

For Information Only

Samaritan Centre

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Recommendation

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Background

The Samaritan Centre is a building located at 344 Elgin Street in Sudbury which houses agencies that provide services to those who are homeless or vulnerable in our community.

The Samaritan Centre was built in 2005 through fundraising and donations from community stakeholders including the donation of the property by City of Greater Sudbury. The goal was to create a unique centre serving citizens in need by co-locating agencies in a single, modest facility to serve their common clientele better, while respecting each other's individual core values.

The original four agencies that became tenants within the Samaritan centre were the Elgin Street Mission, the Catholic Charities Soup Kitchen, Overcomers group of Sudbury and the Victorian Order of Nurses. Glad Tidings church established a charity called New Hope Outreach Services to own and operate the building. A vision and mission statement for the Samaritan Center was then created:

The Vision: To enhance the Greater Sudbury Community by empowering people in need, including homeless people, to move towards wholeness, through the network of diverse charities that respect each other's core values and work in a common facility.

The Mission: To build and operate a single facility, where a network of diverse charities, which respect each other's core values, offer quality holistic programs, to people in need, including homeless people.

The current tenants of the Samaritan centre are the Elgin Street Mission, the Catholic Charities Soup Kitchen and the Corner Clinic (operated by Centre de Sante communautaire du Grand Sudbury). The Elgin

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Street Mission is a drop in centre which serves breakfast and dinner daily, provides bathroom and shower facilities, laundry services, clothing, and spiritual support to those in need. During the winter months the Mission acts as a 24 hour warming station for the Extreme Cold Weather Alert Program. The Blue Door Soup Kitchen (previously the Catholic Charities soup kitchen) serves a free hot nutritious lunch to approximately 400 people weekdays between 11:00 am and 2:00 pm. The Corner Clinic provides health care services and illness prevention programs to low income individuals who are hard to reach, homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, in partnership with other community agencies.

Over the past few years there have been complaints from the public, including increased police calls, as a result of loitering, prostitution and drug related activity occurring in the neighborhood around the Samaritan Centre. The police, members of City Council, City of Greater Sudbury Community Development staff, Samaritan Centre Agency staff members and concerned citizens have met several times to explore ways to address these community issues.

Among other recommendations arising from these meetings was to engage in a visioning session, as a way to reaffirm the vision, mission and future goals of the Centre.

Visioning Session

On September 13th, 2011 staff from both the City of Greater Sudbury's Community Development Department and Greater Sudbury Police Services facilitated a visioning session. There were 20 persons in attendance representing staff and board members from New Hope Outreach, the Elgin Street Mission, the Blue Door Café, The Corner Clinic, as well as, CGS staff, Sudbury Police Services and a member from City Council.

During the session the group shared, reviewed and discussed the vision and mission of each tenant agency as well as the overall vision and mission of the Samaritan Centre. A small group format was used to discuss the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats facing the centre. Groups were then asked to identify priorities based on the analysis, and establish some S.M.A.R.T. goals. From this session three key priorities were identified:

- Establish an ad-hoc Samaritan Centre Committee
- Organizational visibility that advocates programs and services offered by the centre
- Sustainable funding- grants/sponsorship

City staff facilitated a follow up meeting to the visioning session. The group discussed the priorities previously identified and how to move further with creating and achieving goals. Steps were taken to create an ad-hoc committee to be made up of staff, board members from New Hope Outreach and each tenant agency within the Samaritan Centre, as well as a CGS staff member.

All in attendance felt that the visioning session and follow up meeting were a positive step in moving forward to identifying goals and increasing collaboration within the Samaritan Centre.

As well, New Hope Outreach received an annual grant of \$27,000 from City Council. This grant allowed New Hope Outreach to receive tax exempt status for the Samaritan Centre location through MPAC.

CGS staff through the learning city initiative assisted Pastor Kevin Serviss in developing a website and brochure for the Samaritan Centre.