



**QUEENSWAY
TERRACE NORTH**
Community Association

Frank Ryan Fitness Park

Update on Fund-raising

April 2025

In February 2024 the Queensway Terrace North Community Association (QTNCA) and the City of Ottawa signed an agreement under the City's Community Partnership Major Capital Program that committed the City to contribute up to \$100,000 in matching funds for the purchase and installation of outdoor fitness equipment in Frank Ryan Park, which is owned by the City of Ottawa. The terms of the agreement stipulate that all funds raised by the QTNCA are to be handed over to the City of Ottawa, which will then use the QTNCA and City contributions to pay for purchase and installation of the equipment and all associated project management and contractor costs.

The QTNCA established a project team to raise funds and engage with community organizations to understand the fitness needs of the teens, adults, and seniors who would use the equipment. The most recent (Fall 2024) estimate of the purchase and installation costs is \$212,000 – this includes not just the cost of the equipment itself, but all the associated costs of City of Ottawa activities, such as the landscape design and ground preparation, as well City costs for project management. Under this cost scenario, the City of Ottawa would contribute its maximum commitment of \$100,000 and the QTNCA would need to contribute \$112,000. City staff recently informed the project team that costs of similar projects have been rising, which means that the QTNCA's share of the costs will likely be higher than the \$112,000 estimate.

The QTNCA board approved a fundraising strategy focused on seeking large grants from government programs and charitable foundations. This is because the level of effort required to raise such a large amount of money via donation requests to local businesses and holding fundraising events was determined to be excessive for the volunteer project team. Over the past year the project team has researched foundations and government initiatives at the provincial and federal levels for the availability of *capital* funding, that is, funding programs for the purchase and permanent installation of tangible items. This is distinct from *project, program, and event* funding, which is for time-limited services and activities delivered and aimed at groups of people. The project team's research determined that very few charitable foundations provide capital funding. In September 2024 they applied to the BMO Foundation; the team was recently informed that the application was not successful. Unfortunately, the BMO Foundation does not provide reasons for rejection of applications.



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The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF), an agency of the Government of Ontario, opened its capital funding program to applications in early February 2025. The OTF is a significant funder of capital, as well as program and other funds. The project team had a coaching session with an OTF official who informed the team that the Frank Ryan Fitness Park project was ineligible for funding for two reasons:

- As noted above, the terms of the City's agreement with the QTNCA required the QTNCA to hand over all funds it raises for the project to the City of Ottawa – any funds provided to the QTNCA by the Ontario Trillium Foundation would be handed to the City. However, municipalities over 20,000 in population are ineligible for OTF funding. The OTF considers a project such as ours, where the funds raised are handed to an ineligible municipality (termed *flow-through funding*), to be ineligible for OTF funding. The OTF website includes flow-through funding in its list of ineligible activities (<https://otf.ca/who-we-are/our-policies/eligibility-policy#ineligible-applicants>).
- Applicants must either own or hold a minimum five-year lease for the land on which the capital improvement will be made and must provide proof of ownership or lease. The City of Ottawa (itself ineligible for OTF funding) owns Frank Ryan Park. The QTNCA neither owns the park nor has a lease on all or a portion of the park. While the City of Ottawa would have provided the QTNCA with a letter endorsing the project and confirming that the QTNCA has signed an agreement with the City of Ottawa under its Community Partnership Major Capital Program, the OTF does not consider this to constitute proof of either ownership of or a lease for the land in Frank Ryan Park.

The QTNCA will continue to monitor capital project funding opportunities with foundations and government sources – they may change their eligibility criteria and new programs may become available. If you are aware of foundations or government funding programs that make grants of significant size for *capital* projects in the domain of physical fitness and wellness, we would love to hear from you via an email to qtncommunity@gmail.com. We would appreciate it if you would first review the organization or agency's eligibility criteria to confirm that it makes *capital* grants, and it would be helpful if you can provide the URL of the foundation or agency's web page(s) that describes that capital projects are eligible for funding and the dollar value of the grants.

The project team has also been busy reaching out to local community organizations that run fitness programs and have expertise in people's fitness needs, particularly those of teens and seniors. The team has had conversations with the physical education department at Woodroffe High School, staff of the Pinecrest-Queensway Community Health Centre, and the Director General of La Maison de la Francophonie. All were enthusiastic about adding fitness equipment to Frank Ryan Park and how it would enhance their fitness programs. This support and the knowledge and data held by the organizations will be of value for the preparation of future funding applications.

For more information, contact QTNca at qtncommunity@gmail.com.