



July 6, 2026

**TO: Chair and Members, Scarborough Community Council
Mayor Chow**

FROM: The 6 Thora Project Partners

**RE: SC 33.9: 507, 511 and 513 Victoria Park Avenue and 4, 6, 7, 11 and 14 Thora
Avenue – Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendment Application**

The 6 Thora Project Partners welcome the opportunity to provide a submission to Scarborough Community Council on the above-noted development application.

Who we are

The 6 Thora Project is a group of non-profit, charitable organizations that deliver a range of social service, health and educational programs in the Danforth and Victoria Park area. We focus on supports to newcomers, low-income families, seniors and youth in the “Taylor-Massey/Oakridge” neighbourhood improvement area which serves the Oakridge, Crescent Town and Dawes Road neighbourhoods.

Our organizations are well -established and have operated successfully for approximately 20 years. We have experienced growing demand for our services over this period, yet we continue to operate in expensive, inadequate, and insecure commercial spaces. We came together in 2023 to work together to secure the 6 Thora Avenue building to provide security of tenure and accommodate current and growing operational, program and administrative needs.

The 6 Thora Site

In 2022 Toronto City Council approved a motion from Councillors Crawford and Bradford to work with Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services and its partners to identify costs, potential capital funding sources to retrofit a surplus City of Toronto recreation facility at 6 Thora Avenue and operate under a below-market lease with the City. (attached.)

The current development application and recommendations include the City-owned 6 Thora property in the development site; in exchange, the developer will provide property at 7 and 11 Thora to create a park -- over-riding the 2022 Council direction for the 6 Thora building.

We wish to provide some general comments about the application but focus on three specific aspects of the proposal and staff recommendations.

The Development Proposal

We recognize the proposed development and Official Plan and Zoning By-law Amendments are consistent with Provincial Planning policies and the City's Official Plan and Site Specific and Area policies. The site is in a Protected Major Transit Station (PMTS) area and requires, under provincial policy, to meet intensification targets, and will include a mix of residential, retail, and community uses.

We understand development is needed to support anticipated population and job growth; however, additional programs, services and facilities must be provided to build the “complete community” envisioned by planning policies that will bring even greater intensification in the Victoria Park and Danforth PMTS area.

1. Community Space

We are pleased that the proposed development site plan, architectural plans and zoning by-law include 641 sq. m. of community space in the new development. We understand that the space is intended to be secured as an in-kind community benefit under Section 37(6) and must meet the requirements of the Capital Facilities Guidelines and Community Space Tenancy Policy.

We believe that this space, with its separate entrance and elevator to the mezzanine level, could accommodate a mixed-use social service hub, and could offer shared-space and integrated service delivery for our organizations.

We understand that the space will be allocated through an REOI process under the Community Space Tenancy policy. We intend to apply to be operators of the space, and trust that the City will give special consideration to our history of serving the community, and the intent of the 2022 Council motion for 6 Thora Avenue.

However, we are very concerned about the tentative wording in Recommendation 4 and the unnecessary delay it creates. We believe the recommendation should provide greater certainty with respect to the Section 37(6) in-kind community benefit of community space, and should not require further reporting back to Council, except a lease agreement as required by the Community Space Tenancy policy.

We recommend that Recommendation 4 be amended to read:

4. City Council request the Executive Director, Development Review, in consultation with the Ward Councillor and other relevant staff, to work with the owner to secure an in-kind community benefit package pursuant to Section 37(6) of the Planning Act, that includes providing a community space that meets the City's Community Space Tenancy program and considers the facility needs of the 6 Thora Project Partners group.

We would also recommend adding the following new Recommendation:

City Council request the Manager, Community Infrastructure Unit and other applicable staff to meet with the 6 Thora Project Partners group to identify organizational space needs, the application process, eligibility requirements, lease conditions and potential operating costs under the Community Space Tenancy Program.

2. Affordable Housing

The proposed development will provide 551 new units of rental housing intended to help alleviate the shortage of rental housing in the City. It also meets the Growing Up Guidelines with almost half of the units being 2 or 3 bedrooms. Both are positive elements of the proposal.

However, this proposal includes no affordable units for this predominantly low-income, newcomer, priority neighbourhood. Without subsidized units, many families in this neighbourhood will not be able to afford the 2 and 3 bedroom units intended for them.

City of Toronto neighbourhood profiles for the Taylor-Massey/Oakridge Neighbourhoods demonstrate an incredible unmet need for affordable, rental housing in this area. In the Taylor-Massey neighbourhood 66% are renters, 35% pay more than 30% of income on shelter costs and almost 75% residents earn less than \$49,999 per year. In the Oakridge neighbourhood, 69% are renters, 28% spend 30% of income on shelter costs, and 76% earn less than \$49,999 per year.

The proposed buildings are in a PMTSA and Inclusionary Zoning area. Under this provincial policy only 5% or 28 affordable units should be provided. Sadly, even this paltry number of units are not required as provisions are not in effect until July 1, 2027, leaving no legislative or policy lever to ensure affordable units. The City inclusionary zoning policies are gone.

We understand that affordable units could be secured as a Section 37 community benefit; however, this approach will effectively eliminate the proposed community space which must meet the threshold size required in City Capital Facilities policy.

Development Charge Reduction Program

Last month City Council approved entering into an agreement with the Provincial and Federal governments that will give significant reductions in development charges to all residential development retroactive to March 30, 2026. The Development Charge Reduction Program (DRCP) will provide a 40% (1 bedroom) to 60% (2 or more bedrooms) development charge reductions for all residential development, likely providing **a windfall of savings for this development.**

The agreement will also give the City additional funding to provide greater incentives to build rental affordable units through the Rental Housing Supply Program. We believe this development should be included in this expanded program. The City should strongly encourage the Applicant to apply to the Rental Housing Supply Program and ensure that 20% or 110 units in this development are affordable. Even if these units are available many families cannot afford the 80% of market rent established for “affordable” housing. This community will require additional supports through rent subsidies and rent-geared-to income units.

We recommend adding the following new Recommendation:

City Council request City Housing and Planning staff to engage in discussions with the owner to strongly encourage their participation in the Call for Applications under Phase 2 of the Purpose-built Rental Homes Incentives stream of the Rental Housing Supply Program, to support building affordable units in the 507, 511 and 513 Victoria Park Avenue and 4, 6, 7, 11 and 14 Thora Avenue development.

We also believe there has not been sufficient information sharing about affordable housing policy and funding in communities. Residents are not aware of the steps the City is taking to help address affordability, and the constraints placed on it by the provincial government. We believe it is important for our community to engage with the City Housing staff to advance our local and collective efforts.

We recommend adding the following new Recommendation:

Toronto Housing Secretariat staff convene a meeting with housing advocates and community organizations in the Taylor Massey/Oakridge neighbourhood to discuss local housing needs and provide information on options for improving access to deeply affordable housing in this development and the broader neighbourhood under the Rental Housing Supply Program and other housing affordability programs.

3. Child Care

The proposed development includes a purpose-built, privately-owned child care centre and playground that will not be conveyed to the City. The City of Toronto and the Provincial government have targets under the Canada Wide Early Learning and Child Care Program (the \$10 per Day program) which obligates them to create thousands of new affordable non-profit child care spaces. This new centre should participate in the program and enter into a purchase-of-service agreement with the City to ensure there are affordable child care options and fee subsidies available to this community.

We recommend adding the following new Recommendation:

City Council require any new child care centre located in the 507, 511 and 513 Victoria Park Avenue and 4, 6, 7, 11 and 14 Thora Avenue development be operated as a non-profit entity and enter into a purchase of service agreement with the City to offer affordable options for residents.

We look forward to working further with the owner, the City of Toronto, the United Way and other partners in the months ahead to ensure that the new development contributes to building a healthy, inclusive and complete community.

Sincerely,

Nasima Akter
Bangladeshi-Canadian
Community Services

Janet Davis
Bangladeshi-Canadian
Community Services

Rejwan Karim
Access Alliance MHCS

Imam Uddin
Bengali Information &
Employment Services

Sultana Jahangir
South Asian Women's and
Immigrant Services

Jannatul Islam
Toronto Bangla School

c.c. Mayor Olivia Chow; Councillor Gord Perks, Chair, Planning and Housing Committee; Denise Campbell, Deputy City Manager, Community and Social Services; Doug Rollins, Director, Housing Secretariat; Alesa Faria, Executive Director, Development Review; Christian Ventresca, Director, Community Planning, Scarborough District; Janani Mahendran, Manager, Tommy Karapalevski, Planner, Scarborough District Development Review; Daniel Bondi, Manager, Community Infrastructure Unit, Social Development.

SC33.9: Summary of Recommendations from 6 Thora Project Partners

Amend Recommendation 4:

City Council request the Executive Director, Development Review, in consultation with the Ward Councillor and other relevant staff, to work with the owner to secure an in-kind community benefit package pursuant to Section 37(6) of the Planning Act, that includes providing a community space that meets the City's Community Space Tenancy program and considers the facility needs of the 6 Thora Project group

New Recommendations:

9. City Council request the Manager, Community Infrastructure Unit and other applicable staff to meet with the 6 Thora Project Partners to identify organizational space needs, the application process, eligibility requirements, lease conditions and potential operating costs under the Community Space Tenancy Program.

10. City Council request City Housing and Planning staff to engage in discussions with the applicant to strongly encourage participation in the Call for Applications under Phase 2 of the Purpose-built Rental Homes Incentives stream of the Rental Housing Supply Program, to support building affordable units in the 507, 511 and 513 Victoria Park Avenue and 4, 6, 7, 11 and 14 Thora Avenue development.

11. City Council request Toronto Housing Secretariat staff convene a meeting with housing advocates and community organizations in the Taylor Massey/Oakridge neighbourhood to discuss local housing needs and provide information on options for improving access to deeply affordable housing in this development and the broader neighbourhood under the Rental Housing Supply Program and other housing affordability programs.

12. City Council require any new child care centre located in the 507, 511 and 513 Victoria Park Avenue and 4, 6, 7, 11 and 14 Thora Avenue development be operated as a non-profit entity and enter into a purchase of service agreement with the City to offer affordable options for residents.

City Council

Notice of Motion

MM47.44	ACTION			Ward: 19, 20
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Community Space for Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services - by Councillor Gary Crawford, seconded by Councillor Brad Bradford

** Notice of this Motion has been given.*

** This Motion is subject to referral to the Economic and Community Development Committee. A two-thirds vote is required to waive referral.*

Recommendations

Councillor Gary Crawford, seconded by Councillor Brad Bradford, recommends that:

1. City Council request the Chief Executive Office, CreateTO, in collaboration with Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management, Executive Director, Social Development Finance Administration, and General Manager, Parks Forestry and Recreation undertake a review of 6 Thora Avenue or other city owned spaces, for the purpose of social and community use in Beaches East York (Ward 19) and Scarborough South-west (Ward 20) including an update of the state-of-good repair requirements and costs.
2. City Council request the Executive Director, Corporate Real Estate Management in consultation with Executive Director, Social Development Finance Administration, work with Bangladeshi Canadian Community Services and their potential partners to develop a proposed capital and operating plan, identify potential funding partners, establish a below market tenancy arrangement, and investigate the use of the proceeds from the sales of recent City-owned lands in the community and other capital funding sources to support the necessary repairs and retrofit of the facility.

Summary

Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services is a non-profit charitable multi-service organization that has been providing services in the Crescent Town, Oakridge communities in the Taylor-Massey neighbourhood since 2000. Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services services are targeted primarily for South-Asian seniors, youth and newcomers with a mission of "helping people help themselves." Currently Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services offers in-person and virtual recreational and wellness programs for seniors, soccer and other programs for children and youth. Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services delivers many other projects such as Anti-Islamophobia programs for women and girls, intergenerational educational and cultural initiatives, and community celebrations.

Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services regularly partners with other organizations such as Woodgreen Community Services, West Scarborough Neighbourhood Community Centre, Access Alliances and Neighbourhood Link. Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services

currently receives funding from the governments of Ontario, Canada and Toronto, and raises additional funds through a variety of fundraising activities.

The organization is located, and delivers its programs in a shared, commercial space on Danforth Avenue. The current lease will expire in 2023, and Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services will need to find a new location at that time. Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services has identified 6 Thora Avenue, a vacant, surplus City building, as an ideal space for both office and program space. If state-of-good-repair and renovations are completed on the building, and it is made available through a Below Market Lease, the building could make much needed space available for recreational, social and cultural activities for the community. Bangladeshi-Canadian Community Services is willing to work with other potential partners, foundations and government agencies to raise additional capital funds to assist in renovating the building.

Background Information (City Council)

Member Motion MM47.44