

REPORT SUMMARY

ALEXANDRA PARK

Pop Up #2 Love for Local Eats

FEBRUARY 16TH 2023

1. INTRODUCTION

On February 16, 2023, the project engagement team held a community Pop-Up event titled **“Love for Local Eats”**. The feedback and recommendations collected from the attendees of the event will be utilized to inform and shape the spatial brief of the new APCC.



Figure 1: Over 700+ flyers were distributed to residents.

Engagement Overview

OBJECTIVES

- Generate local buzz and raise awareness about the new Community Centre
- Gather specific insights related to gathering spaces, food, and needs of local catering businesses
- Receive direct input and insights from individuals who currently used the centre as who may use the new facilities in the future.

EVENT DETAILS

WHEN

LOVE FOR LOCAL EATS

Thursday February 16, 2023
4:00pm - 6:00pm

WHERE

Alexandra Park Community Centre Gym
195 Grange Crt

WHO

- » General public
- » Local Caterers

FORMAT

- » Interactive activities
- » Food stations
- » Intercept interviews
- » Vendor interviews

2. EVENT DETAILS

Four local caterers participated in the event and showcased an exceptional array of food. Approximately 50 community members attended the event, and the atmosphere was lively and welcoming. The attendees had the opportunity to taste different cuisines and engage in conversations with the caterers and project engagement team.

- » Culinary Crew
- » Culinary Divas
- » Don Marie's Kitchen
- » Nadias

**local caterers who were not able to take part were also contacted after the event to provide their feedback on the proposed new kitchen and eating spaces.*

Feedback Gathered

The feedback ranged from what local caterers need in the proposed kitchen space to what programs and facilities families and seniors hope to see in the new community centre. The engagement team collected feedback by:

- » 1:1 Interviews and questionnaire
- » Interactive activity
- » Intercept Interviews and conversations



Figure 2: (Above) Project engagement coordinators Shaneese and Mahib gathered around the "Community Soup Bowl" interactive activity with community members and local vendors.

Figure 3: (Below) Don Marie's Diner serving up curry goat.



3. WHAT WE HEARD

Event Attendees

Overall attendees were excited about the new community centre. A majority of the feedback came from young adults and parents who were residents of the community. Their input highlighted a strong desire to create a thriving and healthy neighbourhood.

The need for more programs and programming space

Residents were enthusiastic about expressing their ideas for the kind of programming they wanted to see in the community centre. With more space available, residents were eager to envision a range of programming possibilities for the upcoming new community centre.

“the gym acts as a universal room for all programs in the centre. The new centre would need more space and rooms for various programs to take place.”

– Event attendee

“More space in the centre means more opportunities for programs or events since people won’t be scrambling over a single spot each time.”

– Event attendee

Incorporating a dedicated lounge space with comfortable Seating

Some community members expressed that they feel with a lot of changes happening in their community and ongoing construction around them. Many of them expressed their desire for more space to “chill” and relax.

“There should be an established seating area/lounge and that there’s no reason to go to the centre unless it’s for an event.”

– Event attendee

“There’s currently nothing in AP that would make people, especially youth, just come and hang out. I think it all connects back to the centre being limited by the lack of space though.”

– Event attendee

Inclusive spaces for wellness and faith

A number of event attendees indicated a strong desire for a space that promotes both individual and community well-being. They expressed interest in having a dedicated area for promoting wellness and health and also a space where individuals connect with their faith.

Program Related

- Help children with reading
- Basketball program
- Youth cooking programs
- Youth educational classes
- Workshops, programs, and events related to employment, skills upgrading, certifications, and training
- Lunch program for students
- Monthly soup kitchen
- Business incubator
- Program for people with disabilities
- On-site counseling / mental health services
- Music classes to learn an instrument

Space Related

- Indoor computer lab and study area
- Community library
- Loading dock
- Meeting space
- Place to chill (sofa, TV)
- Free bookable event venue space to use for personal events
- Prayer area
- Basement for storage and studio work
- Photography studio
- Space to hold events for the community
- Lounge housing an entertainment zone
- Seating, including an outdoor courtyard

4. WHAT WE HEARD

Caterers

To gather more specific insights and opinions related to the proposed new kitchen and the needs of local entrepreneurs, targeted feedback was collected from caterers through both 1:1 conversations and an online questionnaire. The goal of this feedback was to obtain detailed ideas and suggestions from caterers, and ensure the new kitchen reflects the needs of local entrepreneurs. During these interactions, we asked the caterers a series of guiding questions, which are as follows:

- **What would your ideal community kitchen have?**
- **What does the community need in an event space?**
- **In your opinion, what are the most important programs and services that the new Community Centre should provide?**



Figure 4: Photos of local vendors and event attendees with AP-Staff, project team members.

Photos: Maylynn Quan

Recommendations

- Walk-in cooler
- Large kitchen with lots of prep space
- Seated eating area
- Rentable party room
- Employment and entrepreneurship support
- Programs for newcomers to the country
- Walk-in fridge
- Storage to keep items that need to be preserved
- Keep an array of communal seasoning

*"My ideal kitchen would **have an open space, safe, healthy and welcoming environment.** In my opinion, one of the most important services the centre **should provide is a party room - where residents can be able to use the space for important events and celebrations.** It would help everyone together and to be the community that we are."*

-Caterer

*The most important programs and services that the new centre should provide are **employment/work support programs and programs for newcomers to Canada.** I think it would be helpful to teach people to become sustainable and help find their career path."*

-Caterer

*"My ideal community kitchen should have a **walk-in fridge, more space to store things that need to be preserved and a lot of cabinet spaces.** I believe we need to utilize as much seasoning and cultural staples, so when anyone uses the community kitchen they can recognize spices they may have at home."*

-Caterer

5. ENGAGEMENTS BY THE NUMBERS

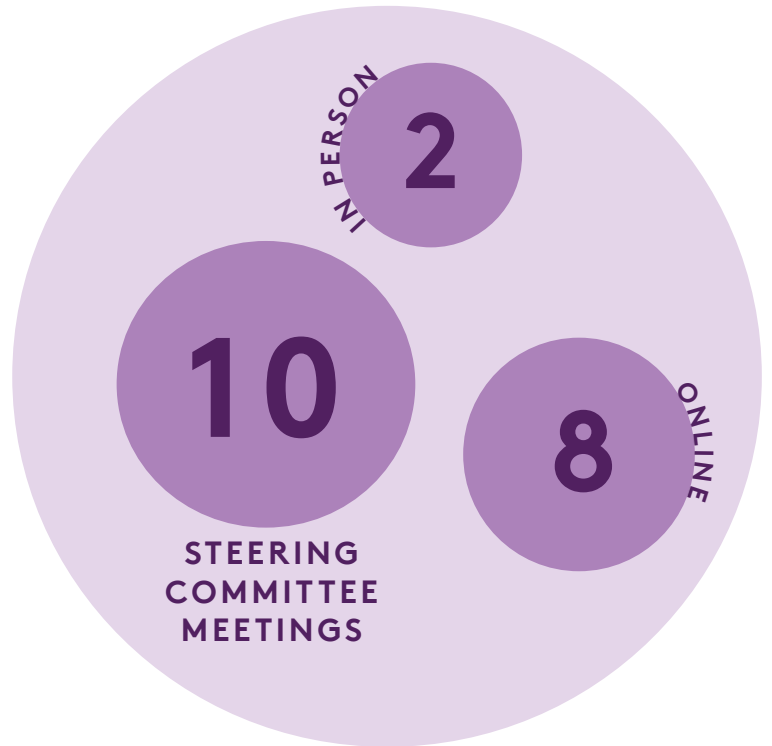
As of February 2023, below is a snapshot of Phase 2B/Site 17 community engagements to date.



**LOCAL
ENGAGEMENT
COORDINATORS
HIRED**



FLYERS DISTRIBUTED



**STEERING
COMMITTEE
MEETINGS**

IN PERSON

2

ONLINE

8



APROX.

100

PEOPLE

LOCATIONS

5

**COMMUNITY
EVENTS/
POP-UPS**

4

- Meet the Architects
- Youth Session
- Neighbourhood pop-ups
- Love for Local Eats pop-up

Karakusevic Carson Architects



Toronto
Community
Housing

