



**INTERFAITH
FOOD BANK**
SOCIETY OF LETHBRIDGE

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Planting Roots, Growing Community ... a capital campaign for Interfaith Food Bank

The Need

Interfaith Food Bank Society of Lethbridge has been providing emergency food support services to Lethbridge and area since 1989. The bridge between those who need help and those who have something to give, was born out of a church basement over twenty years ago when community members saw their neighbors going hungry, and responded to the need. What once started as friends helping friends has now grown into a community organization that feeds nearly 1500 people each month, half of whom are children.

Currently, we are renting an aging facility that was not designed to operate as a food bank. We've been fortunate to have had the opportunity in past years to expand within our walls, but today we've grown beyond them. As Interfaith Food Bank has become an integral part of the social welfare of our community, we've identified the need for the society to own a facility that is conducive to the work that we do.

The Plan

In 2008, our volunteer board of directors identified the need for our own facility through an extensive strategic planning process and we identified the need for a formal building fund that same year. In 2009 we began actively recruiting funds for facility related expenses, and the community responded with their support in principle, and in funds.

The Flip4Food Project, initiated by Cedar Ridge Quality Homes and The Action Team of Century 21 Foothills Real Estate, saw a beautiful showhome built in the Riverstone area in the summer of 2009. Interfaith Food Bank received the net proceeds from the sale of this home, and this gift of just over \$100,000 has allowed us to meet our first capital fundraising goal – sufficient funds for the required downpayment on the mortgage for our new facility.

Over the past year we have been searching for an appropriate facility that would meet some key criteria. Firstly, location was of utmost importance as a large portion of our client base face transportation issues. To be located within walking distance of our current facility, or near public transportation was crucial so those who need our services could access our facility. Secondly, we were looking for a building designed to be a warehouse, with a good roof, open floor plan and room to grow. Thirdly, we had to find a building that would be financially feasible for our society.

Opportunity arose, and Interfaith Food Bank Society of Lethbridge is pleased to announce that we have entered an agreement to purchase a 21,500 square foot building directly across the street from our current location. A long term tenant occupies 11,900 square feet in the front part of the building, providing earned revenue potential and room for future growth. The remaining 9600 square feet in the back of the building is already equipped with a huge warehouse space, loading dock and administrative

offices, and is an ideal home for Interfaith, although a few modifications will be required before the facility is ready for food distribution.

After taking possession of the new facility on September 1, 2010, construction will commence to add a new Client Intake Area from which we will serve our clientele. This area will be larger than our current client intake space, and will include a confidential screening office to allow us to determine eligibility of clients while maintaining their dignity and privacy.

Immediate construction will also see a separate space created for The Interfaith Garage Sale, a year-round thrift store that raises funds for food bank operations and food purchases, that also offers new and gently used kitchen and household items at affordable prices for our clientele and the public at large. Our existing garage sale area has been limited due to available space at our current facility. Expanding the sales floor will allow us to generate more revenue from this social enterprise, and including a larger sorting space will allow our volunteers to process garage sale items in a much more efficient manner.

In 2004, we were pleased to announce the addition of The Interfaith Chinook Country Kitchen (TICCK), a program formed through a unique partnership with Family Centre and Alberta Health Services – Population Health. This community kitchen program provides free cooking sessions that are intended to teach participants to cook healthy meals on a limited budget. The popularity of this program has also caused us to out-grow our current space, and within one year, we would like to move the kitchen from its current location into our new facility.

As a charitable community organization, we are reliant upon the support of community members to fund our operational, programming and facility needs. Over the course of one year, we plan to raise **\$225,000** through our capital campaign, *Planting Roots, Growing Community*. Funds will be recruited through grant funding, special events, sponsorships and private donations.

Why Growing the Food Bank Make Sense

More Space = More Food

Expanded warehouse space will allow us to store, sort, and process donations in a much more efficient manner. Adequate storage space will allow us to accept more food from the National Food Share Program and reclamation processes we currently participate in. Sufficient space for repackaging bulk items will allow us to accept more donations of larger quantities and reduce costs associated with food purchases as we will be able to stretch our dollars further through more bulk purchasing.

Increased Capacity to Process Donations = Better Service to Those Who Need Help

Increased efficiency in food bank operations will allow us to process more requests for assistance from individuals, families, and community agencies in an attempt to make Lethbridge and area more food secure. Adequate space will enable us to use the proper tools for the job and allow us to foster an organized, efficient environment. For example, our current facility does not allow our forklift to transport food within our warehouse, and we must take the fork lift outside to transfer food stock between our bays. The new warehouse is free of load-bearing walls which will allow for more effective inventory management as food can be stored by commodity, as opposed to wherever we can find space. Using proper tools such as our forklift and pallet jacks will increase the amount of food we can process in shorter amounts of time.

Investing in the Society = More Accountability to our Supporters

Financially, it makes more sense to own than to rent. Owning our own facility will allow us to ensure funds recruited from community members stay with the food bank. Creating a safe, efficient workplace will allow us to maximize one of our most valuable resources, our volunteer workforce. Investing in a more modern facility will also reduce costs associated with maintenance and monthly utility bills. Earned revenue potential for leasing excess space to a long term tenant ensures additional space for room to grow in the future, planning ahead for the sustainability of the organization and our capacity to care for our community.

Grow With Us

One of the most impressive qualities of Interfaith Food Bank Society of Lethbridge is the community involvement that has become the culture of Interfaith. Countless individuals, families, businesses, schools churches and clubs have contributed to our mission to recognize the human dignity of those in need and to provide food and access to services and resources generated within our community. We invite our community of supporters to join us in growing the food bank so we can realize our goal in *Planting Roots, Growing Community*.

Get Involved

We invite community members to participate in our planning process, to help recruit supplies, materials and funds required for the project, and eventually to help us move into our new facility. As a community organization, we need the input and involvement of all of our stakeholders.

Contribute

We need to raise an additional \$225,000 over the next year to complete necessary improvements to our facility. Funds will be used to

- renovate to include confidential client intake area
- include space for The Interfaith Garage Sale (social enterprise)
- expand and relocate The Interfaith Chinook Country Kitchen

Contributions of building materials will also be gratefully accepted, and a wishlist of required supplies will be available so community members can make donations in-kind in addition to financial gifts.

Foster Support

By joining the *Planting Roots, Growing Community* capital campaign, individual citizens can help foster support for addressing hunger needs in our community. Talk with friends and family about what you can do to help, and encourage others to participate as well. Together, we can work to make a real difference in the lives of others.

For More Information

If you would like to be involved in the *Planting Roots, Growing Community* capital campaign for Interfaith Food Bank, please contact us by calling **403.320.8779**, or by visiting us online at www.interfaithfoodbank.ca.

July 5, 2010