

Housing Announcement

St. Matthew's House receives funding for The 4Twelve, housing for homeless/near-homeless seniors

St. Matthew's House is celebrating a funding announcement of \$3.75 million from CMHC. The funds will create a unique approach to housing for racialized seniors in wards 1 to 5 in Hamilton. Called The 4Twelve, the property at 412 Barton, next door to St. Matthew's House Children's Centre, will be converted to deeply affordable apartments, 12 in all. Built using modular construction for speed and affordability, these units will be completed and occupied by December 2022.

The 12 units are intended for low-income seniors who identify as women, Indigenous peoples, racialized groups including Black Canadians and people with disabilities. The need for safe affordable housing with supports is more acute than ever. St. Matthew's House has a targeted response to model for others in the future. "We hope that The 4Twelve will serve not only as a safe housing solution for our clients, but will be a model of what is possible – the start of many more projects like this for St. Matthew's House," says Renée Wetselaar, Executive Director of St. Matthew's House.

The homes are only part of the vision for The 4Twelve. It takes more than just four walls to make a place feel like a home; there will be a team on-site to help connect to supports which address the needs of vulnerable seniors in housing, mental health, mobility issues, food insecurity and other supports for a more holistic approach to create a community hub, not only dwellings. The affordability of the units, alongside crisis and eviction prevention supports we have designed will ensure a building program that both engages seniors and allows residents autonomy and opportunities for self-development. The plan is designed to empower seniors in meeting their needs.

This announcement is a dream realized for Board Chair David Savage. "We are so very grateful for the funding and its opportunity to serve the older population who is precariously housed...or not housed at all," he says. "This permanent housing for racialized seniors, housing with supports, is the core of our programming."

Along with this announcement, St. Matthew's House will shortly be launching The 4Twelve Campaign, to establish the supports around the seniors' housing. It will be raising funds for the ongoing funding for the community food centre, furnishings for the units, laundry facilities for tenants and other key elements. These are the supports that will make the units HOME for tenants and ensure successful transition and progression for them.

"This initiative is the culmination of all of St. Matthew's House's efforts in community building since it began in the 1960s," says Brent Bentham, Chair of the Capital Committee overseeing this project. "This is a project where our compassion has merged with the foresight of our Federal government to address a pressing need." St. Matthew's House is collaborating with New Commons Development and builder R-Hauz to complete this project under the announced Rapid Housing Initiative guidelines.

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BLACK HISTORY MONTH

St. Matthew's House is committed to recognizing Black History Month in February and every month after that. For almost two years, SMH has been working side by side with Evelyn Myrie of EMPOWER Strategy Group. We at SMH have committed ourselves to continuing this work through our EDI committee and engaging in many different areas such as at both of our Child Care Centres.

Over the next month at both Centres and staff wide, we will be taking part in celebrating Black History through the month of February. This is a time to honour Black Canadians, past and present, and to recognize and celebrate their continued contributions to our community. We will be engaging in activities with the children to teach about figures in our community and our history such as George Morton, Dr. Charles Roman and Ona Allen.

We have partnered with the Afro-Canadian Caribbean Association (ACCA) to bring these activities to the classroom and throughout our organization. ACCA was originally developed in 1979 in Hamilton by Colin Hall, a Jamaican immigrant from England, along with existing Black members of the community. This organization was formed with the goal "to create and foster a spirit of unity". ACCA has since become a safe space providing a variety of programs for all members of the Black community in Hamilton, working to meet the cultural and social needs of their families, youth and elders.

There are many different ways to help recognize the importance of celebrating Black History Month and educating ourselves on the cultural and historical significance. The City of Hamilton link provides some community events listed at www.hamilton.ca/attractions/festivals-events/black-history-month. You could also consider supporting a Black owned local business such as we did. Urban City compiled a list of local business found here; www.urbanicity.com/hamilton/city/2020/06/here-is-a-list-of-black-owned-businesses-in-hamilton/



SENIORS PROGRAM

My work as a senior support worker has been inspiring and eye opening. Working with seniors has shown me that it is important to fight for what is right and be an advocating voice for those in society who are not heard or do not have the means to stand up for themselves.

As the cold weather approaches, it is important to think about our seniors and the barriers they face in the winter months, such as transportation for essential items like food, getting proper winter attire and being connected to their community. It is also very important to remember our seniors who do not have a warm place to sleep during the winter; seniors who live with mental health issues and disabilities; seniors who are caregivers; Indigenous seniors; and seniors caught in the ongoing homeless crisis.

This field of work has shown me that seniors can be extremely vulnerable individuals in our society especially when it comes to housing. There has been an increase in senior poverty over the years, making it much more difficult to be prepared for retirement and have the necessary finances to live safely and comfortably.

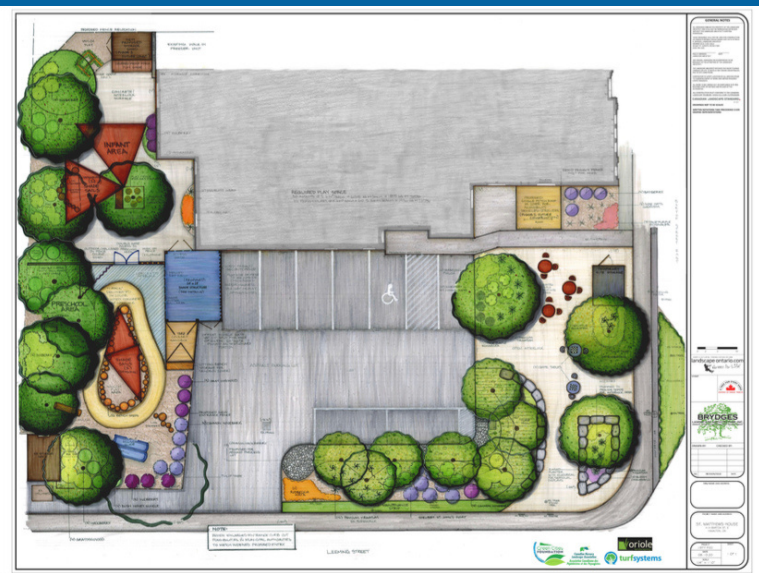
As a senior support worker, it is evident that our work in these communities must continue in order to address the dire needs that are becoming more and more prevalent in our society and ensure that every senior supported.

Kiana Brown
HOPES Navigator



GREEN CITIES FOUNDATION PLAYGROUND AND PARKING LOT REMEDIATION

Plans are moving forward to finish the playground and start work on the parking lot this Summer 2022, converting a section of the asphalt into a community green space for the neighbourhood to enjoy!

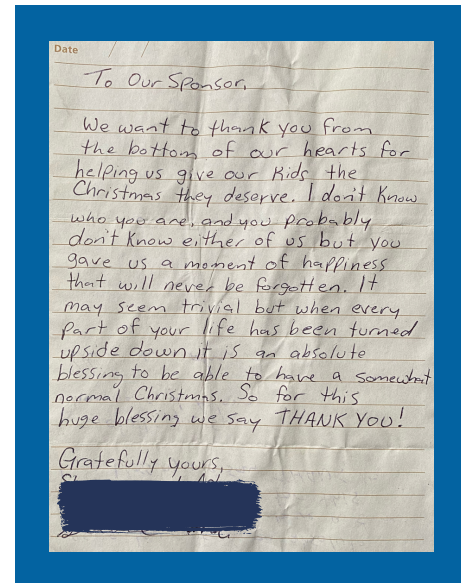


The Green Cities Foundation partnered with RBC Insurance and the Hamilton Community Foundation to complete Phase 2 work in the children's playground at St. Matthew's House this Fall. This phase of our project would not have been possible without the support of: Three Seasons Landscapes, Arborwood Tree Service, Abingdon Heights, Scotts, Connon Nurseries, Miller Compost, Budget Bin, Dutra Landscape, Rock Crest Landscape By Design, Ontario Stone Supply & Garden Centre, Martek Supply, NVK Nurseries, Oriole Landscaping Ltd., Turf Systems Inc., Plant Products, Al's Lawnmower, Wentworth Landscapes, Landscape Ontario Horticultural Trades Association - Golden Horseshoe Chapter, and the Canadian Nursery Landscape Association.

ADOPT A FAMILY/SENIOR HOLIDAY PROGRAM

“The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest of intentions.” – Oscar Wilde

Year after year I get to say I have the best job in the world: Head Elf! Your generosity and love for our neighbours is unbelievable and makes me so proud to be a part of this magic. Our location this year was so full we had to take over some space in the church upstairs. This was not a bad problem to have though. More than 435 families and over 460 seniors received a sprinkle of magic because of you. They felt loved and thought of, when for most it was such a hard year. Every year more families and seniors reach out to us for assistance to help make their holidays brighter and joyful and we are not able to do this without your support and generosity. Thank you to all who made this year such a success. Stay tuned for some exciting Adopt A Family/Senior program news!



CHILDREN'S CENTRE

The boards of St. Peter's Children's Day Care (SPDC) and St. Matthew's House have been in merger negotiations for the past year. We are pleased to share these discussions have almost completed with plans to merge Spring 2022!

St. Matthew's House is excited to welcome SPDC into the family of programs. We look forward to the staff joining our team and collectively working to maintain quality child care services for the many families of SPDC. The process was lengthy but was made easier by the support of our many partners.

We would like to express our sincere gratitude to the City of Hamilton and the Ministry of Education. Their support and efforts were instrumental in this successful merger. As always, St. Matthew's House values our community partnerships and looks forward to continued work in supporting the many children and families accessing quality child care.

In the meantime, should you have any questions, please feel free to reach out to me.

Renée Wetselaar
Executive Director



MESSAGE FROM CHAIR OF OUR BOARD

Hello Neighbour,

I say that very intentionally. Hamilton is a city of neighbours, whether we have met each other or not. The shared perspective, grit, determination and appreciation for our landscape unites us with an identity that is understood. We also share the knowledge that some of our neighbours have a hard time. A very hard time. As the Board Chair of St. Matthew's House, I have the honour and the joy – yes, the joy, which I will explain – of seeing the real challenges of some of our neighbours and working with a team to support real change.

All the work at St. Matthew's House takes the coordination and support of a wide variety of people and collaboration. We invite you to be a part of this collaboration through donation and getting to know us. St. Matthew's House is a non-profit charitable organization founded in 1967 by Anglican churches in inner-city Hamilton to focus on serving vulnerable populations in nearby neighbourhoods.

It is now an independent multi-service charitable organization with mobile support programs that reach across the city. We focus on two main areas: support to vulnerable seniors, and childcare/before-and-after-school programs for 170+ children. We operate at two locations: 414/412 Barton Street East and 705 Main Street West, and a program at a neighbourhood school. Food insecurity in older adults living in Wards 1-5 of Hamilton is complex and often occurs after a lifetime of marginalization. Alternatively, food insecurity may also be caused through a critical life change such as retirement or declined physical or mental health due to aging or accident, death of a spouse, or increased isolation. Even when food is free and healthy it takes knowledge and skills to handle, prepare, and consume it. Our Seniors' programming aims to reduce the root causes of food insecurity among our senior clients.

This support does something else, too. It helps our clients know they are not alone, and that there are people who care enough to help. It reassures us all of the humanity in the world. This is where the joy comes in. We would like to share the joy and get to know you better, and for you to know us. Here are some ideas:

1. Help support the Seniors in Kitchen Food Security Program with a financial contribution. Funds received are used to purchase food, hygiene products and cleaning supplies specific to seniors' needs.

You can visit www.stmatthewshouse.ca/donate to learn more.

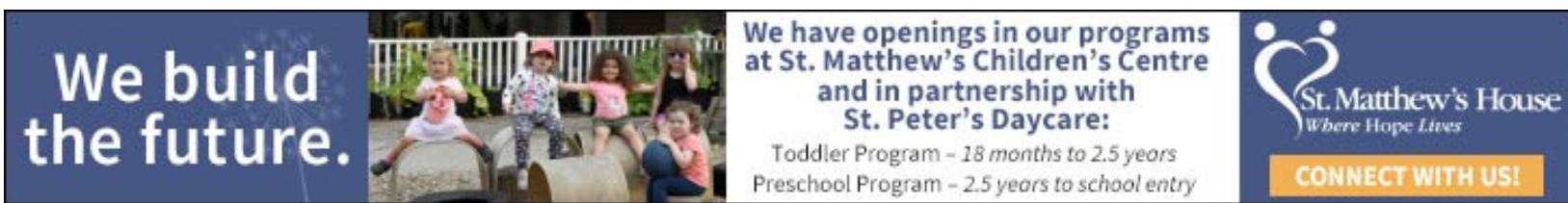
2. Visit our website at www.stmatthewshouse.ca to learn more and think about all the ways that you can help.

3. Help spread the word via social media and help us build our community. We love to share our messaging and tell our stories. Facebook - @SMHhamilton; Twitter - @SMH_Hamilton; Instagram - @smh_hamilton

Thanks for this opportunity to share some of our needs with you. We've learned through COVID that some of our seniors are fighting many barriers. With your help, we can make lives better for so many.

David Savage

Board Chair, St. Matthew's House



We build the future.

We have openings in our programs at St. Matthew's Children's Centre and in partnership with St. Peter's Daycare:

- Toddler Program – 18 months to 2.5 years
- Preschool Program – 2.5 years to school entry

St. Matthew's House
Where Hope Lives

CONNECT WITH US!



Your donations help us to maintain these programs and services through direct support to clients.
All contributions are issued a tax receipt.

THREE WAYS TO DONATE

IN PERSON

Drop off or mail a donation to
414 Barton St. E.
Hamilton, ON L8L 2Y3

ONLINE

Make an online donation
via credit card.
www.stmatthewshouse.ca

BY PHONE

Call us: (905) 523-5546
Ext. 230

CONTACT INFO

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WORKING HOURS

Monday - Friday
8:30AM - 4:30PM

STAY CONNECTED

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