



Making Kenora HOME

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS
FOR HOMELESSNESS

ANNUAL REPORT 2019-2020

HUB Executive

Diane Pelletier, Co-Chair
Jennifer McKibbon, Co-Chair
Nan Normand, Secretary
Keith Myshkowsky, Treasurer
Allison Crewe
Gordon Day-Janzen
Betty Getson
Deborah Jonassen
Charlene Ramage
Judy Underwood
Adam Ward

Guiding Principles

❖ EQUALITY

We are all created equal within this world that we share

❖ INCLUSION

Every person living in Kenora is a part of our community

❖ SHARING

As a community we must care for each other

❖ SELF DETERMINATION

Every person has the right to choose his or her own path providing that path does not hurt another

❖ EMPOWERMENT

We are accountable for our own actions and need to look inward first before looking outward for change

Message from the Co-Chairs

The COVID pandemic has brought the the vulnerability of the homelessness population to the forefront. As agencies scramble to reduce viral spread by temporarily housing these individuals, we rue the lost opportunities to follow the path of Medicine Hat who committed to and succeeded in eliminating homelessness. When Making Kenora Home was established 14 years ago the vision was clear - solve homelessness by providing homes but the path leading towards this vision has been strewn with challenges. We initially believed that funding was the barrier to housing development. Funding was found and then we struggled with the politics of zoning barriers and neighbourhood resistance. Once construction was completed and occupancy began, the need for support services to stabilize tenancies emerged. Each challenge emphasized the need for the entire community to work collaboratively to effectively meet needs. The *Housing First* model remains the solution - provide homes with an array of available housing and support service choices to reduce homelessness. Sadly there is much more work that needs to be done locally before Kenora can be called a Housing First community.

There are plenty of good intentions but intentions have to be actualized into collaboration. True collaboration requires respectful inclusion, a willingness to put the needs of all before individual interests, creativity and innovation. There has been local collaborations within the previous decade that have been successful and with continuing commitment, we can reduce homelessness in Kenora.

Kenora Can Care

Jennifer McKibbon
CoChair

Diane Pelletier
CoChair

Objective #1-Promote Implementation of Making Kenora Home Building Recommendations

Although the original housing recommendations have been substantially met, the community need escalated dramatically since the original report and understanding of effective housing models has evolved. Making Kenora Home has endeavored to be responsive to this changing social landscape and further recommendations have emerged. These recommendations have been promoted through continuing research, consultation and advocacy.

Project	No Progress	Some Progress	Completed	Exceeded	Notes
<i>2007 Housing Report Recommendations</i>					
Full-time Emergency Shelter				x	Challenges have beset the project so although the facility has been built, the operation has not met its vision yet.
Eight Transitional Single Room Occupancy Units				x	More stabilization units have been developed for those experiencing severe mental health/addictions.
Twenty Single Room Occupancy Units		x			Need has outstripped estimates
Ten Single Dwelling Aboriginal Family Units			x		More are needed
Tax Discount/Credit for Low-Income Seniors			x		Municipal tax deferral option now available
Two Supportive Housing Units				x	Units developed for victims of violence. Senior support services available inhouse at 3 senior housing complexes.
Rent Subsidization				x	Funding has been increased however the lack of available units is a barrier
Revolving House Trust				x	Habitat for Humanity established (3 builds to date)
<i>Post-Report Housing Recommendations</i>					
Bail Bed Program		x			Project approved and underway
Seniors Housing		x			54 mixed income units pending construction
Youth Housing		x			10 units approved for those leaving public care but many more needed
Chronically Homeless		x			24 unit single room occupancy/supported living
Public Washroom Availability	x				Despite continuing advocacy, no progress has been made
<i>Housing Support Model Recommendations</i>					
Housing First		x			Iain DeJong presentations
Social Enterprise		x			Shaun Loney presentations

The development of the emergency shelter has been assailed with many challenges. In the two years since opening, hours were reduced, operations were temporarily halted and management has changed between agencies. At this point, the facility has limited hours. The envisioned 24/7 services hub facility has not been realized. The new managers, CMHA-Kenora, are planning to expand services offered at the shelter but without 24/7 services, the homeless population continues to struggle with obtaining food, provision, warming space and hygienic resources including access to toilets. In response to this continuing crisis, Making Kenora Home has consulted, raised issues publically and participated in actions including Walk to the Rocks, Homeless Day Walk and sacred fires. Two community conversations were facilitated to try to ease increased tensions between the new shelter operation and neighbours. We also stood in opposition to the anti-loitering bylaw which would unfairly target the homeless. Local turbulence caught the notice of both the provincial and federal governments and an important report by the Ontario Human Rights Commission regarding Kenora's issues was released as a result of their investigation.



Since Making Kenora Home first brought Iain DeJong to the community to share the success of the *Housing First* model, many have begun referencing the need for implementation of this perspective but resentment still spews from those who believe that housing is for the “deserving”. Even agencies that seem to be embracing the model, fall short of the ideal which centres on respecting the individual's choices. For some, it is a reflection of operational accountability and for others it is a lack of services that can be tailored by need rather than mandate. The competitive struggle for funding allocations still sets agencies against each other and fractures collaborative efforts despite the best intentions.

Social enterprise is emerging as a best model for distribution of social funding dollars. It is a model that is based on reducing social costs through innovative service delivery. It is the antithesis of the competitive funding that encourages the dysfunction previously described. It is also a model that is tied to social outcomes rather than simple service provision. Since social housing and associated support services are reliant on government funding, Making Kenora Home has established a working relationship with Encompass Coop and brought their expertise to local community groups through workshops to increase familiarity with this cutting edge approach. One of the early projects to incorporate social enterprise principles is PEOPLE who provided yard work employment opportunities for marginalized citizens, during the summer of 2019.



Objective #2-Community Caring Projects

Week of Action Against Poverty (2020)

Following municipal proclamation, 2020's WAAP again stimulated community response to local poverty. The Summer of Love fundraiser by the local musical community raised \$1315 and was well attended. Local financial institutions provided information for low income individuals on the grants available for RESPs and RDSPs. People First again facilitated the *Red Ribbon Campaign*. Other traditional events held included *Wear Red*, *Prayers from the Pulpit* and the *Hot Meal Challenge*. Both the public and Catholic teachers unions made appreciated donations and presentations were made to several classes on poverty issues. Staff at the Northwestern Health Unit also undertook actions to benefit local anti-poverty organizations. Other workshops and community conversations were held at ONWA, the Kenora Fellowship Centre and the Kenora Public Library.



Hunger Doesn't Take a Vacation (2019)

Stuff a Boat donations totaled \$2,852.59 in cash and 2,512 pounds of foodstuff which was subsequently donated to local soup kitchens and food banks. This project was completed in collaboration between with Safeway, K-Sports and emergency services (OPP, Northwest EMS, Treaty 3 Police, OMNRF Fire Team).

Minto Summerfest was attended by approximately 90 adults and children. Fifteen agencies collaborated in staging this outreach event which provides an entertaining exploration of local resources directly to low income families within their own neighbourhood.

Five street picnics with an attendance of almost 400 persons were hosted at the Kenora Fellowship Centre. Each week featured themed menus as well as entertainment. In accordance with policy, all disposable dishware was compostable.



Food Security

Prior to the opening of the new shelter, Making Kenora Home had facilitated rotational scheduling and support for local soup kitchens. With the expectation that all services were to be provided through the new 24/7 shelter, the food providers network dissolved. When the new shelter operators were unable to deliver the expected service, social services and community members were forced to scramble to develop responses to local hunger. Venues and strategies shifted as attempts began and ended, sometimes without explanation and COVID conditions increased the confusion. Good intentions have been evident but to date, there is no clear responsibility for local food security amongst the multiple interests in Kenora. Because meeting the basic needs of those who are homeless or tenuously housed is crucial for Housing First support, Making Kenora Home remains committed to effective coordination of emergency food providers.



In addition to previously noted food provision projects, Making Kenora is a partner in the Food With Thought program. Bracelets are purchased by donors to be distributed to those in need. The recipients can exchange the bracelet for a meal at participating restaurants. This project allows the recipient to choose when and what they want to eat. As more restaurants join in this project, choices will expand further. Recipients and participating restaurants report that their experiences have been positive.

COVID Responses

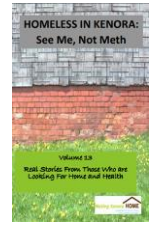
The crisis of the COVID pandemic has impacted our homeless population disproportionately. The efforts that have been made locally to provide services to those in greatest need is admirable. As part of Making Kenora Home's commitment, we agreed to act as intermediary for two different COVID relief projects through the Community Foundation. In addition we provided gift bags through the Fellowship Centre at Thanksgiving.

Objective #3-Community Awareness and Education

COVID also reduced opportunities for community presentations. Community presentations were made in person prior to March 2020. Making Kenora Home responded to multiple media requests on relevant issues on a local, regional and provincial level. A newsletter was published and distributed by email and print edition in the fall of 2019. Since that time, we have advocated on issues primarily through written submissions and social media. Because COVID related information is a priority, we have reduced our outreach accordingly.

Homeless in Kenora Booklet

The 2019 edition of our annual booklet was titled, *See Me-Not Meth*. The eruption of drug addicted persons has impacted everything from the operations of the emergency shelter to crime. The life stories presented in the booklet allowed readers to develop a better understanding of the many paths leading in and out of severe addictions



Facebook Page

The importance of social networking increased with the impact of COVID related restrictions. Current membership in our facebook page is 512 members. The cross postings with Compassionate Kenora and Kenora Moving Forward emphasize the shared interests between the groups.

Web Site

www.makingkenorahome.ca features events, research, publications and a direct newsfeed on federal and provincial housing matters. All booklets and reports are downloadable for public use.

Financial Report

Making Kenora Home Charitable Services Inc. Statement of Financial Position

December 31	2020	2019
Assets		
Current		
Cash	\$22,119	\$ 554
G.I.C	11,110	11,062
	<u>\$33,229</u>	<u>\$11,616</u>
Liabilities and Net Assets		
Curren Accts Payable	\$ 565	\$ 500
Net Assets	<u>\$33,229</u>	<u>\$11,116</u>
	<u>\$33,794</u>	<u>\$11,616</u>

Making Kenora Home Charitable Services Inc. Statement of Revenues & Expenditures

December 31	2020	2019
Receipts		
Receipted Donations	\$	\$
Nonrec. Donations	\$42,900	\$ 1,200
Interest	42	88
	<u>42,942</u>	<u>1,288</u>
Expenditures		
Insurance		\$ 234
Interest & Bank Charges	\$ 36	36
Program Expenses	\$20,859	\$ 1,053
Professional fees	1,847	565
	<u>\$22,742</u>	<u>\$ 1,888</u>
Excess of Receipts over Expenditures		
	\$20,200	\$ -600

Making Kenora Home Charitable Services Inc. Statement of Changes in Net Assets For The Year Ended

December 31	2020	2019
Net Assets-Beginning of Year		
	\$11,116	\$11,716
Excess Receipts/Expenditures		
	<u>\$20,200</u>	<u>\$ -600</u>
	<u>\$31,316</u>	<u>\$11,116</u>

Membership & Volunteerism

contact

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