

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 - 2024



St. Joseph's

"CARING IS SHARING"



INTRODUCTION

St. Joseph’s Community Food Bank is a volunteer driven, non-profit, non-denominational organization established in 1986 to provide food to those in need in Pembroke and area. We work closely with other food banks across Renfrew County to satisfy this most basic community need. Prior to 1985, the Salvation Army operated an emergency food bank for many years until it became clear that a more permanent organization was needed to satisfy the continuing growth in demand. At the time, the Salvation Army could satisfy only about a third of the food need with the resources available to it.

The Food Bank was the vision of Mary and Terry McCann who brought together organizations such as Bernadette McCann House, the Salvation Army, the Kinsmen Club of Pembroke, the members of the multi-denominational church association and a wide range of private supporters to contribute to the successful start-up in January of 1986.

The organization is entirely dependent on volunteer support and public donations to fulfill its mission. The generosity of churches, schools, service clubs, businesses and private citizens have made St. Joseph’s Community Food Bank an essential element of the social support network in the area. The operations are overseen by a board of volunteer directors who are representative of the community. The Food Bank operates out of rented space in the Holy Name Annex of the Roman Catholic Church.

This first strategic plan for the organization, covering the period 2021 to 2024, recognizes the need for a more structured planning process that will allow the Food Bank to flourish while it responds to the growing demands of an expanding clientele. As you will see from

the content of the plan, the Food Bank must evolve to meet increasing and changing demands, challenging economic conditions, an expanding population, and an aging volunteer work force.

MISSION

Hunger is real – we help!

VISION

We are a volunteer driven organization that addresses food insecurity by providing ongoing, dependable, nutritious food for families and individuals in our communities.

VALUES

Volunteerism

We give back to our community in a caring and compassionate manner;

Respect

We operate in an accepting environment of empathy and confidentiality;

Partnership

We collaborate and cooperate with the generous support of our stakeholders;

Excellence

We provide high standards of ethical and reliable services;

Stewardship

The cornerstone of our organization is the responsible and transparent management of all resources.

FOOD BANK STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Food Bank volunteers conducted a thorough SWOT Analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) in 2022. The details of the Analysis have been extremely useful in guiding the planning process. Here are some extracts from this important work:

STRENGTHS

- A very loyal and caring group of volunteer workers;
- Excellent community support from both volunteers and the community;
- Food quality provided to clients is excellent;
- The people of Pembroke are very generous donators;
- Strong support is provided by churches, grocery stores and businesses;
- The Food Bank has a strong financial foundation.

CHALLENGES

- The need for supplemental food in the community has increased dramatically. Over the last 5 years, from a demand of 45,000 meals in 2017 to a projected 96,000 meals in 2022;
- The core of long-term volunteers (retirees) is starting to shrink due to aging and illness. No cohesive strategy is in place to maintain a full complement of workers;
- The community, although very generous, is faced with growing demands for donations. Existing charities often find themselves competing for reduced resources;
- The rapid expansion of the Food Bank and the shift during the pandemic from donating food items to donating cash, requires a wider variety of skills from the Board of Directors. The complexity of financial control, planning and legal issues facing the Board in the future will require a more structured decision making process;
- By far the biggest challenge is the inadequacy of the building that houses the Food Bank. The structure cannot be renovated to deal with the inadequacy of a facility that was not designed to meet the needs of a Food Bank. Problems include:
 - Inadequate space for current storage and client needs;
 - No room for expansion;
 - Two levels in the building make access very difficult especially for aging volunteers;
 - Stairs are impacting volunteer and client safety;
 - More food is being received by pallets requiring better delivery access;
 - Additional cooler and freezer space is needed to increased supply of fresh and frozen food;
 - No confidential administration and client counselling space is available;
 - The building cannot grow to meet skyrocketing demand.

EXTERNAL FACTORS DRIVING CHANGE

The Economy

Wages across the county are not keeping pace with inflation which increased to 6.7% in 2021 from an average of 1.5% in the preceding five year period. This is the highest annual rate of inflation in 31 years.

The Bank of Canada raised its key lending rate by 50 basis points in April 2022 to 1%, the highest single rate increase since the year 2000. This all happened at a time of surging house prices and soaring inflation.

Supply chain problems brought about by the Covid 19 pandemic have disrupted transportation processes, contributing to shortages of goods across a variety of sectors,

particularly food. In 2021, food prices increased by 3% to 5% overall with higher increases for meat (4.5%) and vegetables (4.5% - 6.5%).

Housing

Housing prices are escalating beyond the ability of most citizens to own their own homes. The average cost of homes in Renfrew County rose in 2021 to an all time high of \$379,993. At the same time, the stock of older houses in Pembroke is rapidly being renovated, thus generating higher rents beyond the financial capacity of tenants.

Poverty Rates

Food costs have increased in 2021 by 3% - 5%. This has severely impacted the ability of residents to satisfy their basic human needs. Statistics available from 2018 show that people were already struggling to meet basic costs before the pandemic began. For example:

A family of four with one minimum wage earner was left with only \$1167 of disposable income after paying rent and food costs. It is obviously unrealistic to expect a family to pay telephone, taxes, clothing and transportation costs with these resources;

The situation was worse for ***seniors on old Age Security/Guaranteed Income Supplement*** who were left with approximately \$495 to cover all costs after paying food and rent;

For ***single adults on Ontario Disability Support Program***, the total costs of food and rent exceeded their income by \$16, leaving no resources for other ongoing costs.

From the latest statistics available, the incomes of those remaining in poverty in Ontario over the period from 2008 to 2016 have decreased even before the impacts of inflation.

Food Security – Government Funding Required

The first Canadian Food Bank opened in Edmonton in 1981. These important institutions were initially intended to respond to temporary economic conditions that resulted in high unemployment. Unfortunately, what was intended to be a temporary measure expanded across the country with the growth of emergency food needs. Now hundreds of thousands of people visit food banks monthly as their income cannot meet their basic human needs. Government action is critical to improving food security and affordability.

LONG TERM OBJECTIVES

The following long term objectives should allow the Food Bank to continue the success we have already achieved while positioning us to provide responsive services to our clients:

- Develop a **stable and sustainable funding base** for the Food Bank allowing it to respond to the demands of growth and the evolving food needs of the community.
- Develop **stronger decision making and management processes** as part of the evolution of the Food Bank towards a future of expanded services and skyrocketing growth.
- Continue the community partnerships that have proven so successful to date. **Work with partner charities to better coordinate mutual planning processes** to avoid overlap and duplication.
- **Develop a strong, sustainable work force**, with the appropriate mix of physical strength and business skills needed to support a modern Food Bank into the foreseeable future.
- **In collaboration with the community, establish a long term home for St. Joseph’s Community Food Bank.** The new building will satisfy growth requirements and technical needs, while conforming to safety regulations. It will provide adequate space for storage while allowing for privacy and confidentiality during staff/client interaction.



ACTION PLAN

The goals included in this action plan will ensure that the Food Bank achieves the long term objectives of the Strategic Plan. The goals will be monitored carefully to ensure that they continue to be relevant and, wherever possible to meet the proposed deadlines.

Sustainable Funding

- ❖ **Establish 5 year fund raising targets** to identify the resources needed to support the Food Bank; taking into account inflation, economic trends and the growth in demand for supplemental food - by January 2023;
- ❖ **Establish targets for canned and dry food donations. Strengthen partnerships with local grocery outlets, churches and institutions to have ongoing food donation drives** aimed at increasing food donations in measurable increments to provide a sustainable balance between monetary and food donations – by January 2024;
- ❖ **Develop and implement a comprehensive public relations campaign to publicize the Food Bank’s financial needs** and solicit donations to ensure the viability of the institution – by December 2022.

Strengthen Management Processes

- ❖ **Establish a by-law to formally define the role of the Board of Directors** including articulating the role of the Executive Committee in relation to the full Board– by November 2022;
- ❖ **Identify the mix of skills needed on the Board in areas such as financial management and legal matters.** As part of a succession planning process, gradually change the mix of skills on the Board through attrition and the attraction of new talent – starting December 2022;
- ❖ **Implement a leadership development program for the Board** by arranging annual leadership development seminars over the period of the Plan.

Build a Sustainable Volunteer Workforce

- ❖ **Develop a human resource needs forecast** identifying the need for volunteers over a 5 year period, outlining the mix of skills and strengths required – by May 2023;
- ❖ **Develop and implement a comprehensive plan for attracting** the necessary volunteers on an ongoing basis – by May 2023;
- ❖ **Provide more structure to volunteer recruitment** by formalizing an application process, a requirement for criminal record checks for volunteers and establishing a more structured orientation program for new volunteers to the organization – by December 2023.

Strengthen Community Partnerships

- ❖ **Work with community partners, including partner charities to schedule semi-annual meetings** aimed at updating partners on new developments, raising issues of concern to all and establishing sub-committees to examine areas of common interest where greater cooperation could provide better results – by June 2023;
- ❖ **Implement sub-committee recommendations to improve linkages and cooperation** on an ongoing basis.

Build a New Facility

St. Joseph’s Community Food Bank will construct a new purpose- built facility to satisfy its long term needs by:

- ❖ **Implementing a comprehensive fund raising campaign to raise the money needed for construction** – by September 1, 2022;
- ❖ **Completing the design work** – by July 15, 2022;
- ❖ **Commencing construction of the new building and order appliances and furnishings** – by May 2023 dependent on raising 75% of required funds;
- ❖ **Completing the construction of the new building, relocating and starting operations in the new facility**– by October 2023 dependent on fund raising success.

EVALUATION

Evaluation is an essential element of any plan. The objectives and the action plan will be reviewed semi-annually by the Board to determine whether goals have been achieved and to discuss areas where changes in deadlines may be needed. At the end of the planning period, a report will be presented to the Board of Directors to outline the outcomes. The results achieved through this first strategic plan will be included as an appendix to the next subsequent plan.

CONCLUSION

St. Joseph’s Community Food Bank has developed this first Strategic Plan as part of a visionary exercise, but with an eye towards practicality. Volunteer organizations such as ours operate in an environment of change and this plan recognizes that the achievement of goals can be affected by conditions beyond our control. However, to the best of our ability, this plan is perceived to be realistic and manageable within available resources. The achievement of our goals should position us for long term success in carrying out our mission.