



## MEDIA RELEASE

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### Riverdale Hub Boasts Exciting Upgrades Thanks to \$336,900 in OTF Grants from the Ontario Government

**Toronto, ON** – On November 1st, the Riverdale Hub announced the completion of some key transformative improvements, all aimed at enhancing its community spaces and social enterprises. Local MPP Peter Tabuns was there to meet with the group and formally congratulate them on the work done thanks to two grants, totalling \$336,900 from the provincial government's Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF). The grants, awarded in 2022 and 2023, have made the Hub a more accessible, efficient, and vibrant gathering place for social entrepreneurs, artists, and equity-deserving groups.

"The Riverdale Hub has used these grants so well – by expanding their physical plant, to reflect the communities' needs and updating programmes that mirror their strategic plan," said Peter Tabuns, MPP for Toronto-Danforth. "It is a remarkable example of how resourcing a thoughtful, creative process can make a sustainable difference for everyone involved."

In late 2022, the Riverdale Hub received a \$149,900 Capital grant from OTF to make some needed upgrades that include new HVAC ventilation systems and electrical wiring, a fresh coat of paint throughout the space, and a refreshed patio area. In addition, the Hub expanded its gardening activities with more containers on the rooftop and better water access on the ground floor, underscoring its commitment to environmental sustainability.

The second OTF grant, was a two-year, \$187,000 Resilient Communities Fund grant awarded in early 2023 that let the Hub embark on a strategic planning process, which led to a complete revamp of its food services. The former Social Gardener Café was rebranded as **Free Spirit @ Riverdale Hub**, offering an expanded menu that includes affordable and healthy vegetarian and meat including Halal options, as well as a non-alcoholic cocktail bar. The restaurant hours were extended to serve brunch and dinner, making it a new favourite for locals and visitors alike. Riverdale Hub pays its staff a living wage and tipping is not expected.

"We are deeply grateful for the ongoing support from the Ontario government, which allows us to keep improving our programs and services," said **Nuzhath Leedham**, Executive Director of Riverdale Hub. "These investments enhance our ability to serve the community while ensuring the long-term success of our food service enterprises."

Riverdale Hub, a non-profit social enterprise housed in a beautifully restored century-old building, is renowned for its green initiatives, including geothermal and solar energy systems and a green roof and rain garden bioretention systems. The Hub hosts a range of activities, from art galleries and pop-up artisan markets to co-working spaces and a seed library. The proceeds from these ventures are reinvested into community programs aimed at reducing barriers for equity-deserving groups. Refer to its [website](#) to find out more about event, meeting, and workshop space rental options.

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Ontario government with a mission to build healthy and vibrant communities across the province. Last year, OTF invested more than \$110M into 1,044 community projects and multi-sector partnerships. Projects aim to enhance economic well-being, foster more active lifestyles, support child and youth development, provide spaces for people to come together and connect, and create a more sustainable environment. Visit [otf.ca](https://otf.ca) to learn more.

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