

Prior to completing the application, interested proponents are **strongly** encouraged to read these instructions. They will help community groups and organizations determine whether they are eligible to participate in the initiative and provide further details about the initiative and the application and evaluation process.

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1. Background

Community hubs provide a central access point for a range of services to nourish community life. Each hub is unique, as each brings together a variety of services, programs and/or social and cultural activities that reflect local community needs, such as housing, children's services, Indigenous community services, senior's housing, healthcare, employment and training, education, and poverty reduction. The integrated and multifaceted community hub model plays a critical role in building economic and social cohesion in communities.

In August 2015, Premier Kathleen Wynne's Special Advisor, and Chair of the Community Hubs Advisory Group, Karen Pitre, released [Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan](#). The Action Plan includes 27 recommendations to government on how to improve government policy and support local community hub development in Ontario.

In August 2016, the Province released a [One-Year Progress Report on the Community Hubs Strategic Framework and Action Plan](#).

2. Purpose of the Transition Initiative

On May 1, 2017, the Province announced that it would be creating an application-based initiative to support and maintain availability of a number of publicly owned surplus properties that have the potential to be redeveloped to meet community needs.

This transition initiative aims to address barriers to community hub development, which may include time needed to secure and coordinate funding, policy approvals from government, and access to public property.

The goal is to support community organizations that require more time to develop a comprehensive business plan that reflects community needs and establish partnerships for the successful transition of surplus public properties to meet these needs.

One of the challenges faced in developing community hubs is access to property. The processes and timing of the sale of surplus provincial, school board or public hospital property does not always allow time for community organizations to determine if the property has potential as a community hub. As a result, important opportunities may be lost for redevelopment aligned with community needs.

This initiative will help the current owner continue to hold the property in public ownership for up to 18 months and allow interested community organizations more time to find supporting organizations, complete their business plan and secure the appropriate public or private funding to turn the site into a community hub.

This transition initiative is also intended to provide the Province with key information on the decision-making involved and supports required for successful transition of surplus properties to meet local community needs and advance broader provincial interests such as housing, children's services, Indigenous community services, senior's housing, healthcare, employment and training, education, and poverty reduction.

The results of the initiative are expected to inform provincial policies and future decision-making related to surplus public properties.

3. Transition Initiative Overview

The transition initiative allows community proponents to request additional time to support planning for potential re-development of surplus public properties. With agreement of the current property owner, properties selected through this process can be maintained in the public domain while proponents develop and refine long-term community-focused business plans.

Temporary "on-hold" funding may be provided (if necessary) to cover ongoing operating and maintenance costs incurred by the current owners to ensure that properties selected for the transition initiative can be held in the public domain. Financial support may be available for a small number of properties for up to 18 months and would be contingent on properties being maintained in their current ownership.

Interested proponents are required to submit an application to be considered for participation in the initiative. This application asks for information on the proponent and their supporting organizations, services to be delivered at the proposed community hub, the property of interest, and various financial and technical details.

Successful applicants and current property owners will need to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU) with the Ministry of Infrastructure. The MOU will include details on the proposal, including timelines and key milestones, as well as financial and other forms of support that may be provided by the Province during the “on hold” period. While joint proposals are strongly encouraged, only the lead applicant or proponent will be expected to sign the MOU.

If a viable business model is not developed during the “on hold” period, the current property owner has full discretion to sell the property on the market at the end of the 18 months.

4. Application and Evaluation Process

There is one application form required for the transition initiative, as well as a number of required attachments. The application form is divided into two parts and applications will be reviewed using a two-stage process. Note that any attachments submitted by proponents other than those explicitly requested will not be considered.

The application and evaluation process is described below. The Ministry of Infrastructure may contact proponents to request further information or to clarify submitted information.

Application

It is recommended that applicants contact the Ministry of Infrastructure Community Hubs Division to confirm eligibility requirements before completing an application. Contact information is provided towards the end of this document.

Applications will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) October 16th, 2017. However, proponents are encouraged to submit applications as early as possible prior to this date as the number of proposals selected will be limited and assessment and selection of projects will begin as completed applications are received. Late applications will not be accepted.

It is understood that proponents may be at different stages in their respective planning processes and therefore may not yet be in a position to meet all information requirements set out in the application prior to submitting. In such cases, applications will still be accepted and Ministry of Infrastructure Community Hubs Division staff may follow up with proponents on options to meet information requirements before assessing the proposal’s eligibility. Complete applications must be submitted by 5:00 PM (EST) October 16th, 2017.

Proponents can submit more than one application if they wish to bring forward more than one project, but the Province reserves the right to limit consideration of multiple applications by the same proponent.

Stage 1 Evaluation: Eligibility

Upon receipt of the application the Community Hubs Division will review and notify proponents if additional information is required in order to determine eligibility. Stage 1 (eligibility) evaluation involves a review and assessment of Part 1 of the proponent’s application form, using a specific set of eligibility criteria. This evaluation will focus on whether the application demonstrates eligibility for the transition initiative, which is a necessary step in order for proposals to be considered for selection.

As noted, the Community Hubs Division may follow up with proponents during Stage 1 of the evaluation process in cases where additional information is needed in order to determine eligibility.

Proposals deemed to be eligible based on Stage 1 review will move on to Stage 2 of the evaluation. Ineligible proposals will not be considered for selection under the initiative; proponents will be informed of the outcome and basis for the determination.

Stage 2 Evaluation: Selection

Only proposals that have been deemed to be eligible will be evaluated at Stage 2 (selection), which will focus on information submitted in Parts 1 and 2 of the application. Proposals will be assessed against specific evaluation criteria which will reflect priorities and outcomes associated with the new initiative.

Consideration will be given to selecting proposals and public properties that reflect a range of potential community hub models and local circumstances. The expectation is that proposals would be considered from across both urban and rural locations as well as different regions of Ontario.

Decisions on Stage 2 of the evaluation process will be made in a timely manner as completed eligible proposals are received, and no later than November 30th, 2017. Proponents are encouraged to submit applications as early as possible. Please be aware that while the Ministry of Infrastructure will review all applications, selection of projects under the transition initiative will depend on current Ministry priorities and available funds. The Ministry reserves the right to cease the review of any or all applications at its discretion.

5. What Types of Organizations are Eligible?

Joint applications are strongly encouraged, especially when the application reflects co-ordinated or integrated local planning and the proposal outcomes includes co-location of services and an integrated service delivery model.

In order to streamline review and assessment of proposals, a lead applicant or proponent must be identified to act as a point of contact for follow up communications and to act as signatory for an MOU if the application is successful.

The following types of organizations, with operations currently located in the Province of Ontario, are eligible to submit an application for the transition initiative as a lead applicant or proponent, or to participate in the initiative with other eligible organizations:

- Municipality
- Consolidated Municipal Service Manager
- District Social Services Administration Board
- Indigenous Community or Organization
- Not-for-Profit Corporation (not registered as a charity)
- Registered Charity

For-profit organizations are **ineligible** to participate in the initiative as a lead applicant or proponent but **may** be identified as a supporting organization in an application submitted by an eligible proponent. In such cases some additional information will be requested in order for the application to be reviewed for eligibility and potential selection, including any existing financial commitments or relationships.

6. What Types of Projects are Eligible?

The transition initiative is intended to help support and maintain a number of surplus public properties in the public realm for up to 18 months while the property is being considered for potential redevelopment to meet community needs. Proponents are expected to focus proposals on meeting clearly articulated local needs and alignment with provincial priorities such as housing, children's services, Indigenous community services, senior's housing, healthcare, employment and training, education, and poverty reduction.

7. What Types of Properties are Eligible?

Eligible properties include public properties that are currently available on the market as well as those that are not currently in program use and/or may potentially be deemed surplus to current program use in the near term. The property must be located in Ontario and can be vacant or have existing structures.

Eligible public properties are limited to the following:

- Properties owned by the Province of Ontario
- Properties owned by a school board
- Properties owned by a public hospital

Proponents must identify in their application the specific property they wish to use for their project. If they have not already done so, proponents are encouraged to contact owners of properties that may be eligible for the initiative prior to submitting their application. Information on provincial properties that may be eligible may be found on the [Community Hubs Resource Network](#) or [Infrastructure Ontario](#) websites. Information on school board properties and public hospital properties may be found on relevant websites.

Willingness of the current property owner to participate is an eligibility requirement for the transition initiative. Proponents may submit an application for initial Stage 1 review without confirmation of current owner participation, but proposals will not be deemed eligible for Stage 2 assessment until owner agreement is demonstrated in writing. In some circumstances, the Ministry of Infrastructure may work with proponents and the current property owners to explore options for facilitating property owner participation.

It is important to note that existing rules and regulations pertaining to the circulation of surplus public property continue to apply, including O. Reg. 444/98 under the Education Act, which sets out requirements related to the disposition of surplus school property, and the Province's realty directives and policies. For properties not yet declared surplus or that have not completed circulation, the Ministry of Infrastructure may work with partners to ensure that transition to community use is feasible within or at the end of an 18 month period.

Where property owners are required to respond to expressions of interest in the property as a result of circulation, agreement to participate in this initiative will not affect such requirements. In some cases this may result in transfer of the property to an entity not part of the initiative proposal.

8. Evaluation Criteria

As noted, a two-stage process will be used to evaluate applications. Each stage has its own set of evaluation criteria.

Stage 1

Stage 1 evaluation involves a review and assessment of Part 1 of the application form. In addition to specific eligibility criteria set out in sections 4, 5, 6 and 7 of this document, proposals will be assessed on the basis of criteria grouped under three overarching themes:

1. **Proponent and Supporting Organizations:** established community organizations with a track record of service delivery and in good financial standing
2. **Proposed Community Hub:** established areas of service and program delivery based on community needs and strong alignment with provincial interests
3. **Property and Location:** matched with proposed service offerings, is available with an interested owner (able to proceed within program/realty policies and practices) and an understanding of potential holding costs

Stage 2

As noted, only proposals that are deemed eligible, based on Stage 1 assessment will be considered at Stage 2.

Stage 2 evaluation involves a review and assessment of Parts 1 and 2 of the application form. Proposals will be assessed on the basis of criteria grouped under three overarching themes:

1. **Proposed Community Hub:** established areas of service and program delivery based on community needs and strong alignment with provincial interests, including priority service areas, co-location models and integrated service delivery
2. **Operational Feasibility:** proposal is financially viable and sustainable; proponent has the necessary experience, supporting organizations and organizational and financial capacity to deliver upon its proposal
3. **Readiness:** transition to community use of the property is feasible within or at the end of an 18 month period

As noted, joint applications are strongly encouraged, especially when the application reflects co-ordinated or integrated local planning and the proposal outcomes includes co-location of services and an integrated service delivery model.

Project selection will also emphasize properties from across different regions in Ontario and in different community settings including urban and rural communities.

9. Completing the Application Form

Applications must be completed in English or French using the form provided. In addition, proponents are required to submit a number of attachments that must be submitted along with the application form. Proponents should review the appendix of this document for more information on how to complete their applications.

Applications will be accepted until 5:00 PM (EST) October 16th, 2017. However, proponents are encouraged to submit applications as early as possible prior to this date as the number of proposals selected will be limited and assessment and selection of projects will begin as completed applications are received. Late applications will not be accepted.

10. Submitting Your Application

Completed application packages, including the application form and any **required** attachments, should be submitted via email to community.hubs@ontario.ca. Receipt of applications will be acknowledged via email within 10 business days.

11. Disclosing of Information

The Province is bound by the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act* (Ontario) and any information provided to the Province in the application and any agreement entered into may be subject to disclosure in accordance with that Act.

12. Contact Information

For inquires on the transition initiative, please contact one of the following:

community.hubs@ontario.ca

416-325-6404

13. Definitions

Proponent: the entity that is submitting an application. Where a group of organizations are working together on the proposal, this organization is considered to be the lead organization and will act as the point of contact with the government and enter into any agreement.

Supporting Organization: supports the proponent in their project, either in a funding, service delivery or sponsorship capacity. Depending on their role, in some cases, the property owner may be a supporting organization.

Property Owner: the owner of the property of interest specified in the proposal.

14. Appendix: Application Form Guidance

Application Part 1: Eligibility

Section 1: Proponent and Supporting Organizations

1.1 Proponent (Lead Organization)

Legal Name.

Full Mailing Address.

Telephone / Fax Number.

Website.

Size of Organization.

Current Number of Staff. Estimated current number of paid staff members in your organization.

Current Number of Volunteers. Estimated current number of volunteers in your organization.

Project Team. Number of individuals (paid and volunteer) who would be significantly involved with this project if selected for the transition initiative.

Contact Person Information. This individual will serve as the main point of contact between the proponent and the Province. They must have the authority to bind.

Name.

Title.

Email Address.

Phone Number.

Type of Entity.

Organization Type-Specific Information (where applicable)

Charitable Registration Number and Year of Registration.

Incorporation Number and Year of Incorporation.

Proposed Role. Select which role(s) you as the proponent anticipate having:

- Funder: provides financial resources but has no involvement with service delivery
- Service Delivery: has a direct role in delivering services
- Sponsor: supports the project in a manner not related to funding or service delivery

Mandate. In 100 words or less, describe your organization's mandate.

Experience and Past Success. In 300 words or less, list and describe any experience and successes you (the proponent) have had in delivering community programs and services, including those that have been supported by provincial ministry or agency funding. Where applicable, provide the name of the funding ministry or agency and relevant funding program(s). Particular emphasis should be placed on experience involving multi-service delivery or partnerships with other community organizations, including any community hubs currently operating in Ontario.

1.2 Supporting Organization(s). Note that the property owner should not be included in this section, unless they are anticipated to have a future and ongoing role in the project. Do not include provincial ministries or agencies in this section.

Legal Name.

Full Mailing Address.

Telephone / Fax Number.

Web Address.

Size of Organization.

Current Number of Staff. Estimated current number of paid staff members in this supporting organization.

Current Number of Volunteers. Estimated current number of volunteers in this supporting organization.

Project Team. Number of individuals (paid and volunteer) who would be significantly involved with this project if selected for the transition initiative.

Contact Person Information. This individual will serve as the main point of contact for this proposal. They must have the authority to bind.

Name.

Title.

Email Address.

Phone Number.

Type of Entity.

Organization Type-Specific Information (where applicable).

Charitable Registration Number and Year of Registration.

Incorporation Number and Year of Incorporation.

Proposed Role. Select which role(s) you as the proponent anticipate having:

- Funder: provides financial resources but has no involvement with service delivery
- Service Delivery: has a direct role in delivering services
- Sponsor: supports the project in a manner not related to funding or service delivery

Mandate. In 100 words or less, describe your organization's mandate.

Describe Relationship between Proponent and Supporting Organization. In 150 words or less, describe the current and historical (if applicable) relationship you have had with this organization. This should include any experience delivering community services and programs together and the expected relationship in relation to this project.

Section 2: Proposed Community Hub

- 2.1 Proposed Community-Focused Programs and Services to be Provided.** In 200 words or less, list and briefly describe the proposed community-focused programs and services that would be delivered.
- 2.2 Local Community Needs to be Addressed.** In 150 words or less, describe how the project aligns with the needs and/or service gaps that exist in your local community.
- 2.3 Alignment with Provincial Priorities.** Select all options that apply to your project. Note that this list is not inclusive of all provincial priorities, and eligible projects may include those outside of the areas listed.

Section 3: Property and Location

- 3.1 Property Information.** This information should be obtained from the property owner, where possible. Note that the Ministry of Infrastructure may follow up with property owners to confirm information provided.
- Full Address.**
- Size of Land (acres).**
- Size of Existing Structures (square feet).** Where applicable, provide a list of existing structures, including the size of each in square feet.
- Current Ownership.**
- Type of Current Owner.** Identify what type of legal entity owns the property.
- Name of Current Owner.** Specify the name of the legal entity that currently owns the property.
- Estimate of Annual Operating and Maintenance Costs.** Provide an estimate of the annual operating and maintenance costs related to the property and operating revenue available to offset these costs.
- Estimate of Property Value.** Provide an estimate of the value of the property.
- Source of Property Valuation.** In 150 words or less, identify the source of your property valuation, including the date. Describe any material assumptions that were made.
- 3.2 Property Ownership/Lease Intention.** Specify whether you are interested in acquiring or securing a long-term lease for the property.
- 3.3 Accessibility.** In 150 words or less, describe how compliance with the built environment requirements under the [Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act](#) will be achieved.
- 3.4 Current Availability.** Select the current availability of the property. If you are unsure, please follow up with the current owner. Some information may be available using the following resources:
- [Community Hubs Resource Network](#)
 - [Infrastructure Ontario](#)
 - School Board websites
 - Public Hospital websites
- 3.5 Current Use.**
- Proponent or Supporting Organization Use.** Select whether you or one or more of your identified supporting organizations currently makes use of the property of interest (e.g. for program or service delivery purposes).

Description of Current Use. Describe in 100 words or less how the property is currently being used, including the name(s) of the organizations that are making use of it (where applicable).

3.6 Agreement of Current Owner to Participate in Initiative, if Proposal is Selected.

3.7 Status of Engagement between Proponent and Current Property Owner. In 150 words or less, describe the current status of engagement between the proponent and the current property owner, including discussions and planning to date in relation to the transition initiative application. In particular, describe the current level of interest on the part of the property owner in participating in this initiative.

Section 4: Attachments

Attachment 4.1 is not required for Municipalities, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers or District Social Services Administration Boards. Attachment 4.2 is not required for properties owned by the Province of Ontario.

4.1 Proof of Eligibility. Provide attachments that confirm your eligibility to participate in the initiative. For example, letters patent, notification of registration of charitable status or special act of incorporation.

4.2 Letter of Confirmation from Current Property Owner. Attach a letter from the owner of the property you have specified to be of interest in your proposal, confirming that they are prepared to maintain ownership of the property for up to 18 months should this proposal be selected for participation in the transition initiative.

Application Part 2: Selection

Section 1: Proponent and Supporting Organizations

1.1 Stakeholders. In 300 words or less, list and describe your (the proponent) organization's stakeholders and the local community and any impact your proposed project may have on them. Also comment on any engagement that has taken place with stakeholders and the local community related to the proposed project, and any significant issues arising from this engagement that may be relevant to the project.

1.2 Current and Future Government Funding Sources. In 300 words or less, provide details on current and future sources of funding from various orders of government. List the amount, the funding organization, and the anticipated dates that funding will be provided. If funding is received from multiple sources please provide an estimate of total annual funding and identify major revenue streams.

Section 2: Proposed Community Hub

2.1 Future Community Use. Building on your response to question 2.1 of Part 1 of the application form, in 500 words or less describe in detail the programs or services that would be offered and how they would be delivered, including which supporting organization would be the responsible delivery partner. In addition, describe how the various programs and services would interact to form a cohesive hub and highlight plans for service delivery integration.

2.2 Community Needs Assessment. Building on your response to question 2.2 of Part 1 of the application form, in 500 words or less, describe the local community needs and/or program and service gaps that your community hub would help address. Include specific evidence and analysis done and describe how your hub would contribute to addressing identified needs and service gaps. Where possible, refer to public government and/or other publicly available documents that provide relevant and reliable local information on service needs and gaps.

2.3 Alignment with Provincial Interests. In 500 words or less, describe how your proposed hub is aligned with the provincial interests you selected in Part 1 of this application.

2.4 Planning Alignment. In 300 words or less, describe how your proposal is aligned with existing planning initiatives, including but not limited to provincial growth plans, municipal and local community plans, school board capital plans, and Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) planning initiatives.

2.5 Expected Outcomes. In 300 words or less, list and describe the expected economic, social and community outcomes of your project and how performance would be measured and reported (qualitative and quantitative). Particular emphasis should be placed on client outcomes.

Section 3: Property and Location

Note that the Ministry of Infrastructure may follow up to confirm information provided and if additional property related information is needed.

- 3.1 Detailed Operating and Maintenance Cost Financials (if “on hold” funding is required).** In 300 words or less, provide historic operating and maintenance costs for the past three years and revenue available to offset these costs, and comment on any major repairs or capital expenditures that may be required during the “on hold” period. If “on hold” funding is required to maintain the property in its current ownership for up to 18 months, the current owner must provide an estimate of the level of support needed.
- 3.2 Full Property Description.** Describe in 500 words or less the history, features and layout of the property. Also provide a summary of title, stakeholder, or other issues to indicate other opportunities/constraints that may facilitate/complicate future program delivery and/or development of the property for the proposed use. In addition, provide a full list of all existing due diligence reports (including date) available for the property, including but not limited to heritage designation, land claims, environmental assessment, land use planning, geotechnical, and other relevant reports that provide information on the current status and condition of the property. If possible, attach a document that shows the layout of the property in detail.
- 3.3 Details of Proposed Future Use.** Describe in 500 words or less how your proposed use of the property for community programs and services aligns with its size, layout and location. In addition, elaborate on your proposal to either own part or all of the property or lease part or all of the property. Describe why this choice makes sense for you and your supporting organizations, given financial considerations and the programs and services you would offer.
- 3.4 Renovation / Re-purposing / Construction Plans.** In 200 words or less, describe any proposed changes to the property that are needed for future community services and use and to ensure accessibility. Where possible, reference potential timelines and costs of each improvement and alternation.

Section 4: Readiness

- 4.1 Current State of Business and Financial Planning.** In 300 words or less, discuss your current state of business planning and financial planning for your proposed project. This should include a list of any revenue or financing sources that you have secured, have identified, or are proposing.
- 4.2 Risks and Challenges.** In 200 words or less, list and briefly describe the two or three most significant risks that might prevent or threaten the viability of your project. Outline your contingency plan for each risk.

Section 5: “On Hold” Period

- 5.1 Plans and Activities.** Describe in 500 words or less how you and your supporting organizations are planning on making use of the “on hold” period to make your project a reality. This description should include a list of major tasks to be completed during this time, along with projected project timelines and milestones.
- 5.2 Required Support and Success Factors.** Describe in 500 words or less the specific factors that would make the “on hold” period a success for your project. This includes any non-financial support that could be provided by the Province during the “on hold” period and how this support would contribute to achieving identified success factors. In addition, comment on any outstanding decisions or approvals required to make the project a reality, including those involving the provincial government or other orders of government. Any zoning changes that may be required should be identified. Key dates and strategies that may be used to ensure success should be provided.
- 5.3 Long-Term Financial Sustainability Plan.** In 500 words or less, describe how you will demonstrate that the proposed community hub would be sustainable in the long-term, from a financial perspective. This should include a list and description of any secured or proposed revenue sources for your project. Where possible, also include the proposed use of each revenue source and elaborate on any funding gaps that may exist (and how these gaps will be addressed).

Section 6: Attachments

Attachments 6.2, 6.3, 6.4, and 6.5 are not required for Municipalities, Consolidated Municipal Service Managers or District Social Services Administration Boards.

- 6.1 Signed Supporting Organization Confirmation Letters.** You are required to submit a separate letter confirming participation by each supporting organization. This letter needs to be signed by both yourself (the proponent) and the supporting organization. Each letter should indicate who the supporting organization is and their current level of interest in participating in your proposed project. It should also outline the proposed roles and responsibilities of each organization.

Proponents who are able to do so are encouraged to instead submit more formal agreements. These agreements would need to include all of the information specified above, for the signed confirmation letter.

- 6.2 Financial Statements.** Attach the last three years of your financial statements. One or two years of statements will be accepted for proponents that do not have three years of statements. Where possible, audited financial statements are preferred.
- 6.3 Current Operating Budget.** Provide an attachment that shows a forecast of your revenues and expenses for the current complete fiscal year. Please indicate your fiscal year end and explain any major increases or decreases in operating revenue from the previous year and potential material impact of the project (if approved).
- 6.4 List of Elected Board of Directors.** Provide an attachment that lists your board of directors. This list must include names, board positions, telephone numbers and email addresses. Also indicate board members' occupations if relevant to their participation on the board. If the proponent is from a First Nation, attach a list of band council members.
- 6.5 Governance Structure.** Provide an attachment outlining your executive or management structure, including details on the decision making process.