



Riverside Hub

An Infrastructure Project Serving Brantford/Brant and Surrounding Areas

The Riverside Hub Project is a partnership of ten mental health, social recreation, developmental service, and wellness organizations working together to construct an approximately 171,000 square-foot community hub in Brantford's downtown core. We passionately believe that a Hub will make Brantford a better place by providing a welcoming, purpose-designed facility that improves service access and integration, while fostering relationships, belonging, and wellbeing.

Our partners share an urgent, critical need for a new space to meet the needs of our communities. Our current buildings have extremely high overhead and lease costs. They are outdated and do not meet our program, accessibility, health and safety, or growth needs. A purpose-designed, co-located space will allow us to harness cost efficiencies, and to find smarter and more innovative ways to deliver the best possible value for every dollar spent.

After three years of background work, the Riverside Hub Development Committee is exploring the feasibility of a site in Brantford's downtown core in partnership with the City of Brantford. We are working toward completing a shovel-ready project proposal to submit for federal, provincial, and municipal infrastructure funding opportunities. We invite you to learn more about our plans to build a stronger community together.



This image represents building scale only — is not indicative of future design

The Partners

Coming Together to Build a Stronger Community



Counselling, Mental Health
& Developmental Services



Supportive LGBTQ2+
Advocacy Community



Mental Health & Autism
Supports for Children



Health, Health Promotion
& Food Security Services



Brantford Hospital –
Outpatient Mental Health
Services



Mental Health and Crisis
Supports, Safe Beds



Addictions, Mental Health,
Housing and Employment
Services



Housing & Employment
Supports



Social Recreation and
Inclusion programs for
individuals with disabilities



Peer Support, Social
Recreation, and Employment

Who We Serve

Together, our Hub partners serve approximately **27,000 community members** each year. Our programs support individuals from all walks of life as they connect, seek services, and heal.

Who We Employ

Together, our partners employ roughly **800 community members** working in health, social services, developmental services, social recreation, and more. Around 500 of these staff will be on-site daily.



Types of Services



Social Recreation



Counselling & Mental Health Services



Children's Services



Healthcare Services



Autism & Developmental Services



Addictions Supports



Crisis Services



Programs for Intimate Partner Violence



2SLGBTQ+ Services and Advocacy



Housing Supports



Employment Supports



Food Security Programs

Background

Making the Case for Riverside Hub

In 2019, Willowbridge Community Services began exploring options for resolving the critical issues presented by their facility on 54 Brant Avenue. Gathering input from the community, Willowbridge was gearing up for a major renovation or a move.

However, extensive community consultations soon revealed that many service providers in the city were also struggling with similar issues. As themes began to emerge from community focus groups, surveys, and feedback forms, Brantford's core service providers came together and formed a committee to help address shared concerns.



Community & Partner Feedback

The Brantford community identified major concerns with health and social service facilities:

▶ ACCESSIBILITY

Many facilities are hard to reach by transit, are not fully wheelchair accessible, have poor lighting and poor ventilation.

▶ PRIVACY & SAFETY

Facilities have serious issues with security for staff and clients, and layout/design do not allow for privacy during sessions.

▶ RESOURCES

Not-for-profits in Brantford typically compete for the same funding and remain siloed.

▶ INTEGRATION

Services are not coordinated or integrated, which results in clients having to repeat their stories at a high emotional cost. Lack of integration also creates further difficulties in connecting clients to the service they need.

▶ AFFORDABILITY

Facilities have extremely high overhead costs and lease payments (over \$1,000,000 / year) for outdated spaces with no partner input.

▶ CAPACITY

Demand for services is at an all-time high, but facilities are cramped and offer no room for growth.

▶ SUITABILITY

Programming spaces do not suit the needs of the community or programming and lack critical infrastructure.

▶ DIVERSITY

Facilities are not welcoming or inclusive of diverse communities and in some cases present as unsafe.

Responding to the Community

Our vision for a new Community Hub in Brantford

In response to the community's feedback, our partners determined that our communities would be better served if we worked together. Our committee created a vision for a Community Hub and pulled in a broad range of experts to help us co-locate our services in a new, central, purpose-designed facility. Our partnership envisions a Brantford where no one is left behind, where everyone has the opportunity find support in their moment of need in a space that says, "you truly matter to us".

The Model

The Riverside Hub will consist of an approximately 171,000 square-foot health and social service hub in the downtown. We are currently conducting a feasibility study, in partnership with the City of Brantford, on a site at Icomm Drive that currently houses the Brantford Farmers' Market. We intend to create:

- A facility that is purpose designed and shows the community that they matter
- A coordinated, integrated access point for streamlined mental health services that creates a positive participant experience
- Exploration of shared elements for seamless participant experiences and economies of scale with shared reception, operating and facility costs, communications, IT, and other back office supports.
- The facility will be fully sustainable, with a net zero carbon footprint.



What Does a Hub Mean for the Community?

Benefits of the Hub Model

There will be numerous opportunities available through the economies of scale created from forming a Community Hub. These will directly benefit both the community, and the partners co-located in the space. These include:

- Increased access to coordinated services for the community
- Improved sense of community inclusion and belonging
- Reduction in overhead costs through shared resources, lower monthly lease costs, elimination of duplicated services, and reduced operating costs
- Provision of community support in an individual's moment of need. Seeing individuals in distress while they're experiencing it has shown to reduce their use costlier emergency and hospital services
- Increased innovation, collaboration, and creativity in services across partners
- Improved mental health outcomes by supporting the social determinants of health



Public Amenities

The Riverside Hub has, through the design process, highlighted key public amenities that will be open to, or bookable by, the community. These include:



Creative Spaces

Bookable art, music, prayer, exercise, and meditation rooms.



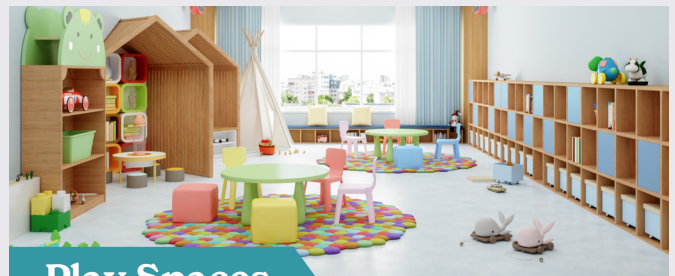
Culinary Spaces

A community café, teaching kitchens, vegetable gardens, and the possibility of integrating the preexisting farmer's market into the build.



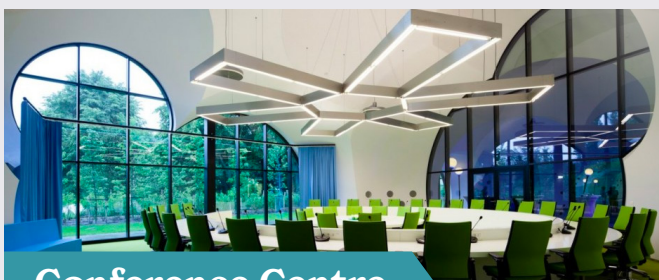
Outdoor Spaces

Community gardens, rooftop patio, playgrounds, bike-share and repair, greenspace.



Play Spaces

Large indoor playrooms, gymnasium, playgrounds, and party space.



Conference Centre

Bookable banquet, conference, meeting, office, and work-share spaces.



Brantford Farmers' Market

Currently exploring facility improvement and the inclusion of the Brantford Farmers' Market.



Progress & Timelines

Mapping Out Riverside Hub



After forming a committee in 2019, the hub partners have met biweekly for over 3 years with **the goal of submitting an infrastructure grant proposal.**

Our timelines are as follows:

✓ Complete ↗ Ready to launch ⌚ In progress → Upcoming

- 2019**
- ✓ Needs Analysis – Completed January 2019
 - ✓ Hub Development Community Formed – April 2019

- 2020**
- ✓ Feasibility Study

- 2021**
- ✓ Space Needs Analysis – Complete
 - ✓ 1st Ontario Trillium Grant – Awarded
 - ↗ Fundraising Plan – Ready to launch
 - ⌚ Governance Model

- 2022**
- | | |
|---|---|
| ⌚ Indigenous Talking Circles | ⌚ Incorporate as a New Organization |
| ↗ Name, Brand and Website – Ready to Launch | ⌚ Complete By-Laws |
| ✓ Identify a Site | → Apply for Charitable Status |
| ✓ 2nd Ontario Trillium Foundation Grant | → Finalized Partner Affiliate Agreements and Lease Agreements |
| ✓ Business Plan | ⌚ Further Community and E.D.I Engagement |
| ⌚ Site Feasibility Study | |

- 2023**
- ⌚ Site Plan
 - Site Acquisition
 - Assemble a Riverside Hub Board of Directors
 - Building Design & Schemata
 - Apply for Federal/Provincial Infrastructure Funding ★
 - Launch Fundraising Campaign

- 2024**
- Begin Construction

- 2026**
- Open our Doors

Our Team

Together for a Stronger Community



The Riverside Hub has been helped along by numerous community consultants, organizations and volunteers.



The Muslim Association
Of Brantford



Development & Design

MTE Consulting – Engineering
+VG Architects
Two Row Architect
Melloul Blamey Construction
Ken Karakas – Remax Realtor

Consultants

Gravity Inc. – Communications
Meridian Edge – Governance
Tapestry Community Capital – Social Finance
Waterous Holden Amey Hitchon – Legal
KCI Philanthropy – Fundraising
Two Row Architect – Indigenous Engagement
KPMG – Business Plan
Vink Consulting – Community Engagement
Sierra Planning & Management – Economic Impact Study
T. John's Consulting Group – Site Planning

Supporters

MP Larry Brock
MPP Will Bouma
Mayor Kevin Davis (Brantford)
Mayor David Bailey (Brant)
City Councilors
Muslim Association of Brantford
Eva Salter – Former Regional Infrastructure Advisor
David Prang – CEO Chamber of Commerce
Daniel Rankin – ED Brant United Way

City Staff

Sasha Hill Smith – Manager of Government Relations
Brian Hutchings – CAO
Ron Gasparetto – Manager of Real Estate

The Site

Connecting in Downtown Brantford

The Riverside Hub is currently exploring the East Side of the Icomm Dr. Parkade to determine the site's feasibility as a potential hub location. The City of Brantford owns the land and is supporting our study. We have requested that, should it be suitable, the land be gifted to the Riverside Hub for public use.



The Site

Rejuvenating Brantford's Downtown Core



The Icomm Drive Parkade is located steps from market square in downtown Brantford, visible from the public library, the YMCA, and Wilfred Laurier University buildings. Presently, the Parkade is underutilized and is reportedly an unsafe location as a frequent site for drug use. By connecting to the parking garage, Riverside Hub would also support the health of an under-utilized part of the city. The Icomm Drive site also presently has the Brantford Farmer's Market located on the property. Riverside Hub is in consultations with the City & Market Vendors to consider incorporating the Farmers' Market into the design of the building.

The Site

A Glimpse of the Project's Location & Scale (Design TBA)

