

COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS - July – September 2020

Housing Services partners provide a range of supports and services in our communities. These events, presentations, activities and programs help to mitigate the effects of poverty by building community spirit, offering life skills training and enhancing the lives of the tenants.

Community Partnerships initiated at the Richard Beckett Building and Branlyn Meadows Community and/or ongoing include:

Ongoing - the tenants at the Richard Beckett Building have access to an in-house Seniors Centre, operated by the Community Programs and Social Development Department, who provide a comprehensive calendar of activities and affordable food services. Due to COVID-19 these opportunities have been cancelled and new programs developed below to support tenants.

New/On-going - Emergency Food Program (EFP) - Through the Brantford Food Bank and the Salvation Army in Paris now coordinate the distribution of emergency food hampers during COVID-19. Tenants can call these two organizations directly to receive food which can be delivered to them. In total the EFP served 32,966 individuals during this quarter including MNP tenants.

New/On-going - Healthy Aging Without Walls (HAWW) - Many senior tenants shared feelings of loneliness and isolation during COVID-19. City staff were able to apply to bring the Seniors Centre Without Walls provincial program to the City of Brantford so adults 50+ can call in and participate in fun, educational programs with their friends and neighbours. Monthly program calendars (63) are submitted to all MNP senior tenants. In total 471 participants served through HAWW program during this quarter (July 165; August 127; & September 179).

New/Completed/Pending – Mask Distribution to Senior tenants – Through the Healthy Aging Without Walls and in co-ordination with City staff 67 senior tenants were issued washable masks along with Buzz Me program flyer information for additional supports. This initiative was completed following City Council's approval of the new Mandatory Face Covering By-law on July 17/20. Further masks continue to be available for senior tenants upon request.

Completed (June 2020) - Wellness Chats - In response to the mental health concerns raised by seniors, the City partnered with Family Counselling Centre of Brant to offer free, group support sessions to adults 50+ during COVID-19.

New/On-going - Terraband Activities/Exercise Bands & Activity Guides - Many seniors wanted more information about easy exercises they could do from home. As a result, Terraband equipment including exercise bands and an activity guide listing a number of various exercises that could be completed safely at home using the bands were forwarded to all (63) MNP senior tenants. These items were issued directly to all LHC tenants.

New/On-going - Buzz Me -Many seniors were interested in receiving weekly calls from the Outreach Team to check in on their health and continue their friendly conversations. City staff worked with the community organization Seniors and Kids Intergenerational Programs (SKIP) to launch “Buzz Me” so seniors would still have an opportunity to connect with trained volunteers to build meaningful relationships over the phone and receive information about the resources available for seniors. Program is averaging over 20 participants each month

Ongoing - Community Paramedicine has received Emergency Operations Committee (EOC) approval and continues to operate a monthly program at the Beckett Building. The Community Paramedicine program utilizes a team of local paramedics who visit the LHC senior buildings to provide health supports. The program has received ongoing funding from the Local Health Integration Network (LHIN) to keep this very effective program in operation.

New/On-going – Approach to clinics (Education focus & Direct Referrals) – the Community Paramedicine programs will change in how they operate to ensure the safety and well-being of everyone and change in its approach to client education. A new group education system has been determined to be more beneficial and new partnerships are currently been formulated which will be able to provide group education on a variety of topics including health, nutrition, safety, fall awareness etc. Other new programs currently under development will enable the Community Paramedicine program to directly refer people with various mental health or social challenges directly to those services.

New -Flu Vaccination Clinics –Through the Community Paramedicine program the Beckett Building has been scheduled for a flu vaccination clinic by appointments on-site for Oct 21st. All appropriate public health guidelines will be followed.

New – Brantford Food Bank/Salvation Army Christmas Basket Programs – The Brantford Food Bank and the Salvation Army in Brantford will be providing the Christmas Basket Program this year by way of grocery gift cards this year due to COVID-19 to all MNP tenants who register. Program flyers have been forwarded all MNP tenants.

Ongoing - At Branlyn Meadows our community partners and staff continue to work with tenants to plan social-recreational opportunities, including spring garden planting day and back-to-school carnivals. Due to COVID-19 some of these opportunities have been modified to follow public health and safety guidelines. These opportunities for inclusion and community outreach have been completed and will be offered throughout 2020.

New/Completed – Healthy Kids Hand Sanitizer/Children Face Masks – Through the Healthy Kids program in co-ordination with City staff 35 children's face masks and school bag hand sanitizer bottles were delivered to children at Branlyn Meadows.

Annual/Completed - The annual Back to School Carnivals were held on August 25, 26 & 27th with modifications due to COVID-19 (unit sign-ups & drop offs) at various sites throughout community including Riverside Gardens, Northland Gardens, Eastdale Gardens & Daleview Gardens. Children had an opportunity to get a back pack with school supplies, and all families were able to receive a food donation. Agencies involved in putting together this year's event include Jacob's Well Ministries Inc., City of Brantford Housing, Brant Family & Children Services, JC Homes/ St. Basil's, County of Brant, Brant Community Church, Church of the Nazarene, Freedom Christian Community, Hope CRC, Generations, Grace Gospel – Paris, Paris Presbyterian, GVCC, Shallow Creek Academy of Hair, & Salvation Army. In total 22 back packs (children) & 24 food boxes to families at Branlyn Meadows