

# BLUE DOOR SHELTERS



# OPENING DOORS FOR PEOPLE

STRATEGIC PLAN - 2016-2019



# INTRODUCTION



On behalf of the Board of Directors, we are proud to release Blue Door Shelters' new Strategic Plan – 2016 to 2019. This plan builds on our rich history of serving diverse communities affected by homelessness. It reflects the culmination of an extensive staff and community consultation, and a review of the emerging and critical needs of people living in poverty.

Our organization is about people; those who use our services, our employees and our dedicated volunteers. The people we serve are at the heart of our work at Blue Door Shelters. We are dedicated to building the capacity of our teams, strengthening our commitment to our volunteers and ensuring that we deliver quality and transformational services to the people we serve.

We have chosen a focused approach with this strategic plan and have set two strategic priorities. The strategic directions are: building leadership and collaboration, and financial development. With this road map, we will concentrate our efforts and leverage our partnerships to make an impact in the lives of individuals and families touched by homelessness.

We are grateful to all our supporters and funders who made contributions to this effort. We are excited to work with you to create new possibilities!



Radha Bhardwaj,  
Executive Director



Kevin Kennedy,  
Board Chair

# WHO WE ARE

**Blue Door Shelters, located in York Region, provides safe, supportive shelter and services for people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Founded in 1982, we operate three, no-fee, emergency shelters for families, men and youth.**

## OUR MISSION

To provide safe and supportive emergency shelter and services for people who are homeless or at risk of being homeless.

## OUR VISION

A community where everyone has the right to a home.

## OUR VALUES

**Respect** We treat people with dignity. We are individually accountable for how we act and behave. We respect our clients' rights to make informed choices. We are non-judgmental about the choices they have made or choose to make.

**Diversity and Inclusion** We embrace the diversity of our clients, staff, volunteers, funders and donors. As an organization, our Board, staff and volunteers reflect the diversity of our community. We strive to provide inclusivity for all, in every aspect of our work. We recognize and are committed to eliminating the stigma that is associated with being homeless and/or in need of emergency shelter.

**Client-Centred** We affirm the client is the primary agent of change and ensure their involvement in the creation of services that are designed to serve them. We have an organizational responsibility to apply harm reduction principles in all actions.

**Leadership & Collaboration** We take a leadership role in increasing awareness about homelessness and in strengthening emergency shelter programs and services. We will collaborate and/or partner with those in the community who support our vision, mission and values.

**Accountability** We will be transparent and accountable to our clients, staff, volunteers, funders and donors for the responsible management of our resources. We are committed to providing services that meet both the words and spirit of our stated values.

# STRATEGIC DIRECTION #1

## LEADERSHIP AND COLLABORATION

### Goal A – Foster Strong and Trusted Funder Relationships

#### INITIATIVES FOR STAFF

Use evidence-based practice, evaluation tools and enhance outcome measurement for all programs.

Provide leadership and best practices in Housing First services and enhanced supports to chronic and episodic homeless populations.

Align our programs with funder expectations.

#### INITIATIVES FOR BOARD

Enhance relationships with existing funders.

Define board roles, committees, and responsibilities.

Create opportunities to build knowledge and leadership within through succession planning.

### Goal B – Foster Strategic Connections Across Sectors to Raise the Profile of Homelessness

#### INITIATIVES FOR STAFF

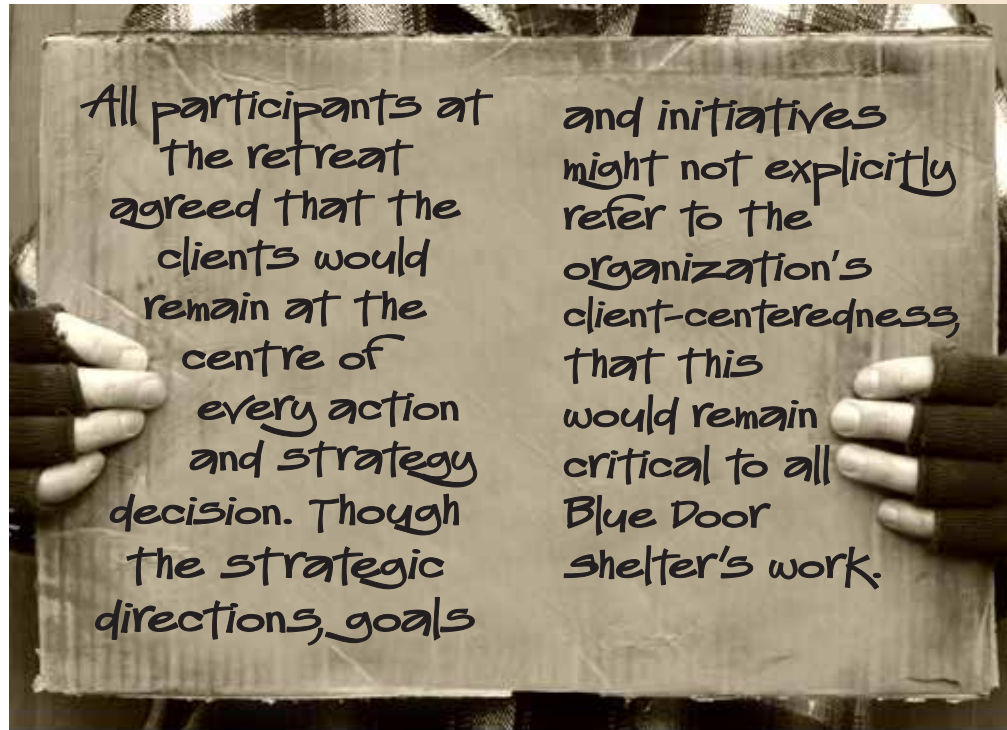
Create additional opportunities for collaborative partnerships through fundraising, educational events and grant submissions.

Participate in strategic community forums that impact homelessness.

#### INITIATIVES FOR BOARD

Build Board presence in the community at public events, fundraising events and various forums.

Build an inclusive and diverse Board.



# STRATEGIC DIRECTION #2

## FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT

### Goal A – Build and Begin Implementing a Fund Development Plan

#### INITIATIVES FOR STAFF

Hire dedicated staff for fund raising and volunteer management.

Build staff culture and capacity to fundraise to include training, tools, and resources.

#### INITIATIVES FOR BOARD

Establish a Board Fund Development Committee.

Build Board culture and capacity to fundraise.

### Goal B – Build and Align a Communication Strategy with the Fund Development Plan

#### INITIATIVES FOR STAFF

Initiate a branding exercise to consider a name change and relevant communication tools.

Seek communications training to develop key messages

#### INITIATIVES FOR BOARD

Seek communications training to develop key messages and an elevator pitch.

Initiate a branding exercise to consider a name change and relevant communication tools.

# THE STRATEGIC PLANNING PROCESS

The strategic planning process started in August, 2015 with the formation of a Strategic Planning Committee. Members of the Board of Directors joined managers and staff representatives from all three shelters.

In September, 2015 Marnie Sigmar (Sigmar Consulting) joined the Committee as the consultant. Together the consultant and the Strategic Planning Committee launched their work to develop a three-year strategic plan. The committee agreed on how to conduct an environmental scan to most effectively seek input from internal and external sources. The committee also formulated an inclusive and robust SWOT analysis.

The environmental scan drew on information through regional, provincial and federal sources to consider current statistics, trends in service provision and evidence of new and emerging needs in homeless populations. The SWOT analysis included focus groups, interviews and surveys with the following groups: clients from all three shelters, funders, staff members, Board of Directors, volunteers, placement students and community partners.

## SWOT PARTICIPATION

CLIENTS FROM ALL 3 SHELTERS	
FUNDERS	100% PARTICIPATION
STAFF MEMBERS	100% PARTICIPATION
BOARD DIRECTORS	100% PARTICIPATION
VOLUNTEERS AND STUDENTS	100% PARTICIPATION
COMMUNITY PARTNERS	22 PARTNERS

# LEARNINGS FROM THE PROCESS

## STRENGTHS

CLIENT-CENTRED FOCUS  
ACROSS THE ORGANIZATION

EFFICIENT USE OF RESOURCES

STRONG COMMUNITY  
PARTNERSHIPS

RICH ORGANIZATIONAL  
HISTORY IN YORK REGION

EXEMPLARY COLLABORATION  
WITH THE HOUSING TO HEALTH  
PROGRAM

DIVERSE STAFF TEAM

RECOGNIZED EXPERT IN  
PROVISION OF HOMELESSNESS  
SERVICES IN YORK REGION

HARM REDUCTION PRACTISE -  
ORGANIZATIONAL BELIEF IN  
AND RESPECT FOR THE RIGHTS  
OF PEOPLE AND ACCEPTING  
PEOPLE "WHERE THEY ARE AT"

RESOURCEFUL  
USE OF  
COMMUNITY  
PARTNER  
PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

## CHALLENGES

NEED TO FURTHER DEVELOP  
AND EXPAND THE EXISTING  
VOLUNTEER PROGRAM

NEED FOR ADDITIONAL AND  
DIVERSE FUNDING RESOURCES

DEFINE BOARD ROLES, TERMS  
AND DIVERSITY

LEVERAGE 35 YEAR HISTORY

LACK OF AFFORDABLE  
HOUSING UNITS

SHARE OUR STORY - PROVIDE  
A FULL PICTURE OF ALL THE  
SERVICES AND SUPPORTS  
OFFERED IN ADDITION TO  
PROVISION OF SHELTER BEDS

# PROGRAMS & SERVICES



## ***Housing to Health Program***

This program offers comprehensive services for individuals experiencing chronic and episodic homelessness. Blue Door Shelters, LOFT Crosslinks Housing and Support Services, and Krasman Centre are collaborating to support individuals who share severe struggles including physical health, legal and justice issues, historic discrimination and trauma, victimization, addictions and stigma. Focus is placed on individuals currently not connected to or not wanting to connect with formal services.

## ***Case Management***

Case management helps individuals and families stabilize, achieve their goals, and access services across service systems (including addiction services, health care, criminal justice, and mental health). This process provides clients with choice, individualized team planning, and wraparound support. Counselling and case management are client-centered and client-led processes at Blue Door Shelters.



## ***Housing Resources***

An extensive network of housing resources are used to search for and secure safe and affordable housing. Individualized support focuses on budget, advocacy with landlords, support with applications and apartment set up needs.



## ***Children and Youth Programs***

Through an understanding of the unique needs of children and youth who are at our shelters, programs are facilitated to build on strengths and self esteem and encourage healthy and whole lives.



## ***Individual and Group Counselling***

Counsellors are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week to provide empathetic listening, links to community resources and appropriate referrals. Our Residential Counsellors work hard to promote independence and quality of life by responding to changing needs.

## ***Wellness***

Programs like yoga, art therapy, cooking classes, and music & leadership programs are popular at all three shelters. Making peace with trauma can be a long journey and the workshops we offer encourage our clients to regain the ability to express themselves, rebuild a sense of self-worth and motivate healthy changes.



# THANK YOU

Blue Door Shelters wishes to thank all who participated in our strategic planning process. We are delighted that 100% of our funders, Board of Directors, volunteers and staff played a role in setting our directions for the next three-year period. We are grateful beyond words.



Front Left: Marnie Sigmar, Sigmar Consulting, Radha Bhardwaj, Stephanie Lau. Back left: Lawrence Chi, Karen Al Massaad, Ingrid McCann, Ingrid Teunissen, Ronda Williams, Barbara Steele

## **Thank you to our Strategic Planning Committee**

**Barbara Steele**  
Board of Directors

**Radha Bhardwaj**  
Executive Director

**Ingrid McCann**  
Housing Worker, Youth Shelter

**Ingrid Teunissen**  
Manager,  
Leeder Place Family Shelter

**Lawrence Chi**  
Board of Directors

**Stephanie Lau**  
Executive Assistant

**Karen Al Massaad**  
Housing Worker, Leeder Place

**Ronda Williams**  
Residential Counsellor,  
Leeder Place

## **Thank you to our Community Partners**

Thank you for investing your time and expertise in guiding our strategic directions. We look forward to continuing our work together:

*Addiction Services of York Region*

*AIDS Committee of York Region*

*Aurora Winter Blues Festival*

*Canadian Mental Health Association*

*Catholic Community Services of York Region*

*Children's Aid Society*

*Citizens For Affordable Housing*

*Community Legal Clinic of Richmond Hill*

*Home Depot, Bradford*

*ITS Canada and ITS Dispatch*

*John Howard Society of York Region*

*Jewish Vocational Services*

*Krasman Centre*

*LOFT/Crosslinks Housing and Supportive Services*

*My House Rainbow Resources*

*Public Health, York Region*

*Salvation Army*

*Sandgate Women's Shelter*

*360 Kids*

*York Region Centre for Community Safety*

*York Region District School Board*

*York Support Services Network*



# YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Help those in your community who need it most. Your donation goes towards basic accommodation, supportive counselling, referrals and assistance to find and keep affordable housing. To learn more about us and to donate, please visit our site:

**[www.bluedoorshelters.ca](http://www.bluedoorshelters.ca)**

 **BlueDoorShelter**

 **bluedoorshelters**

## **Administrative Office**

Leeder Place, Family Shelter

Porter Place, Men's Shelter

18838 Highway 11 East Gwillimbury, ON, L9N 0C5  
(2 kms north of Green Lane, West Side of Hwy. 11)

## **York Region Youth Shelter**

835 Gorham St., Newmarket, ON, L3Y 1L7  
(corner of Gorham St. and Alexander St.)

Tel: 905-898-1015

Toll Free: 1-888-554-5525

Fax: 905-898-6414

