

City of Toronto – Parks Development & Capital Projects

# Davisville Community and Aquatic Centre (CAC)

## Virtual Public Meeting Meeting Summary

March 24, 2021

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## Introduction

This document provides a summary of the Davisville Community and Aquatic Centre (CAC) virtual public meeting that was held on March 24, 2021 at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting was attended by 94 community members.

More information about the project can be found on the project webpage at [www.toronto.ca/DavisvilleCAC](http://www.toronto.ca/DavisvilleCAC)

## Meeting Goals

The new Davisville Community & Aquatic Centre (CAC) will be a welcoming new space where residents of all ages and abilities can come together and participate in a wide range of programming. The goals of this first public meeting are to:

- (Re) introduce the project & kick-off community consultations
- Provide a project overview and timeline
- Explain how the community can get involved/ inform the design
- Answer questions of clarification

## Meeting Promotion

The meeting was promoted through:

- Paid social media advertisement on Facebook and Instagram
- Email outreach to community organisations
- Postcards to residences in approximately a 1.5 km radius of the new Centre.

*Note: Some residents received their postcard the day after the public meeting. Notification will be sent out earlier in the future to avoid potential delays. Those who received late notification were still able to participate in this phase of engagement through the online survey (available until April 5), by reading the materials on the project website, including the meeting presentation, and by sending the project coordinator any questions through email or phone.*

## Feedback Summary

Project staff presented a project introduction and overview, followed by a question and answer session. The meeting presentation is available on the [project webpage](#). Questions (Q), answers (A), comments (C), and responses from staff (R) are presented below. This is a summary of the discussion and chat box comments, and is not a verbatim transcript.

### Audio Feedback

Discussion during the question and answer session included:

Q. Are the washrooms gender neutral? I am not a fan of the Regent Park model.

A. All washrooms and change rooms are gender neutral, which will be inclusive of all genders. The open space in the change rooms is similar to the pool deck area in that all bathers in these areas are required to wear a bathing suit at all times. Families or individuals will have access to private stalls and washrooms in the change room where they can change. Good sight lines from the pool deck and aquatic office will allow for passive security. The layout will allow for sections of the change room and washroom to be separated for either cleaning, or for gendered programming (e.g. women's only swim times).

Q. Will it be possible to have a kitchen space?

A. Yes, that is possible. Many new centres have community kitchens. We tend to design a residential style versus a commercial style kitchen. This is to avoid the cost of fire suppression systems and the liability that's associated with it. We're not using gas fired appliances, but instead designing to residential standards which is more than adequate for teaching and programming uses.

Once we determine if the community kitchen is a really strong desire from the community, we can develop the size and amenities of the kitchen further. A kitchen is an option in the online survey, so please take the survey by April 5<sup>th</sup> to let us know if you are interested in community kitchen space.

Q. Will the public be given access to the gym in the evenings and on weekends, since it will be used by the school during the day?

A. In general, the community will have access to the gymnasium when the school is not in use. What we want to do is make sure that the facility is being used at all times. So when the school is not using the gym, the public has access to it.

Q. What will be made available for seniors in the community? We have one of the largest senior demographics in the city.

A. A lot of the spaces in the center are going to be multi-use, and the entire centre will be physically accessible. So, we're really thinking about, how people of all ages, including seniors, can use all of these spaces. As a reminder we are also asking you for programming preferences in the online survey. There is a high older adult demographic in this community, and we have thought about that and want to make sure that there's programming that will meet a variety of needs for the older adult population.

C. There is currently discussion about a new potential affordable housing site being located in the community, dedicated specifically to seniors. This may be where Sprint Senior Care would be rehoused. We are aware of the naturally occurring retirement communities in our area along with that individual residents, who need support so we're looking at opportunities to support seniors, not just at this site but throughout the community.

Q. Why is the construction for this center taking place at a different time than the construction for the school?

R. The school planning process preceded the City planning process. The Councillor initiated and led negotiations with the Toronto District School Board (TDSB) and it was then determined the site was going to be jointly developed. So as a result, our planning process was started later, after an agreement for the site was reached.

Q. Why do we have to wait until fall of 2022 to begin construction?

R. We are in the consultation portion of the schedule right now. The community feedback will serve to inform and fine-tune the design. The architect will then start detailed design of the building and the site. That process is approximately a year long. By approximately summer of next year, we will be in a position then to tender the project and start construction around fall 2022.

Q. Can the construction timeline be reduced?

R. The site is very constrained, as is the area for construction staging. Building on a very tight site is going to take a little bit more time, so reducing construction time is very unlikely. The 2-year estimate is probably a realistic timeline for a 3-story building.

Q. What would a gender neutral washroom or change room be like?

R. It is very private so when you're in a single stall changing or using the washroom, it is a private room. There will also be a larger stall that a whole family can share. For the washrooms,  
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the shared area is the sinks where you wash your hands. There are open shower areas immediately adjacent to the pool deck area and there are also private showers in the accessible washrooms.

Q. Is Davisville being reduced to two lanes?

R (Councillor). That's not something that would be associated with this project. The redesign of Davisville is currently in the study phase and consultation has yet to really begin. There are ideas being put out about widening the sidewalks and looking at bike lanes, but exactly what it will look like in the future will depend on the upcoming consultation process. I'm hoping that it will be both safe and beautiful eventually, but no, we have not decided yet exactly what it'll look like. And if you ever want to discuss your ideas or concerns, just send me an email, and I'd be happy to hear from you.

Q. Why were the postcards to notify the community of this meeting so late?

R. I was on the phone with Canada post just this morning, to see how things were going with the delivery. Unfortunately, we know that some folks just got their postcards in the mail today, or might even receive them tomorrow. Fortunately those promote not just this public meeting but also the online survey, which again is available until April 5. The good news is that we design our engagement processes, so that if you miss a public meeting, you are not at all disadvantaged because we post everything from this meeting online. For the question and answer session that we're having right now, you can always email the project team. We do apologize that the postcards did not reach everyone in time, and will send the notices more weeks in advance than we already do to prevent this in the future.

Q. Since the school will be open this fall, how will you be arranging the construction schedule to cause the least interruption to student (e.g. noise)?

R. We don't have that level of detail yet but there will be a construction management plan that will be approved by the TDSB. There will also be a 12-foot high hoarding fence that will separate the construction area from the school. There will be a safety officer stationed on Davisville Ave. directing traffic in and out of the area, as well as dealing with the safety of children and other pedestrians in the area. As we get closer to construction, there will be a very detailed plan that will be worked out. Safety is a priority during construction.

Q. Will there be glass windows looking into the change room, similar to Regent Park? I do not want that feature.

A. We are not at that stage of design yet. We encourage you to give us that kind of feedback in the online survey.

Q. Could there be barbecues on the north side of the building to allow for outdoor community events?

R. There would not be space on the ground floor as the building itself takes up the entire area allocated by the TDSB for the aquatic centre. A barbecue could be possible on the roof and is an option in the online survey. There are barbecues on the roof at the new Canoe Landing Community Recreation Centre.

Q. How many parking spots will there be in the underground parking lot?

R. The city has 20 designated spots including 1 barrier free spot, all in the underground garage.

Q. Will there be an outdoor cafe or a patio where people can sit and have a coffee in nice weather?

R. There is not room for outdoor amenities off the ground floor but this may be possible on the rooftop.

Q. Does the city have a good idea of the demographic profile in the area and who would be using the spaces (e.g. families with young children teams, the elderly, etc.)?

R. Yes, we look at the demographic profiles of the neighbourhood to help determine programming needs. For example, there is a lot of population growth coming into this neighbourhood which is one of the motivations to build this new centre. We will be designing and programming the centre for a diverse range of needs including young children, teens, adults, older adults, and people of various cultures. Before the programming is finalized the City will engage with stakeholders and residents to ensure the programming needs are meeting the needs of the community.

Q. What considerations are being made about embodied carbon? Net zero is great, but designers should be conscious of high-emissions materials, for example, concrete. This could be an opportunity for sequestering materials such as mass timber.

R (Architects). That's a really good point. We have done other community center pool facilities with mass timber and solid wood decks, which sequesters carbon. This is useful as we are looking to create a low carbon facility.

Q. Will the centre have workout equipment that is accessible (e.g. for people who use electric wheelchairs)?

R. In this particular facility, we don't think we are going to have the space as it is a very constrained site. So, we don't envision a weight room but rather fitness classes using the multi-purpose spaces, and potentially fitness stations to accompany a rooftop track. Accessibility will be a key priority in this facility. The trend is shifting away from heavy weights and cardio equipment, since so many new developments have these amenities, and many residents have gym memberships, to instead provide flexible and innovative approaches to fitness delivery.

Q. Has the aquatic center received site plan approval?

R. No, we are not at that stage yet. When we go in for site plan approval, we'd have to have a design in hand. We are currently in the design stage at the moment. The application would likely occur around the Fall 2021.

Q. How are we going to manage the schedule for the pool?

R. The pool will be used by the public and will be used by the school as well. We'll have an agreement in place and designate times for school use. The public would definitely get good use of the pool during the day, morning, and evening. There will be a range of pool programming provided, for different uses (e.g. leadership classes, fitness classes, lane swims). If you have any specific programming thoughts, the survey would be helpful place to share your ideas.

Q. How is this centre similar or different to Maurice Cody Community Center?

R. That centre is small and does not have a pool.

Q. Would the proposed condominium development next to the Centre be able to give some extra space back to the city for this aquatic center?

R (Councillor). Sometimes developers do give benefits to the community, but there's regulations around that. We will keep our eye on the ball when it comes to community benefits and make sure that there are improvements to the community in substantive ways. We are not at a point where we're discussing what benefits we are requesting from the developers as we are still requesting that they propose a more reasonable application for that site.

Q. Why was it decided that the school would not have its own gym and the community center wouldn't have its own separate gym? What's the idea behind sharing spaces?

R (Councillor). The idea was to create a community hub where we could join together as partners. Our office and the local schoolboard trustee worked very closely together along with our respective city and school board staff to make sure that we had not literally, but in many ways, a joint facility. We were creative about how to do that within the budgets that we both had

to work with. I think this is going to be a very successful project, in part because of that.

R. By sharing facilities, such as the gym, you're finding efficiency. So there are synergies between the two stakeholders. This has worked really well for us on many of our projects where the City is sharing a site with multiple stakeholders. Canoe Landing Community Recreation Centre is a similar model; sharing gyms, underground parking and other spaces resulted in a very efficient solution.

Q. Can the washroom and change room stall walls go up to the ceiling so people cannot see or reach over them?

R. Yes, it is possible for them to go right to the ceiling and the doors would go close to the floor. That's all to be developed, but we have talked about the partition walls going right to the ceiling.

Q. What is the building's capacity?

R. We will only be able to determine that after the consultations, once we understand exactly what types of rooms we will need, the purposes, shapes and size of the rooms will determine overall capacity. Most large multi-purpose rooms can hold more than 100 people. Smaller rooms could be 40-60 people. As the design is developed we will have a more accurate idea about capacity.

Q. Can the pool space be day-lighted?

R. Yes, we are very excited about using daylighting. This is when there is enough natural light that you don't need to use artificial lights. We can have full glazing (windows) at the south and north ends of the building, and partial glazing on the east and west sides. We will try to create as much daylight as possible within the pool, keeping in mind that we also have to avoid glare on the surface of the water.

Q. Will there be access to space for the practice of religion such as prayer room?

R. That's a great suggestion. There are examples of other community centers where spaces like this have been provided. I just want to emphasize that it would be a non-denominational room and would be a permitted space, so that if a group was interested in using that for prayer, they would go through the permitting process and be able to access the space for that purpose.

Q. Was the adjacent school originally planned to have a triple gym?

R. That may have been suggested during the early planning stages but reduced because of cost implications.

Q. What is the square footage of the new Centre?

R. We are targeting 30,000 square feet for gross floor area, including the basement, which is largely the pool tank and mechanical area.

Q. How big will the roof be and what else will be on the roof? Can it all be used for programming?

R. The roof will include mechanical equipment but will also have programmable space, (e.g. a walking track, lawn, picnic area, barbecue, etc.), which we are asking for feedback on in the online survey.

Q. Can there be an ice rink on the roof?

R. This is not something that has been done at another City facility. It can be considered but is unlikely given space constraints and engineering challenges.

Q: Is the stakeholder advisory committee a diverse body that's directing some of the community needs throughout this process?

R: We're still forming that right now. The application process is online at [www.toronto.ca/davisvillecac](http://www.toronto.ca/davisvillecac). You can apply to sit on the stakeholder advisory committee, and we do encourage you to reach out to organizations in your neighborhood that you know of that represent the diversity that exists in your neighborhood and ask them to please apply online. We've reached out to a few organizations and we're not done reaching out yet. So, again, that's open until April and we highly encourage you if you have an organization in mind to let them know.

Q: Is there enough outdoor space shared with the school in order to have an outdoor rink if need be in the winter months? Is that something that's being discussed right now? Or that may become a little bit later.

R: Not to my knowledge and if there are any additional amenities, such as the rink, it would be on the school property and I don't see how that would be possible as it seems to be completely designed, including their soccer field and various other landscape areas.

C (Councillor). I just want to add that whether something fits at this space, or doesn't exactly fit this space for whatever reasons it doesn't mean that there aren't opportunities in our local neighborhood to find those places I'll give you like. We can always organize as a community with local parks and local places to do things like that, even if it doesn't fit here.

Q: What sort of programming would be available for residents, free of charge versus for a fee?

R: This isn't a free center. That is a council-approved process and there is specific methodology to determine where there is a free center. This will be a paid center. I do want to emphasize that the way in which we approach accessibility is we want to reduce financial barriers and uphold the welcome policy which is definitely an option for those of low income that are eligible. I also want to emphasize that, from a universal design perspective, we have a lot of drop-in programming that is all free. We also have the older adults discount for programs, so basically, for adult programs, there's a 50% discount for older adults if they participate. We really have a fairly well-rounded approach when it comes to reducing financial barriers. So, even if you're not in a free center, there are opportunities in which you can have free or very low-cost programming.

Q: Why does the city do gender-neutral change rooms and washrooms now? Can you maybe explain that the policies behind that?

R: We look at how we can have all people use the change room. So when we have a designated gender change room, sometimes a parent brings a child of a different gender and they can't use the appropriate change rooms. Then we end up having to have a designated universal space where families could change. So, it's hard to have three change areas when we can have two, which is inclusive of all genders. And we still provide the privacy that you would have in a change room. Having two identical change room blocks allows us to close spaces for cleaning and still run gender-specific programming. Overall, it aids our ability to program and makes it more accessible for families. It also provides a safer environment for children entering change rooms because they're always with an adult. So there are different reasons why we use a general neutral change room.

Q: How big is the primary catchment area for this new center?

R: Generally between 1.5 and 2 kilometers.

Q: Will there be a drop-off and pick-up area for wheel-trans?

R: There is a traffic study underway. There will be a designated stopping area for accessibility vehicles on Davisville Avenue near the front entrance of the facility.

Q: How will the pools at the center be made accessible?



R: The whole building will be fully accessible with sliding doors at the entrance. When you get onto the pool deck, there will be a barrier-free ramp down to each pool tank. The leisure pool will be a fairly shallow pool that will have lots of amenities within the pool for children and older adults. The building will have an elevator to get to all levels. There are no interior steps and some of the washrooms will have enough space for turning. There are a lot of factors that go into accessible design. Accessibility is an overarching goal for us for every aspect of the building. But it also goes all the way down to little details including the height of the benches and spaces to allow a wheelchair to turnaround. Accessibility is a key goal for this facility.

Q: Will the smaller pool or the leisure pool have a drop floor that's height-adjustable to accommodate different programs?

A: I don't believe that's on the agenda right now to have a dropped floor. We really are at the very beginning of this process so it hasn't been determined fully yet. But the leisure pool has very wide steps that you walk into and a ramp into a very shallow area that connects to the three-foot shallow end of the pool.. It's used as a teaching pool, and at the other end, there's benches and bubblers and some spray features. So an older adult can sit in a warmer pool and have bubble jets against their back while at the other end kids are playing and coming in and walking. We often see the drop floor design in a bigger facility so we've never looked at that, but it is an option that can be put on the table.

Q: Why is the city putting tot pools in? Has there been a change in the installation of those types of pools?

R: There hasn't been a change, but what we're doing is allowing for more teaching programs. A tot pool is an area where we can have younger children in the pool that we're teaching while we're using the six-lane facility for adult programming. So, we can have a lane swim going on where we have younger children in a leisure top pool, and they're being taught lessons. It gives us more capability to increase our programming and allow more adult programming to go on while our children's program is going on. Overall, it's a better use of our space.

Q: Is it possible to have a private company donate or buy naming rights in order to fund an expansion or an addition to the site?

R: There is a policy on naming that's council-driven and approved. I would not say it's a common practice. Naming would be about having some significance for the community or that particular area and would be definitely council-driven. There's an office in the city called the partnership office and that's exactly what it's for. There is a way to do it but it has to be tactful and focuses on public benefit. No such opportunities have arisen for this site.

## Chat Feedback

Additional feedback from the meeting chat box includes:

- Support for the inclusion of:
  - Features:
    - A community kitchen
    - A safe and accessible wheel-trans drop-off location in front of the centre
    - An accessible pool
    - An active roof
      - Refer to Cooper Koo YMCA in Corktown as precedence
    - A mass timber building
    - Pedestrian access from the street and bike parking
    - A café on the rooftop to serve snacks and beverages
    - Indoor walking track

- Rooftop skating rink
      - A participant suggested that since there is no room for a rink, the community could use the existing outdoor skating rink at the North Toronto Community Centre at Yonge and Eglinton.
    - "Parking" space for walkers and strollers
  - Programs:
    - Physical therapy/rehab programs in the pool
    - Programing targeted to older adults at various life stages (e.g. a 65 year old and 85 year old have different programming needs)
    - Sub-lease portions of the patio to private food sellers
    - Rooftop art classes'
    - Aquatic programs for older adults
- Discussion about:
  - Whether the design should be "iconic". Some think investment should be focused on function rather than form, while others like the idea of creating an iconic building in the community.
  - Whether gender neutral washrooms are preferred. Some are concerned about safety in gender neutral washrooms while others support the inclusivity of gender neutral washrooms, like the Regent Park model, and stated gender neutral washrooms sound very good for families
- Suggestions and concerns about creating accessible & welcoming spaces:
  - To create an accessible Centre, consider that many mobility challenged people are not in a wheel chair but distances are a challenge
  - Concern that access via tunnels sound intimidating for seniors
  - Concern that there will not be enough programming available for older adults during the daytime if the gym is only accessible in the evenings (which is not a preferred time for programing for some seniors)
  - Concern that people who live outside of the immediate community will fill the recreation space and more local residents will not be able to use the new centre
    - Suggestion to charge those who live outside of the community more to participate in recreation programs at the new centre
  - Concern there are not enough parking spaces, especially if school events are taking place
- Suggestions to improve community engagement:
  - Send out meeting notices earlier, as some just arrived the day of the meeting
  - Advertise for survey participation through school newsletters and the community centres

## Next Steps

Community members can visit the [project website](#) to:

- Complete the online survey by April 5 to provide their input into this phase of engagement.
- Sign up for project e-updates
- Apply for the Stakeholder Advisory Committee by April 5

## Contact Us

For questions or comments related to this project, please contact:

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