions, Agencies, and Corporations to Support the Expansion and Operations of the Association of Community Centres