

A World Within a Block.



Annual Report 2017 – 2018

St. James Town Community Corner



Message from the Steering Committee

Our annual report gives the Steering Committee of The Corner the opportunity to pause and reflect on our year of service delivery in St. James Town. Neighbourhood demographics are quickly being affected by the growth of new property developments and rising incomes of new residents. Yet many residents and tenants remain at the edges of this growing prosperity and risk increased marginalization as affordable housing and employment opportunities remain elusive. In the midst of these changes The Corner is a constant as a hub of health, social services and resident driven programming for people who call St. James Town home.

The Corner has partnered with residents, service providers and funders to increase funding, develop new programs, and enhance civic engagement in decision making that affects the day to day lives of residents. Several events over the past year highlight The Corner’s leadership and commitment to support a vision of a healthy engaged community.

The Ontario government hosted a press conference at The Corner on June 27th, 2017 in which the Minister for Infrastructure Bob Chiarelli and the lead for Hub Development Karen Pietre announced their surplus public property hub development initiative.

The Corner hosts an integrated intake and service coordination model through Health Access St. James Town (HASJT), a multi partner initiative that connects residents to services in a timely and responsive manner. The Corner/HASJT model was also successful in gaining additional funding from the Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network to consolidate and sustain the great work that it is doing.

Consistent with our vision for a healthy, connected, vibrant and prosperous community, we are very excited to be an instrumental part in coordinating the Collective Impact initiative in St. James Town. The initial phase of this initiative is funded by the Ontario Trillium Foundation. Partnering

Opposite: A young preformer at the St. James Town Festival



Seniors in conversation at the Spring Festival

with residents, service providers, public and private landlords, local businesses, police, government representatives, funders, media and public champions, this project is on track to develop a broader community vision of St. James Town as a healthy community where people feel proud to live, work and play.

Feedback to and from the community is vital to our ability to be relevant to our resident, tenant, funders and agency partners. Towards that end The Corner has engaged with our stakeholders in multiple ways to generate information about neighbourhood priorities and create efforts to respond to them. The Corner plays a key role in partnership with HASJT and the SJTSPN in planning the annual Spring Gathering consultation, the St. James Town Festival, outreach to tenants in the lobbies of apartment buildings and the employment of diverse local ambassadors to lead programs and consultations.

The Steering Committee is very grateful for the support of the many individuals, staff, volunteers and partners who have contributed to the success of The Corner. Our responsiveness to the community is particularly made possible by our dedicated staff who consistently bring a can-do spirit to their work.



Finance minister Bill Morneau

- **AMBASSADORS OF THE CORNER:**
- Boomi Patel
- Chelladurai Yoga
- Esperanza Calantog
- Niru Kumari
- Nuzrat Reshamwala
- Rasathy Yogarajah
- Samiea Bashir
- Shaheen Kausar
- Wayne Lapointe
- Tanvir Kaukab



Ontario premier Kathleen Wynne at the corner with the community

SJT SCHOLARSHIPS 2017:

- 1 For Community Engagement/Leadership:
Eashmana Choudhury
– Ryerson University
- 2 For Creative/Artistic Contribution:
Zouahl Kayoumi
– Ryerson University

- We are excited and inspired by the possibilities that can be generated
- by our shared vision of a healthy, connected, vibrant and prosperous
- St. James Town community.
- **ONTARIO PREMIER, SPECIAL ADVISOR AND ONTARIO MINISTER OF INFRASTRUCTURE ANNOUNCEMENT AT THE CORNER**
- In June 2017, Premier Kathleen Wynn, Special Advisor on Community
- Hubs, Karen Pitre, and the Ontario Minister of Infrastructure, Bob Chiarelli,
- announced the Surplus Property Transition Initiative at The Corner. An initiative that will allow more organizations to share facilities, streamline service delivery, as well as develop new partnerships with local communities.

The Surplus Property Transition Initiative is a measure that is intended to make it easier for public surplus properties to be transformed into new public community assets that support local initiatives, such as The Corner. The Community Hubs Initiative provides many opportunities to share learnings across community hubs that operate across the spectrum of co-located services to integrated service delivery.



Leaders sharing ideas at the Forum

SJT Service Providers’ Network Leadership Forum

On April 27, 2017, The St James Town Service Providers’ Network (SJTSPN) held a leadership forum, bringing together the senior leadership from organizations and stakeholders working toward the betterment of St. James Town. The leadership forum was an opportunity for the SJTSPN Executives to provide an overview of the work in SJT, orient towards a common vision for the network and community, as well as to share updates on the exciting initiatives that were starting or slated to start.

Evaluation of the leadership forum identified that 83% of attendees felt they had a better understanding of the SJTSPN and its role, and that the forum was a positive experience. Attendees identified the benefits of the forum and suggested future forums to have more time for smaller group discussions. Senior leaders attending the forum expressed an appreciation for the information provided and looked forward to further discussions on the roles organizations can take to further enhance the collaborative work in St. James Town.

- **2017-2018 STATS**
- One to One Service programs:
- **15**
- Resident Led program:
- **18**
- One time event and program:
- **54**
- Regular programs:
- **26**
- Partner Agencies:
- **19**
- New clients:
- **1568**
- Volunteers provided 1900 (approx) hours of volunteering
- **143**
- Placement students with 2100 (approx) hours of engagement:
- **7**

- SJT FESTIVAL AWARD WINNERS 2017**
1. SJT Change Makers: **YOUTH**
Pavishan Balarajah
 2. SJT Change Maker:

Elana Oliva
 3. SJT Change Maker: **NEWCOMER**
Touran Norowzi
 4. SJT Change Maker: **LGBTQ+**
Robert Dumaresq
 5. SJT Change Maker: **WOMEN**
Niru Kumari
 6. SJT Change Maker: **MEN**
Zaid Mohamed
 7. SJT Advocate: Amna Shah
 8. SJT Group Award: **LOCAL SMALL BUSINESS**
Leonida Sabinorio McNabb – (Philippine Variety Store)
 9. SJT Group Award: **LOCAL BIG BUSINESS**
Tania Waldock – (House on Parliament)

- **Toronto Central LHIN – Funding Enhancement**
- The integrated service delivery model of The Corner & Health Access St. James Town (HASJT) has been supported since 2014 through modest funding from the TC-LHIN. In the years since, the success of the model led the TC-LHIN to highlight it as one of the exemplary models in Mideast Toronto.
- The Corner is the “hardware” and HASJT is the “software” of the model. TNO and Sherbourne Health are the two anchor agencies that co-lead this model. Through this model around 1600 residents of SJT, previously unconnected to services, are connected to care. Of this 1600, around 12% are clients with significant needs and challenges. There are around 40,000 visits to The Corner on an annual basis.
- The initial investment from the TC-LHIN was primarily for the HASJT aspect of the model. Soon, it became evident that strengthening the model in its entirety was essential for consolidation and sustainability. Hence, in late 2017, the TC-LHIN made an additional investment which led to a substantial enhancement of the service coordination, data management, and community engagement capacity of the model.
- **COLLECTIVE IMPACT**
- Collective impact is a strategy focused on bringing diverse stakeholders to the table to work in innovative ways to address a complex issue. St. James Town embarked on a Collective Impact initiative in recent years with the goal of “Making St. James Town a neighbourhood of choice to call home”. The initiative focuses on creating a safe, healthy, connected neighbourhood with increased opportunities for income generation. Social connections serve as the enabling lever that helps realize this vision.
- The Corner serves as the anchor or “backbone” for this initiative. In 2017-2018, a Steering Committee of diverse leaders was formed to steer the initiative forward. The committee is comprised of many players including but not limited to residents, service organizations, TC-LHIN, the City of Toronto, individual experts, creative artists, the BIA, private landlords, and Toronto Police Services. The initial phase was funded through the Ontario Trillium Foundation.



TOP:

Seniors participate at the Spring Gathering

BOTTOM:

Programers help run Festival activities



Celebrating the Community

SPRING GATHERING

In April 2017, 224 people attended this event, with more youth participation than previous years. In 2018, Spring Gathering was held on March 23rd at the Rose Avenue Public School. The year’s overarching theme for the Gathering was ‘Making St. James Town a Neighbourhood of Choice to call home’. 255 participants including residents, ambassadors, volunteers and service providers attended the event. Special guest speakers included Mayor John Tory, Councilor Lucy Troisi, TDSB Trustee Chris Moise, representatives from the TC-LHIN and public champion for St. James Town, Barbara Hall.

COLLECTIVE IMPACT: A NEIGHBOURHOOD OF CHOICE TO CALL HOME

Participants discussed the St. James Town Collective Impact Initiative and provided their ideas, feedback and suggestions for the initiative. There were 5 themes that were discussed at tables during the consultation phase: 1) actions to improve the neighbourhood, 2) building social connections across the 19 high-rise buildings, 3) building social connections between youth and seniors, 4) building social connections between newcomers and long-term immigrants/Canadian born residents, and 5) connecting businesses and residents.

“Creating programs/events where adults, seniors and youth can come together and talk, exchange their experiences and can teach new things. We can have volunteers to help seniors with their daily tasks like shopping, medical appointments, walking or just providing them with a friendly visit at their homes. Seniors can also help youth with their jobs and careers, while youth can help seniors understand the changing world and new technologies.” – Resident ambassador.

Overall the event was a great success in terms of residents sharing their opinions and perspectives on initiatives they would like to see implemented to improve St. James Town and strengthen the connection between community members.

FESTIVAL

The festival is organized by the St. James Town Service Providers’ Network. Nine subcommittees were created to organize and manage the event; logistics, volunteer, vendors, entertainment, outreach, awards and a new fundraising committee. The 2017 festival was held on Saturday August 26, 2 – 7pm at the grassy area behind 200 Wellesley St. East. 12 groups of residents put up cultural performances and the performers were selected through two rounds of auditions.

Performers were also given honorariums as a token of appreciation from the neighbourhood. There were also activities including Henna, Face-Painting, Storytime by the Toronto Public Library, Pay-what-you-can hot dogs, Games at the Kids Area, Bouncy Castle and several other arts and craft activities meant to engage the little ones in the neighbourhood. Seven resident food vendors also setup their stalls at the festival. The vendors worked in collaboration with a Registered Dietician from

Sherbourne Health to ensure safe, healthy and nutritious food was available for festival attendees. The food served was a symbol of the diverse culture and background that makes up St. James Town.

Awards and scholarships were given out to residents for their contributions and efforts within the community. Award winners were selected by the awards sub-committee which comprised of residents, ambassadors and representatives of service providers. Apart from all the fun and games, residents also had the opportunity to connect with various service providers who were able to do on the spot registration for services at the kiosks.

In September 2017, a ceremony was held to celebrate the contribution volunteers made to this year's festival. The event was attended by 70 volunteers who went out of their way it included games, dinner and certificates.

The event was a resounding success and all the hard work of the sub-committees, volunteers and residents culminated in a festival that not only brought the community closer together but highlighted the diverse cultural and social aspects which makes St. James Town a neighbourhood of choice to call home.

OPENSTREETS

The Corner successfully participated in the OpenStreet TO event on Aug 20, 2017. The Corner also participated in the same event on Sept 17th, 2017. Overall, nearly 200 participants visited The Corner Kiosk during the two days. The Corner was the Lead Hub for the Sherbourne/Bloor intersection, which included Open Streets, Municipal Licensing and Standards, Toronto Public Health, Centre for Education and Training, St. James Community and Wellesley Community Centre, and Parks, Forestry and Recreation. Openstreets has always served as an avenue to portray the uniqueness and diversity of St. James Town to the rest of the city. It also serves as a platform for residents of Toronto to connect with The Corner and the services offered by its partner organisations.

Community Events

INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY

This event was celebrated on March 3rd, 2018 in which 25 people participated; male colleagues and volunteers from the community cooked and served breakfast for the participants. There was also a collective art workshop done by women. Guest speakers and a comedian were also part of the event. All participants had a great time. The event highlighted the strength and resilience of women while also giving insight into female perspectives.

EASTER EVENT

Two staff members organized an Ethiopian coffee ceremony to celebrate Easter on April 20, 2017. Around 20 participants were in attendance for the event. Celebrating Easter the Ethiopian way helps the community to grasp different perspectives and cultural symbolisms from around the world.

TOP:
Pets and their owners at Open Streets.

BOTTOM:
Getting together to celebrate Internarional Womens Day





TOP:

Members of YouthBEAT

BOTTOM:

Bringing cheer to the community
Christmas Party



RAMADAN PRAYER SPACE

The Corner provided prayer space for the month of Ramadan during the day and evening from May 26 – June 25th.

PRIDE EVENT

The Corner yearly pride event was held on Wednesday June 28, 2017 in partnership with HASJT and SHC. The event included speakers and resources from the community and partner organizations such as 519, SHC, ASAAP. It included activities for children, food, prizes and an information table. As a community with a sizeable LGBTQ+ population, we were very proud to host such a successful event that displayed The Corner's continuing resolve to cater to, advocate for and stand in solidarity with our community's LGBTQ+ members.

EID

Celebrated Eid on 15th July with around 30 community members.

YOUTH BEAT

The YouthBEAT program was conducted on the 29th, 30th and 31st of August. 8 youth from three different communities participated in the program. The program aims to build the capacity and confidence of youth through arts and crafts.

STAFF HOLIDAY PARTY

In December 2017, a holiday party was arranged for The Corner's steering committee, staff, partners, volunteers, ambassadors and placement students. Around 35 participants attended the party at the Wellesley Community Centre. It was an amazing opportunity for staff to catch up with their colleagues, their work and have a quiet time outside work.

COMMUNITY HOLIDAY PARTY

In December 2017, a dinner party was prepared by Progress Place (cooked turkey). The Corner staff and volunteers planned the rest of the menu. The dessert was provided by Trinity Church. The cutlery was sponsored by TNO. The Corner hosted games for adults and children separately. The winners were given prizes. The toys were sponsored by Bell's office staff whose location is close to our neighborhood. The TPS 51 division's 4 members of the community police brought some toys and two of them were at the party as well. 269 community members participated and among them 136 were children. Fifteen volunteers (9 from Trinity church, 3 from the bell and 3 from the community) helped to serve the food and provide the toys. TPS, SHC, PP, TNO and The Corner staff with volunteers/ placement students contributed to the event. The party was an important chance for community members to socialize with one another, connect and understand that they are valued by The Corner and the rest of the community.

NEPALI NEW YEAR

A Nepali cultural event (New Year) was organized in January 2018 and held at The Corner by the Nepali Association. The Corner considers it a privilege to host multicultural events that strengthens the community and its feeling of togetherness.

VISITATIONS

FINANCIAL MINSTER (MP) VISIT – The Finance Minister of Canada, Bill Morneau visited The Corner in May 2017. The agenda was to interact with the community, to listen to their concerns and to visit The Corner. The minister was able to have an open interaction with residents who gathered at The Corner. During the visit he also announced the availability of prayer space during the month of Ramadan. (See video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OD2kMLpPy7U>).

TCLHIN – Three staff from various departments of Toronto Central Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) visited The Corner on different days in December 2017. They were interested in some of The Corner’s operations, such as governance, collaboration, partnerships, community engagement and service delivery

CITY – The new Councillor Lucy Troisi visited The Corner on December 22nd 2017.

CITY HOUSE HAMILTON – Nine members from City House Hamilton visited The Corner in February 2018 to know more about the Hub Model.

PREMIER, KATHLEEN WYNNE – Visited The Corner and interacted with members of the steering committee, ambassadors, residents, service partners and staff on March 23rd, 2018.

Community Help

TAX CLINICS

Two tax clinics were led by Health Access on April 8th and 22nd. 84 clients were served. In March 2018, two tax clinics were successfully conducted; one was with the Sri Lankan Accountant Association and the other one was done by Bleecker Wellesley Network.

SENIORS FORUM

This year’s seniors’ forum was held on Friday June 16th at Wellesley Community Center. The event was well attended, with great food and give a ways. Total of 75 people attended the event and it was organized by Seniors Sub Committee.

MENTAL HEALTH DAY

Mental health day was celebrated on Wednesday, October 18th at The Corner. The event was organized by service providers and other partners at The Corner. The lead was Health Access in partnership with Sherbourne Health, Progress Place, TNO, Youth Beat and Youthdale.

FLU CLINIC

The Flu clinic at The Corner in partnership with Sherbourne Health was started on October 31. The team organized six clinics for the residents, four at The Corner and one each at 55 Bleecker St. and 85 Bleecker St. 196 community members received flu shots during the program. Community ambassadors were actively engaged in the planning and implementation – deciding on outreach/outreach locations, conducting flu information workshops in different languages, supporting the clinic flow and interpretation needs.

TOP:

Committee members making ready to serve meals at the Seniors Forum

BOTTOM:

A friendly volunteer ready to help at Spring Break



FUNDERS

TCLN – Toronto Central Local Health
Integration Network
Ontario Trillium Foundation

Toronto Employment and Social Services
Tower Renewal Office
City of Toronto

SERVICE PARTNERS

Community Resource and
Connections of Toronto
City Hope
Central Neighbourhood House
Dixon Hall
Hospice Toronto
Investing in Families – City of Toronto
Progress Place
Toronto Public Health – City of Toronto
TNO – The Neighbourhood Organization
Salvation Army
Sherbourne Health Centre
Sustainable Thinking and Expression on
Public Space (STEPS)
St. James Town Community Café

St. James Town Sunshine
Senior Group
St. James Town Youth Council
The Humane Society of Toronto
Toronto Community Housing (TCH)
Toronto Employment and Social
Services add (TESS)
Social Service: Wellesley Place
– City of Toronto
Residents and Grass Root
Organizations in St. James Town
Women Health in Women's Hands
UforChange
Yonge Street Mission
YMCA

STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Vickie Rennie
Yogarajah Chelladurai
Suchana Pandey
Veronica McDonald
Maryana Tanyashyna
Amna Shah
Wilma R Sinnathurai
Bilal Ahmed
Hannah Goodbrand

Tanvir Kaukab
Yasin Jama
Lovlyn D'souza
Criss Habal-Brosek
Nalini Pandalangat
Jelani Matthew
Ravi Subramaniam
Shirley Roberts