



United Way
Peterborough & District

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – September 14, 2023

Community Partners Announce New Program to Support People Experiencing Homelessness

PETERBOROUGH, ON (September 14, 2023): Today at the former Trinity United Church at 360 Reid St. the **City** and community organizations came together to announce new homelessness support services operated by One City Peterborough at the former church.

Opening remarks from **United Way** CEO **Jim Russell** praised the efforts on the part of the City, “I am struck by the focus and determination that the City is bringing in dealing with the issue of homelessness in our community.” Additionally, he pointed out that the church recently purchased by a community group is being transformed into a community centre.

The **Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network (PPRN)**, working through the recently formed Trinity Centre Coordination Committee, are embarking on a project with One City Peterborough to establish a community hub at the recently acquired Trinity Church property (July 2022). To start, One City Peterborough’s role is to adapt the space and offer programming for people living outside. The broader project’s aim is to fully develop the property into a holistic centre supporting local needs for housing, food security, employment, mental health, and community.

One City will be providing the service and Co-Executive Director **Christian Harvey** highlighted the work that is being done and the progress to date in getting ready to welcome people, “we are in the midst of hiring staff, ensuring the space is up to code, and developing programming that will welcome and meet the immediate needs of those experiencing homelessness.”

One City and partners are working tirelessly to be able to open the centre by mid-fall, ensuring that people experiencing homelessness have a warm place to go when the cold weather hits. **Program details include:**

- Daytime drop-in programming will operate year-round from 1PM-5PM, with extended hours during extreme cold and heat alerts
- Overnight drop-in programming will operate from October 1st to March 31st from 8PM-8AM, with sleeping cots available for community members to use



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Steve Kylie, Chair of the **PPRN**, reflected on the recent purchase and the vision for the former church, “having drop-in programming here is completely aligned with the vision to develop a community hub, and having One City as our first tenant, and hub developer augers well in realizing that vision.”

Joining Kylie was **Dave Freeman**, Chair of the recently formed Trinity Centre Coordination Committee and former member of the Trinity United Church congregation. Freeman spoke about the pride of seeing the church transforming to meet the needs of vulnerable community members, “I am proud of the legacy of our church and look forward to the service that will be provided to people in need in our community.”

Attending the proceedings were the Co-Chairs of City Council’s Housing and Homelessness Portfolios, **Councillors Alex Bierk and Keith Riel**, who brought greetings and updates on the City’s strategy to respond to the issue of homelessness.

“The One City winter overnight drop-in centre is another critical part of the City’s winter homelessness services strategy. It will serve some of the most vulnerable residents in our community, working alongside the other housing and shelter providers to ensure people have a warm, safe place to go,” Bierk and Riel said in a joint statement. “The City is also pleased to be working with One City for its year-round, daytime drop-in space, which will replace the current One Roof drop-in centre program. Thank you to One City, the Peterborough Poverty Reduction Network, and the United Way for their efforts to make these services possible.”

The **City of Peterborough** will provide One City with \$900,000 per year for three years under the service agreement for the winter overnight drop-in space and the year-round, daytime drop-in centre. The City will continue to work closely with One City and other community partners to support clients who use shelter and housing services.

For more information, please contact:

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