



Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) Application Guidelines

Weston Common Cultural Hub

34 John Street, Toronto, M5V 3G6
(Ward 5 - York South Weston)

Questions?

Contact: Erika.Hennebury@toronto.ca

Application Deadline:

October 7, 11:59 PM Eastern Standard Time (EST)

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A. INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this Request for Expressions of Interest (REOI) is to select a qualified not-for-profit organization to lease and operate the Weston Common Cultural Hub, a community cultural hub located at 34 John Street, Toronto, M5V 3G6 (Ward 5 - York South Weston).

Weston Common Cultural Hub (the 'Hub') is an 8,200 square foot community cultural hub that was secured through a community benefits agreement by the City of Toronto, in partnership with Toronto Artscape Inc., and a private developer, as part of a Weston-Mount Dennis community revitalization initiative that transformed vacant land into affordable housing and community cultural space.

The Hub is on the ground floor of a mixed-use building, owned by Dream (MPCT DIF DAM Residence at Weston Inc.), that includes 26 affordable artist live/work rental units, a publicly accessible Artist's Courtyard, and Weston Common Square, a 13,000 square foot City-owned outdoor public space (the 'Square'). The Hub is part of a larger affordable housing initiative, including a 30-storey, 370-unit market rental apartment building, and seven market rental townhouses developed by the Rockport Group through its company 22 John Street Developments Inc, purchased by Dream in 2021.

The City, as a third party to the lease with Dream, hopes to find a new head tenant for the Hub through this REOI process to help provide an affordable, accessible and a welcoming cultural space offering community programs and services to the Weston-Mount Dennis community.

B. WESTON COMMON CULTURAL HUB PROSPECTUS

Address	34 John Steet, Toronto, ON M5V 3G6
Intersection	John Street and Weston Road (Weston Village)
Ward	Ward 5 - York South-Weston
Neighbourhood	Weston, City of Toronto Neighborhood 113
Space Specifications	- 8,200 square feet total - Facilities do not including specialized theatre lighting, sound equipment, chairs, other equipment. - Accessible/Barrier-free washrooms
Existing Subtenants	Crossroads Theatre and Urban Arts
Occupancy Date	January 1, 2025
Lease Term	5-year lease term (with option to renew)
Basic Rent	Basic rent is nominal (i.e.: \$1 year).
Annual Estimated Additional Rent	-Estimated Hub Operating Costs: \$66,000/year -Estimated Hub Utilities: \$18,000/year -Total Estimated Additional Rent: \$84,000/year (Operating + Utilities) -Note: this information is estimated as the City is not a tenant to the lease with Dream
Taxes	\$0 (provided the head tenant maintains compliance with an existing Municipal Capital Facility agreement and bylaw)
Estimated Insurance	-\$8,000 (per information provided by Toronto Artscape Inc.; types and limits of insurance set out in the lease to be assigned/assumed)

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Estimated Revenue	<ul style="list-style-type: none">-Currently an estimated \$42,000/year from the two subtenants' rent and their portion of the utility costs.-The Event Space can be used to generate additional rental revenue as an event space (not included in the estimated revenue), a rehearsal hall, theatre, or other special events. The Event Space seats 140 theatre style and can accommodate 171 in a cabaret set up.-The Flex Studio can also be used as an event space or as a support space for larger events and can accommodate 40 theatre style or 70 standing.
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C. WHO CAN APPLY?

Eligible applicants must be:

- registered not-for-profit organizations,
- based in the city of Toronto,
- in good financial standing,
- with a minimum of two years of audited financial statements.

Priority will be given to not-for-profit organizations that provide arts and culture services and programming, but the City may also consider proposals from organizations that deliver community or social services that provide benefit for the Weston-Mount Dennis community as long as those mandates comply with requirements of the zoning bylaw and the lease, which specify non-profit use.

D. MANDATORY INFORMATION SESSION & SITE TOUR:

Applicants must attend an REOI information session and attend an in-person site tour (see section K). Information sessions will provide important details on the community space, such as the layout and functions of the space, information on existing tenants, projected operating costs, and technical specifications. Attending a site tour is necessary to understand the space you will be applying to operate. The application will include a field for City staff to confirm your attendance at a site tour. Accommodations may be made for exceptional circumstances.

Information Session and Site Tour registrants will receive access to a secure Document Room including additional relevant documentation, such as the Hub lease agreement and the Municipal Capital Facility agreement, which will be assumed by/assigned to the successful applicant.

Information Session #1:

Wednesday August 28, 2024, 4-5pm

Registration deadline: July 12, noon

Location: Online (WebEx)

Site Tour #1:

Thursday September 5, 2024, 5-7pm

Location: Weston Common Cultural Hub, 34 John Street

Registration deadline: September 4, 5pm

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Information Session #2:

Monday September 9, 4-5pm

Registration deadline: September 9, noon

Location: Online (WebEx)

Site Tour #2:

Tuesday September 11, 5-7pm

Location: Weston Common Cultural Hub, 34 John Street

Registration deadline: September 10, 5pm

Participation in the online information session is mandatory for all interested organizations. A recording can be shared upon request. Participation in a site tour is also mandatory. Alternate tours may be accommodated upon request.

Please register to attend by emailing Erika Hennebury, Senior Cultural Affairs Officer, Economic Development and Culture, City of Toronto, at Erika.Hennebury@toronto.ca.

E. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT:

The Hub was developed by Rockport in partnership with Toronto Artscape Inc. ('Artscape') and the City of Toronto, opened in 2019, and was purchased by Dream in 2021. The Hub was created as part of a broader Section 37 community benefits agreement between Artscape, Rockport and the City of Toronto. The City, Artscape, and Dream (the 'Landlord') entered into a 50-year nominal tripartite lease agreement to operate the space in and the Hub opened in 2019.

Artscape entered receivership on January 11, 2024, and ceased operations. The City is now seeking a new operating partner (the 'Head Tenant') for the Hub. The new Head Tenant will be assigned Artscape's interest in the tripartite lease agreement and assume Artscape's obligations for the remainder of the lease term. The new Head Tenant will be responsible for operating and programming the Hub, including the management of subtenants, which currently include Urban Arts and Crossroads Theatre (formerly Shakespeare in Action).

The Hub is comprised of approximately 8,200 square feet of community cultural space, including an 1,800 square foot flexible event space with a green room/dressing room space and a dedicated accessible washroom, three flexible studio spaces, an office space, a meeting room, a large open lobby space, a storage room and a waste disposal room.

The City is seeking a Head Tenant who will ensure ongoing engagement with the Weston-Mount Dennis community, support subtenants, and partner with local artists and community groups to ensure access to the Weston Common Cultural Hub and deliver year-round community programming that closely aligns with community needs, and priorities.

F. WESTON-MOUNT DENNIS COMMUNITY PROFILE

Weston-Mount Dennis has been a site of gathering, trade, and travel for millennia. Home to the Carrying Place Trail, connecting Lake Simcoe to Lake Ontario, Weston has been an ancestral portage and footpath for the Wendat, Seneca, Mohawk, and Mississauga Nations, as well as the Onkwehonwe, Anishinaabe, Great Lakes Métis and other Indigenous Peoples for time immemorial. The Village of Weston was named by European settlers in 1796, marking the

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beginning of an influx of settlers from around the world. Now, Weston is home to a diverse population including Indigenous peoples from many nations, and immigrants from Portugal, Italy, the Philippines, Jamaica, Vietnam, Somalia, Eritrea, Brazil, and many other places.

The population of Ward 5 - [York South-Weston](#) is 116,685 with a relatively high population density. 40% of households live in apartment towers, while 29% living in detached single-family homes. Ward 5 features a high percentage of single-parent households and a high percentage of immigrants and refugees, many of whom are first generation. Ward 5 residents earn a lower average household income compared to Toronto's average.

Located in Weston Village, the Hub is a short walk away from many vibrant local businesses and restaurants supported by a network of local Business Improvement Areas, including the Eglinton Hill BIA, Lawrence Ingram Keele BIA, Mont Dennis BIA, Rogers Road BIA, and Weston Village BIA. Weston Common Cultural Hub is located within the Weston Village BIA's catchment. Weston Common Farmers Markets runs every Saturday from June to October. With the recent opening of the GO/UP station in Weston, the area has become a major transit hub. Significant population growth is expected in the coming years, with multiple affordable rental and condo development projects anticipated in the coming years.

Community cultural space is a key aspect of community infrastructure development. The Weston Common Cultural Hub represents a key cultural infrastructure asset and a stabilizing element in a community undergoing change.

The City held a series of meetings with the Weston Common subtenants and a broader community meeting to seek feedback from local residents and social and cultural service providers on the future use of the Hub. Priorities shared by community members include:

- Ensuring accessible and affordable community space for local events,
- Affordable and welcoming arts and cultural programming for all ages, with a priority on youth and children,
- Culturally relevant and welcoming programming, with focus on supporting local underserved Black and Muslim communities,
- Animating the square at Weston Common, with particular attention to evening programming, when the square is well used by local families,
- Collaboration with Weston Common subtenants, artist live/work tenants, and local artists,
- Opening the Hub for community to access regularly during office and programming hours,
- Improved visibility/discoverability of the space and promotion of the programming,
- Support for and collaboration with local food security initiatives,
- Connect the broader community across neighbourhood dividing lines, territories, boundaries and borders.

G. DESCRIPTION OF THE SPACE

Weston Common Hub is located on the main floor of an artist live/work building, featuring 26 affordable artist live/work studios. The Hub entrance opens onto a 13,000 square foot public square called Weston Common (the 'Square'). The Hub features three flexible studio units, two of which are tenanted by a local arts service organization, Urban Arts and a local theatre company, Crossroads Theatre. Both organizations provide year-round community arts

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programming, performances, events, youth workshops, after school programs, and camps. The Hub also features a 1,800 square foot Event Space, which can be used for programming and rentals.

Accessibility: The Weston Common Hub is AODA compliant.

Specifications:

- **Full Weston Common Hub:** 8,236 square feet
- **Event Space:** 1,800 square feet (60' x 30') of flexible multi-purpose space, plus a Dressing Room/Green Room space (150 square feet), a dedicated accessible single-stall bathroom, an AV room/Technical Booth, and a concessions space with a sink, a refrigerator, and a service counter. Maximum capacity is 171 (reception style event), theatre event (142 capacity), or a dinner event with round tables (120 capacity). The Event Space was designed for performing arts presentations, festivals and special events, and community programming, but can be used for other activities. The Event Space is occasionally rented for theatre performances and special events by the two subtenants.
- **Studio 1 (tenanted by Crossroad Theatre):** 1,273 square feet
- **Studio 2 (tenanted by Urban Arts):** 1,351 square feet
- **Flex Space:** 779 square feet (41' x 19') of flexible multi-purpose space, includes kitchen cabinets, a large sink and a mini refrigerator, and floor to ceiling windows. Maximum capacity is 70. The Flex Space can be used for rehearsal, performance creation and presentation, visual arts, workshops, office, meeting room, art gallery, receptions, events, or general community programming. The Flex Space is regularly rented for community programs by the two subtenants.
- **Servery:** a food storage and preparation room with one large refrigerator and one large freezer, and a kitchen storage and food prep area. Shared with the two subtenants.
- **Office:** an office space overlooking the lobby area. Capacity for two office staff with a large desk and shelving.
- **Lobby:** 570 square feet of open space, for pop-up markets, concessions, art markets, art exhibitions, receptions, performances, pre-show, intermission, and post-show lobby space, and/or reception area. Shared with the two subtenants.
- **Meeting Room:** 247 square feet, accommodates 10 people around a boardroom table. Shared with the two subtenants.
- **Storage room:** 190 square feet. Shared with the two subtenants.
- **Waste Disposal Room:** 185 square feet. Shared with the two subtenants.
- **Washrooms:** Two gender-specific accessible high-capacity washrooms suitable for maximum Hub capacity.

Weston Common Square: Weston Common Hub opens on to a 13,000 square foot public square, owned by the City of Toronto, maintained by the Landlord, that can be permitted for public events, performances, markets, and other community activities. Applicants are encouraged to consider animating the Square on a regular basis. Operation of the square is not part of the lease agreement for Weston Common Hub.

H. ESTIMATED OPERATING COSTS AND LEASE OBLIGATIONS

The following cost breakdown is subject to change and is provided to help support applicants in preparing a proposal and budget. However, costs may vary, depending on the fit up, needs of

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each applicant.

Each applicant is strongly advised to carefully review the various documents provided, including the lease agreement, with a lawyer to have a clear understanding of the terms and obligations.

Basic Rent:

'Basic Rent' is the base rent or minimum rent paid by the tenant to the landlord. The Weston Common Hub is owned by Dream and leased to the Head Tenant for a 50-year term, on a cost-recovery basis, as part of a Section 37 community benefits agreement registered on title of the land, with the Dream acting as Landlord. The lease agreement sets out 'Basic Rent' as nominal, at \$1/per year.

Estimated Additional Rent:

The Lease Agreement is "net and carefree" to the Landlord, meaning that, while 'Basic Rent' is nominal, the tenant will be responsible for the payment of monthly estimated 'Additional Rent' to the Landlord. 'Additional Rent' includes both Utilities and Operating Costs. Estimated 'Additional Rent' is paid by the Head Tenant to the Landlord on the first of each month and reconciled at the end of each year. The Head Tenant is entitled (per the Lease Agreement) to an annual reconciliation of actual operating and utilities costs. The Landlord will submit detailed annual audited operating costs and utilities statements to the Head Tenant reporting actual expenses, along with supporting invoices. Any over or under-payment will be reconciled annually.

Utilities include hydro, gas, and water. Utilities are not separately metered and are estimated based on a proportionate share of overall building costs, calculated by square footage. Utilities are estimated by the Landlord to be approximately \$18,000/year.

Operating Costs include a proportionate share of the Landlord's operating costs, as outlined in the Lease Agreement. This may include maintenance, basic repairs, HVAC servicing, garbage and recycling services, security, pest control, maintenance of fire suppression systems, window cleaning, snow removal, and related services. Operating Costs are calculated on a proportionate basis, by square footage. Operating Costs are estimated by the Landlord to be approximately \$66,000/year.

Estimated Annual Revenue:

The current Subtenants (Crossroads Theatre and Urban Arts), who occupy Studio 1 and Studio 2, pay a fixed monthly rent, plus estimated monthly utilities costs to the Head Tenant. The monthly rent represents a proportionate portion of the overall Hub operating costs based on square footage and can only be increased relative to any increase in actual operating costs and utilities charged to the Head Tenant by the Landlord. The subtenants pay estimated monthly utilities costs, based on a proportionate portion of utilities costs, based on square footage. This revenue will help to offset overall Hub operating and utilities costs for the Head Tenant. Just as the Landlord is required to submit detailed annual audited operating costs and utilities statements to the Head Tenant reporting actual expenses, along with supporting invoices, the Head Tenant is also required to submit actual expenses reports and share supporting invoices with the Subtenants. Any over or under-payment for operating costs and utilities will be reconciled annually between the Head Tenant and Subtenant.

Note: Estimated event rental revenue is not included in the Estimated Annual Revenue table in Section H below, as revenues may vary widely, depending on the proposed use of the Hub.

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Taxes:

Weston Common Hub has been designated by City Council as a Municipal Capital Facility (MCF) and as such is exempt from municipal and school taxes. The MCF designation exempts the Property from property taxes under subsection 2(1) of O.Reg 598/06 (<https://www.ontario.ca/laws/regulation/060598>), cultural purposes class (paragraph 2(1)16).

Insurance:

The Head Tenant must hold Commercial General Liability insurance, which includes Tenants Legal Liability, of a minimum policy coverage of \$5 million per occurrence, naming the Landlord as additional insured. The cost of this insurance is estimated at \$8,000 annually, based on previous years. Insurance costs may vary, based on coverage and market rates. Additional insurance may be required by the Landlord, acting reasonably.

Improvements, Fit-Ups, and Furnishing, Fixturing & Equipment costs:

Improvements and renovations are not required. However, if the Head Tenant wishes to undertake any improvements or renovations to the interior of the Property, improvements will be subject to approval by the Landlord, in accordance with the Lease Agreement. Costs for improvements will be the responsibility of the Head Tenant. Improvements could include renovation or installation of interior building elements, such as walls, floors, doors, or ceilings, or related renovations.

- **Fit-ups:** The Head Tenant will be responsible for any interior fit-up costs. Fit-up costs can include design elements, such as painting, floor coverings, internal wall treatments, or other design elements. Fit up costs can be estimated based on industry cost guides (i.e.: 2024 Altus Cost Guide), or comparable costs analyses provided by other non-profit organizations who have undertaken similar projects.
- **Furnishing, Fixturing & Equipment:** The Head Tenant will be responsible for any furnishing, fixturing, and equipment (FF&E) costs, according to individual requirements.
- **REOI applications** should include a detailed estimated budget for any proposed improvements, fit-ups, and FF&E costs. Applications must demonstrate capacity for any capital investment required to finish the space to an operational level that suits their organization. Funding towards improvements, fit ups and FF&E is not part of the tenancy agreement. Occupancy of the Community Space is anticipated to begin as soon as January 2025, so any improvements, fit-ups or equipment installation work can begin no earlier than the occupancy date as set out in the Lease Agreement.

I. ESTIMATED ANNUAL OPERATING BUDGET

Estimated Operating Costs and Utilities provided in the chart below are based on estimates provided by the Landlord and may vary. Labour, fit-up and other costs were not included, as they will vary based on the proposed use of the space. Estimated event rental revenue was not included as it will also vary depending on the proposed use.

Revenue	Additional Rent (2025)
Subtenant Rent	\$36,000
Subtenant Utilities	\$6,000
Total	\$42,000

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Expenses	
Basic Rent	\$0
Estimated Operating Costs	\$66,000
Estimated Utilities	\$18,000
Estimated Insurance	\$8,000
Taxes	\$0
Estimated Total year one	\$92,000

J. HOW TO APPLY:

Completed REOI applications must be submitted before the deadline of **Monday October 7 at 11:59pm**. Incomplete, ineligible, or late applications will not be considered.

Application requirements:

- ✓ REOI Application Form (PDF)
- ✓ Signed Declaration of Anti-discrimination and Harassment (signed PDF)
- ✓ Audited Financial Statements (PDF)
- ✓ Articles of Incorporation (PDF)
- ✓ Staff list, including names, positions, Full Time/Part Time (attach PDF)
- ✓ Board list, including names, roles, postal codes (attach PDF)
- ✓ Letters of support from community organizations, partners, funders (optional, PDF)

Email all completed, signed forms along with the required attachments in a single email to Erika.Hennebury@toronto.ca.

Document Room:

For access to the Document Room, applicants must RSVP for one of the two mandatory information sessions and/or site tour by emailing Erika.Hennebury@toronto.ca.

The Document Room is a secure web link that allows applicants to access the following key documents for information purposes:

1. Weston Common Head Lease and Municipal Capital Facilities Agreement
2. Zoning Bylaw 1358-2015
3. Weston Common Subtenant Agreements
4. Section 37 Agreement

Accessibility Supports:

Accommodation of accessibility supports for information sessions, site tours, or application documents (e.g., documents in alternate formats, off-hour meetings, etc.) is available upon request to ensure groups can fully participate in the process. **For accessibility support requests please contact:** Erika.Hennebury@toronto.ca.

Note: Only one email submission per application is accepted. Please do not send multiple emails as attachments may be lost or missed. **Applications must be signed (e-signatures accepted) by an authorized signatory on behalf of the lead applicant.**

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K. REOI EVALUATION PROCESS

Application Assessment Process

All REOI applications will first be assessed by City staff to determine eligibility. All eligible applications will then be adjudicated by an Advisory Committee comprised of City staff and community members selected and managed by the City's Economic Development and Culture Division. The Advisory Committee will assess each eligible application according to the assessment criteria, submit final application scores, and make a consensus-based recommendation on a Head Tenant, as well as provide a shortlist of highly recommended applicants. The recommended Head Tenant and shortlist will be submitted to the City's General Manager of Economic Development and Culture for approval. City Council authorization may also be required depending on the proposed terms and/or use of the space by the Head Tenant.

Note: The Weston Common Head Tenant will be selected at the absolute discretion of the City. The recommendations of the Advisory Committee will not oblige the City to negotiate or execute an agreement with the recommended organization, or any organization, should the applicants be deemed not to be suitable. Any award of an agreement resulting from this REOI will be contingent upon approval by the General Manager, Economic Development and Culture, and/or City Council if required, and must be carried out in accordance with the by-laws, policies, and procedures of the City. By responding to the REOI, applicants acknowledge and agree that the decisions of the City are final.

Assessment Criteria

The following assessment criteria will be used to evaluate and score all eligible applications out of a total of 100 points.

1) Organizational & Financial Capacity (45/100 points)

Applicants should demonstrate substantial experience in delivering community programming, organizational capacity, strong governance, strong financial position, and fiscal oversight.

Applications will be assessed on:

- Alignment of the proposed tenancy with the organization's vision, mission, and mandate, and values,
- Strength of organizational, policy, governance, and operational structures,
- Capacity and qualifications of the Board of Directors, demonstrating functional expertise in the organization's program and service areas, as well as legal and fiscal oversight,
- Overall organizational capacity to undertake the Head Tenancy,
- Demonstration of financial good standing, financial capacity, and a positive cash position through the applicants' audited financial statements,
- The extent to which the budget demonstrates financial capacity, good planning, a stable revenue mix, a realistic fundraising plan, and ability to manage project occupancy costs and any proposed fit-ups, furnishing, or equipment purchase and installation.

2) Community Impact and Service Delivery (45/100 points)

Applicants should demonstrate how their proposed services and programs align with key community priorities, and serve the local Weston-Mount Dennis community, as well as the arts and cultural sector, and city, more broadly.

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Applications will be assessed on:

- The impact of the proposed services and programming on the Weston-Mount Dennis community,
- The applicant's proposed programming partnerships with local artists, equity-deserving communities, grassroots groups, and community organizations,
- The applicant's proposed programming partnerships with the subtenants, artist live/work tenants, local community organizations, arts organizations, and artists,
- The extent to which the applicant plans to raise the profile of the Hub and make it accessible and welcoming to the local community,
- Alignment with the community key priorities.

3) Equity and Inclusion (10/100 points)

The City of Toronto recognizes that barriers exist for many members of our city's equity-deserving communities, particularly Indigenous communities, African, Caribbean, and Black communities, racialized communities, Deaf persons and persons with disabilities, refugees and asylum-seekers, 2SLGBTQIA+ communities and low-income women, children, youth, and seniors.

Applicants should demonstrate how they are helping to eliminate barriers to cultural space, services, and programs faced by equity-deserving local residents and artists.

Applications will be assessed on:

- The organization's anti-racism, accessibility, equity, and inclusion equity processes and policies, including representation of equity-deserving communities within the organization's leadership, staff, board, and communities served,
- The organization's plan to reducing systemic barriers to cultural space, services, and programs at the Hub,
- The organization's plans to ensure accessibility and affordability of services and programs and access to space by the local community and artists.

Note: Application evaluation results are the property of the City and are subject to the [Municipal Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act](#) (the Act). Evaluation results may be subject to public release under the Act. City Council and individual members of the City Council have the right to view the responses, provided that their requests have been made under the Act.

L. LEASE AGREEMENT & OCCUPANCY

The Head Tenant will be required to comply with the terms and conditions of the Lease Agreement with the City of Toronto and the Landlord. The Head Tenant will be required to execute an Assumption and Assignment Agreement, in a form agreed upon by the City and Dream, agreeing to assume all of the obligations on the lease. Possession of the Hub may take place as early as January 2025.

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M. KEY DATES

The following schedule is subject to change at the sole discretion of the City, and appropriate written notice of any changes will be provided to those who have registered for the information session and site tour.

- August 28 (4:00-5:00 pm): REOI Information Session #1 (WebEx)
- September 5 (5:00-7:00 pm): Site Tour #1
- September 3 (8:00 am): Deadline to submit questions for the FAQ
- Week of September 9: FAQ posted online
- September 9 (6:00-7:30pm): REOI Information Session #2
- September 11 (5:00-7:00 pm): Site Tour #2
- October 7 (11:59 pm): Application deadline
- October 2024: Application assessment
- November 2024: Notification to applicants
- November / December 2024: Lease preparation
- January 1, 2025: Occupancy date (estimated)

N. QUESTIONS?

Please note that the City will collect and compile questions and attach an FAQ to this REOI Guidelines document as Appendix A. Questions must be received by September 3 at 8:00 am to be included. FAQ will be posted on the City's website and circulated to anyone who has RSVP'd to an information session or site tour during the week of September 9.

Questions can be sent to: Erika Hennebury, Senior Cultural Affairs Officer, Economic Development & Culture, City of Toronto, at Erika.Hennebury@toronto.ca