



A YEAR OF OPPORTUNITIES

 MennoHomes

2022 ANNUAL REPORT

A FEW WORDS FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND BOARD CHAIR

Albert Einstein had *Three Rules of Work*. First, out of clutter find simplicity. Second, from discord make harmony. Third, in the middle of difficulty lies opportunity. While these three rules helped to guide Einstein's scientific curiosity, they could be equally applied to issues related to affordable housing.

The multitude of factors that have led to the current crisis in housing affordability is wide-ranging and complex. There is no one "solution" and trying to find one inevitably means running into roadblocks and dead ends. But we can't let obstacles prevent us from moving forward. We may not be able to solve the entire issue of affordable housing, but we can tackle tasks that lie in front of us. For MennoHomes this past year, it has meant moving forward with construction at Sprucelawn in St. Jacobs. Those 28 new apartments won't solve then entire affordable housing problem, but for the people who will call it their new home, it will change everything. It's that simple.

The second rule relates to finding harmony where there is discord. In 2022, MennoHomes continued to strive to build harmony for our tenants with each other, with the broader community, and with themselves, through the ongoing work of

our Community Support Worker. We firmly believe that we need to go beyond simply providing affordable rent if we truly want people to flourish in their new homes. Our Community Support Worker is an integral part of this. Issues related to mental health wellbeing and substance abuse must be addressed, too. One simple response is to ensure support is provided by people with specific training in these areas. This past year with the support of local community partners, we expanded the role of our Community Nurse to include new locations and provide support for even more people. Our hope is that this will contribute to harmony for everyone.

The final rule is one that has felt like our theme in 2022. Although we are in the middle of a housing crisis, it has been a year of opportunities. Following the completion of our partnership with St. Paul's Lutheran Church and Parents for Community Living at 544 Bridgeport, numerous churches and organizations throughout Waterloo Region (and beyond), have inquired about the possibility of a similar project with them. They have recognized the housing crisis and realized that they might be able to contribute to part of the solution. These opportunities to create new affordable housing are a mixed blessing. Resources to

pursue all of them are limited but we remain open to exploring them and discovering where the various conversations will lead. Likewise, people like you, and organizations throughout our community, are responding to the opportunity to do something tangible with donations and pledges that allow us to move forward with the construction of new affordable housing. Thank you! We are also thankful for our staff, board, and volunteers that contribute to our efforts.

We may not know what the year ahead holds, but if we approach it undistracted by the clutter, work to create harmony, and attentively pursue opportunities, we will make a difference. Thank you for joining us on this journey.

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Dan Driedger
Executive Director



Nancy Regehr
Board Chair

COMMUNITY NURSE UPDATE

Karen Ehlebracht has been providing support as a Community Health Nurse (CHN) for tenants at the Waterloo Mennonite Homes location in a part-time role since 2020. In August, an expansion of this role was made possible through a new Community Wellness Program funded by Trinity United Church as well as the Community Fund and Art & Barb Janzen Fund held at Waterloo Region Community Foundation.

The role includes professional health care support to tenants across multiple housing sites, with priority at 544 Bridgeport. Working within the scope of practice as defined by the College of Nurses of Ontario, the CHN is available weekly for drop-in or clinic style appointments at 544 Bridgeport, Waterloo Mennonite Homes, and Rockway Gardens Village, as well as by phone or email at other times during the week. She is also available for tenants from any other MennoHomes location on referral.

Issues that can be addressed with clients include health condition monitoring (including blood pressure monitoring), consulting, mental health resources and support and health system navigation. On a community level, the CHN works closely with the Community Support Worker to address community issues using individual and group strategies. We were thrilled in 2022 to have Karen more formally part of the MennoHomes team in this newly expanded role.



SPRUCELAWN APARTMENTS FOR SENIORS UPDATE

In November 2021 MennoHomes merged with Sprucelawn Apartments for Seniors. The two organizations officially amalgamated in February 2022. Sprucelawn was a non-profit that had been providing affordable housing for seniors in the village of St. Jacobs for almost 40 years. It was started by the three village churches (Lutheran, Mennonite, and United) who saw the need for affordable housing for seniors and built a 30-unit apartment building that backs onto the mill race in St. Jacobs.

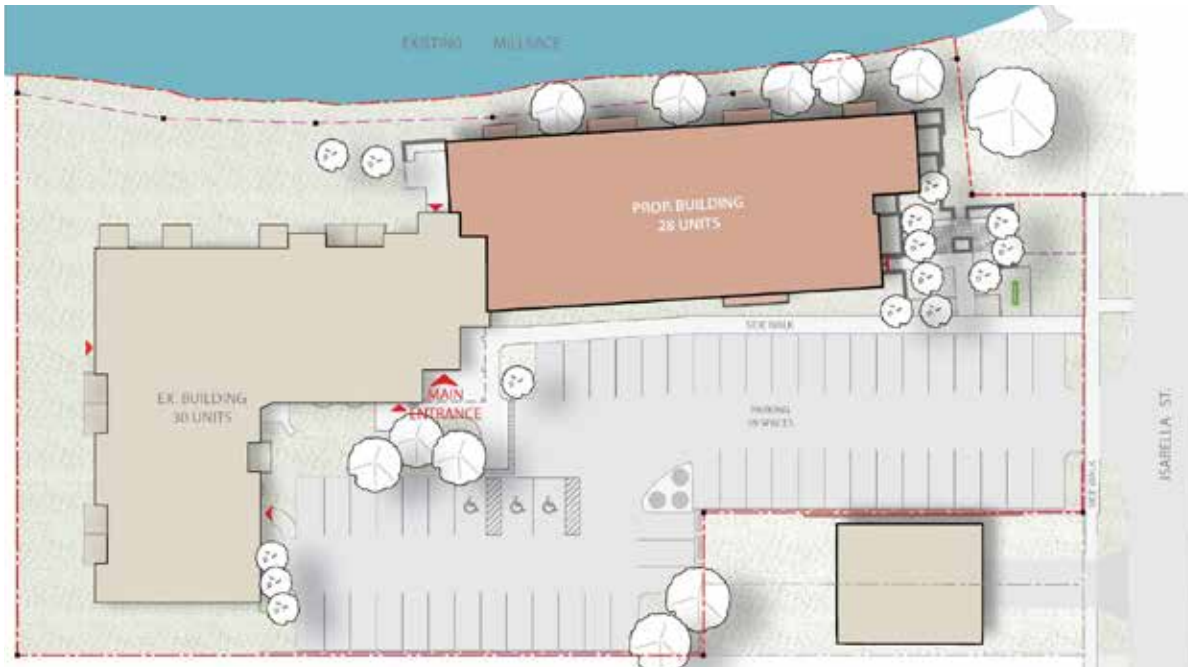
More recently, they acquired some adjacent land and had been working through various planning and design activities to build a 28-unit addition. With the amalgamation, MennoHomes has taken on the responsibility for the existing building as well as construction of the new addition. It will consist of 20 one-bedroom apartments and 8 two-bedroom ones. Construction is well underway with completion anticipated by the end of summer 2023.

The capital campaign currently underway will ensure rent received from tenants is sufficient to pay the ongoing mortgage and operating costs.

The capital campaign currently underway will ensure rent received from tenants is sufficient to pay the ongoing mortgage and operating costs. Laverne Brubacher, the former chair of Sprucelawn, is leading this \$2 million campaign. With \$1.4 million already raised, we've made good progress but additional donations and pledges are needed.

Please contact Laverne Brubacher or Dan Driedger to learn more about how you can be involved in this important project for seniors with low incomes in our community.

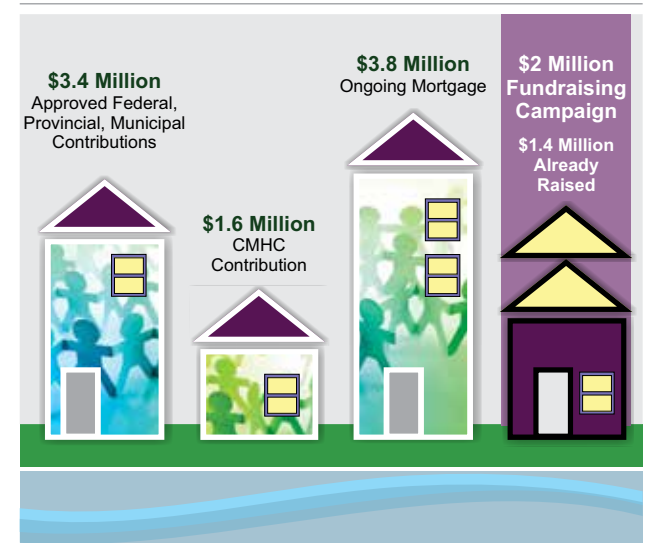
Phone: 226-476-2535
Email: home@mennohomes.com



Sprucelawn Apartments Expansion

Budgeted Project Cost \$10.8 Million

\$2 Million Fundraising Campaign



SEEDS OF OPPORTUNITY

As mentioned in our opening comments, 2022 has certainly felt like a year of opportunities. These opportunities are two-fold.

The need for affordable housing in our community is greater than it has ever been since MennoHomes started in 2001. At that time, the Community Waiting List was approximately 3,000 households. Since 2017 it has increased rapidly as the housing crisis deepened. The current waiting list is now over 7,000 households. This number is not just a statistic. It represents people in our community, our friends, neighbours, and members of our families. As an organization that is committed to responding to the need for affordable for affordable housing, unfortunately the opportunity to respond is growing.

The good news is that there is also a heightened awareness of the issue of

housing affordability. This is an opportunity for people and organizations to become directly engaged in responding. And they are responding. Individuals, businesses, charitable organizations, and governments are recognizing that addressing the housing crisis needs to include a financial investment in new housing. These investments, whether donations, grants, or long-term low-interest loans are making a difference and will continue to do so for decades to come.

Likewise, the availability of land on which to develop new housing is now being made available through potential partnerships. Municipalities have begun to make surplus

land available for new affordable housing projects. Our project at 544 Bridgeport in partnership with St. Paul's Lutheran Church has captured the imagination of other churches through Waterloo Region. We are actively engaged in conversations that could lead to new partnerships.

As we reflect on 2022 and look ahead to 2023 and the years beyond, it will be interesting to see how these seeds of opportunity take root and grow into

something new. We have an opportunity to respond, and a responsibility to do so. ***We can do so much more when we work together.***

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REBRANDING UPDATE

At our Annual Meeting in 2022, we announced that we would be rebranding as Beyond Housing. It was noted that the transition would take place over the coming months as we waited for some legal agreements to be finalized under our existing name. Little did we know that those months would stretch to a full year. We are now ready to move forward and are thrilled to do so.

As with any significant change, rebranding as Beyond Housing was not something the board took lightly. Discussion of a potential name change for MennoHomes has taken place at the board at various times over

the past decade. Name changes are tricky business so when we finally unveiled the new name and logo, we were excited to finally share the news but also nervous as to what the response might be.

We needn't have worried. The feedback we received during our online Annual Meeting and following it was overwhelmingly positive, affirmative, and supportive. People understood that our mission and values were not

changing and that, in many ways, Beyond Housing was a more intentional way of reinforcing our goals. As an organization we have always worked to provide more than

basic housing for our tenants. We strove to go beyond the minimum. We have worked to provide living spaces that people can call home and believe our new name reflects this goal.

From our Mennonite roots, we have grown to become an organization that welcomes everyone in the community to be involved. We believe now is the time to embrace a name that more accurately reflects who we serve, who is involved in our work, and how we create housing that is affordable. We invite you to join us as we continue to go beyond basic housing and create places to call home..

www.beyondhousing.ca

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FINANCIAL UPDATE

MennoHomes was again able to end the fiscal year with a modest operational surplus. Tenant rent was sufficient to cover annual operating expenses, allowing fundraising efforts to be directed towards the construction of new affordable housing. We are thankful for donors that have continued to honour their pledges for Bridgeport at Lancaster Phase 1. Donations not required for Phase 1 will be designated for the construction of Phase 2.

We launched a \$2 million capital campaign for Sprucelawn Apartments for Seniors with donations and pledges totalling \$1,429,265 at the close of 2022.

Our audited financial statements are available on request or can be found online by clicking here: [MennoHomes 2022 - Audited Financial Statements](#).

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nancy Regehr - Chair
Chip Bender - Vice Chair
Amie McPhee - Treasurer
John Oudyk - Secretary
Jennifer Justason
Steven Reesor Rempel
Saleh Saleh
Brian Unrau

Martin Buhr - President Emeritus



ADMIN & PROGRAM STAFF

Lori Martin - Administrative Assistant
Robin Near - Bookkeeper
Karen Ehlebracht - Community Nurse
Sue Martin - Community Support Worker
Dan Driedger - Executive Director

PROPERTY MANAGEMENT

CITYCORP Management Inc. Dubrick Property Management Ltd.

Alfred Rempel - 544 Bridgeport Road
Rick & Linda Brown - Rockway Gardens Village
Sean & Lisa Harkness - Sprucelawn Apartments for Seniors
Brad Roth / Helen Bartsch - The Foundry
Susan Rempel - Waterloo Mennonite Homes

VISION

Caring communities where every person can thrive in a safe and affordable place they call home.

MISSION

We create homes for people in need of affordable housing. We develop housing that is economically and environmentally sustainable and includes supportive services.

VALUES

Housing is a Human Right

We believe that adequate, safe and secure housing is a fundamental human right. We are committed to providing quality, affordable housing that is thoughtfully designed and is responsive to the needs of tenants, recognizing that stable and secure housing improves quality of life.

Equity, Integrity and Respect

We respect and value the diversity of people in our community. We adhere to high ethical and professional standards in our work and relationships. We are fair and respectful in our interactions and treat everyone with respect and dignity.

Accountability and Sustainability

We are accountable for our actions. We accept responsibility for our performance and share the results of our work in an open and transparent manner. We balance fiscal prudence with asset preservation, environmental sustainability and social responsibility.

Collaboration and Community

Through collaboration and partnerships, we work with others to achieve common goals, build communities and create places to call “home”. We provide support services to our tenants to develop communities where each person is valued and has a sense of belonging.

Creativity and Innovation

We are open to change and we continuously seek new approaches to enhance the development and operation of affordable housing.



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