



HISTORY

In late 2014, Community Food Centres Canada (CFCC) put out a call for proposals for the expansion of a Community Food Centre in the province.

Twenty-four locations across the province responded to compete for this designation.

The process was rigorous throughout 2015 and included a site visit to hear from our community leaders that a Community Food Centre would be of value to the City of Hamilton.

City Councillors, public health officials, community leaders were all in attendance to express their support. As a result of these efforts, Neighbour to Neighbour Centre was awarded the designation.

FUNDING

In 2015, Neighbour to Neighbour Centre approached the City of Hamilton with two requests and was granted the following:

- a) A Capital request of \$200,000 to assist in the building of a new Community Food Centre in Hamilton.
- b) To become an equal funding partner with N2N Centre and Community Food Centres Canada in providing 1/3 (\$200,000) of the annual operating expenses for the 5-year term of the Community Food Centre contract.

The funding provided by the City was not restricted to a specific program but to the overall operations of the Community Food Centre. The CFC receives no other City funding.

Community Food Centres Canada is prepared to renew its 5-year commitment. It brings to the table a renewed commitment of 1 million dollars for operations over the next 5 years. This figure may increase based on new programs with matched funding as well as donor restricted funding to the Hamilton area. The CFCC requires us to also meet specific operating standards. It is expected that N2N Centre and the community will step up once again to support the balance required to operate.

Hamilton's CFC operating budget is roughly \$700,000 annually. This includes staff costs, program supplies, food purchase, rent, insurance and overhead/administration. Over the next five years the renewed CFCC funding would contribute \$200,000 per year, the request for renewed City funding would match that at \$200,000 per year and N2N is committed to fundraising and continuing to secure grants, foundations support for the remaining \$300,000. In 2020, our overall budget was increased to over \$800,000 as we distributed emergency federal funds due to the pandemic. Over \$90,000 in grocery gift cards and additional food was distributed to over 5,000 people in Hamilton.

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY FOOD CENTRE?

The Community Food Centre approach is not like emergency food. Like the rehabilitation unit of a hospital, the CFC focuses on healing, health, and prevention. A Community Food Centre is a dignified and welcoming space that tackles issues of poverty, hunger, poor health, childhood obesity and social isolation. *The CFC is about skill-building, creating leadership opportunities and connecting people.* The result: a healthier, equitable and safer community.

Hamilton's Community Food Centre has:

- A commercial community kitchen that serves healthy meals weekly as well as host skill-building and nutrition education.
- Affordable Markets offer local sourced, seasonal produce.
- Gardens yielding fresh produce, teaching skills. Network supporting community gardens across the City.
- Child and youth programs. Intergenerational programs. Wellness for older adults.
- A community bake oven that will serve as a hub for social events and gatherings.
- Community advocacy offices connecting people with resources, tools and skills to have a voice on the issues such as housing and social assistance.

ALIGNMENT WITH HAMILTON'S FOOD STRATEGY GOALS

1. **Food Friendly Neighbourhood to Improve Access to Healthy Food** (*gardens, Hamilton Community Garden Network program, meals, markets & café*)
2. **Increase Food Literacy to Promote Healthy Eating & Empower all Residents** (*gardens, child/youth programs, community kitchens, edible education, food literacy network & events*)
3. **Support Local Food** and Help Grow the Agri-Food Sector (*local farmer purchases & relationships; community gardens*)
4. **Advocate for a Healthy, Sustainable and Just Food System** (*National - CFCC, Food Secure Canada; Partnerships with City include Welcome Baby, Food Literacy network, Cancer Screening Coach, Smoking Cessation, Food Handler Exams & sessions for newcomers.*)

ALIGNMENT WITH OUR FUTURE HAMILTON, COMMUNITY VISION PRIORITIES

1. Community Engagement and Participation (*Peer Advocate work, Volunteers : 3,948 hours, community action training*)
2. Economic Prosperity and Growth (*local farmers; living wage employer; peer advocate model, skill-building and leadership roles/mentorship*)
3. Healthy and Safe Communities (*food access – healthy food; wellness & fitness; meals, markets & café; smoking cessation; kids camps; welcome baby; programming addressing social determinants of health*)
4. Clean and Green (*gardens, community garden network*)
5. Built Environment and Infrastructure
6. Culture and Diversity (*Intercultural kitchen; Cooking up Justice Youth network; Senior wellness*)