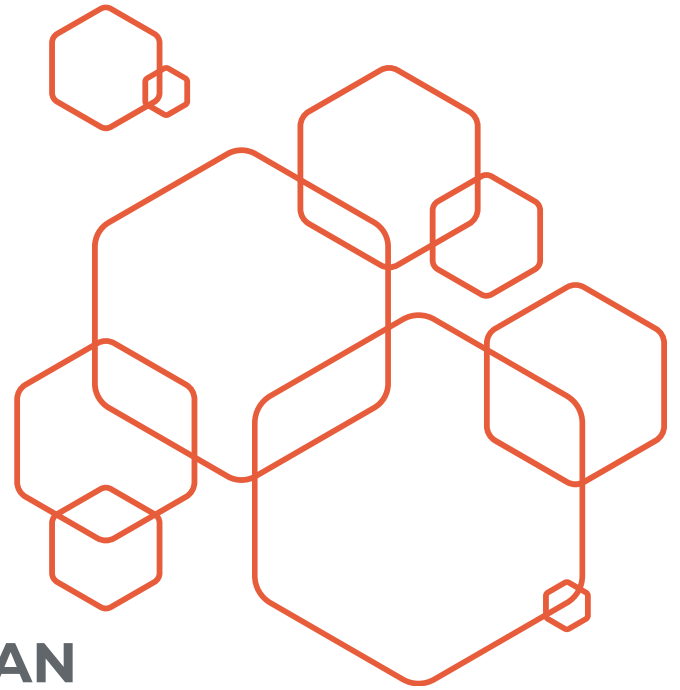




2024 ANNUAL REPORT



COMMUNITY ACTION PLAN

Addressing Poverty & Promoting Wellness

January 1 – Dec. 31, 2024
Approved May 15, 2025



MESSAGE

FROM THE CO-CHAIRS

Thanks to the hard work of the CWC Board, Working Group members, and the trust placed in CWC by people and organizations in our community, CWC was ready to meet the challenges and opportunities presented in 2024. CWC offered leadership and support in the aftermath of the horrific murders that rocked our small community in February 2024. The Province of Manitoba announced an investment of \$300,000 to CWC to support and sustain wellness initiatives in our community, beginning in the spring of 2024 and continuing into 2025 and 2026. Suddenly, the dreams and visions CWC nurtured since forming in 2020 needed to be translated into action. These funds allowed CWC to hire staff in the fall of 2024. Our Coordinator and Office Administrators then were able to establish a welcoming office space, open 4 days a week in the Lower Level of Memorial Hall. As soon as this office was established, CWC greatly expanded capacity to coordinate and administer existing programs and to explore and develop new initiatives. CWC's original vision to address poverty and help people navigate existing community resources now has the resources necessary to make this vision a reality. We also have greater capacity to identify significant gaps in services in all of our 6 Working Group's focus areas, and begin to consider how those gaps might be addressed by CWC and in partnership with other stakeholders.

CWC would not have been ready to meet this challenge without the commitment of 15 people who agreed to serve on the Board over this past year; some have served on the Board in the early years, while others answered the call for new board members and brought fresh energy and ideas to the table. We must also acknowledge and thank board members who completed their term on the Board, because they helped set the stage for this time of growth for the organization. The Working Groups and their many volunteers are critical to the impact CWC can have on our community. Serving together on a Working Group can help build strong connections and healthy relationships across many differences. It can be (and should be) a lot of fun too! Working together to make a difference in our community is encouraging and inspiring!

The Board takes serious responsibility using our provincial funding to ensure CWC is continuing to serve our community for many years to come in a sustainable and effective manner. To this end, we invested in Strategic Planning and identified four key areas: funding, human resources, advocacy and awareness, and program development.

Without the continued support and trust placed in CWC by members of the community, whether you are rich or poor or in-between, CWC would not be possible. Thank you sincerely for your support and encouragement, and for your questions and suggestions too!

Sheryl Reimer and Karen Tjaden



Karen Tjaden
Co-Chair



Sheryl Reimer
Co-Chair

MESSAGE FROM THE STAFF

As someone who has called Carman home for over 25 years, I am deeply connected to the community and passionate about creating positive change. My passion for community outreach and social services, and a strong understanding of the challenges our community faces have shaped my approach to working alongside individuals and organizations that make a difference.

I have had the privilege of being involved with CWC from the very beginning, watching it grow from a hopeful initiative to the vibrant force for change that it is today. It has been incredibly fulfilling to witness CWC's evolution and to see the impact we have made in the lives of so many.

Since joining CWC as Coordinator in September 2024, my role has felt like a natural extension of my dedication to this cause. It has been an incredible opportunity to contribute to our shared vision of creating lasting, positive change within our community. I am excited to continue fostering connections and partnerships that will help CWC thrive in the years ahead.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of this journey. Together, we are making a difference.

Sincerely,
Lisa Lehmann
CWC Coordinator

Rose and I became Administrators at CWC at the end of October in 2024. We are both dedicated and determined to help others by assisting them with resources, navigation, and creating a comfortable environment. Together with Lisa, we are planning to continue CWC's work in reducing poverty and bringing awareness of issues affecting those in our community. We hope that our continued support at CWC will improve the lives of many and help people realize we all have active roles to play in helping each other thrive.

Written by
Karen Kucharsky
CWC Administrator



Lisa Lehmann
CWC Coordinator



Rose Durupt
CWC Administrator



Karen Kucharsky
CWC Administrator

BOARD MEMBERS AND STAFF



Board Members

Karen Tjaden (Co-Chair) 2024-2026
Sheryl Reimer (Co-Chair) 2025-2027
Lorna George (Treasurer) 2020 - 2025
Wendy Durand (Grant Coordinator) 2021
-2026
Allison Abbott-Wiebe 2020 - 2025

Rick Beers 2024 -2026
Nancy Clearwater 2021 - 2025
Melissa Emerson-Froebe 2024 -2026
Julie Hesketh 2024- 2026
Terra Huston 2021 - 2025
Mandeep Kaur 2024 -2026
Susan Wepler 2021 - 2025

Staff

Lisa Lehmann (Coordinator) 2024 -
Rose Durupt (Administrator) 2024 -
Karen Kucharsky (Administrator) 2024 -

COMMON VISION: Together, creating a community where everyone has the opportunity and supports to flourish where they live, learn, work and play.

COMMON VALUES: Common values will guide our behavior, inspire our actions, and encourage conversation within every component of this community initiative.



**Empowerment - Sustainability - Accessibility
Best Practice - Respect - Shared Responsibility**

“Nothing about us, without us”

“It takes a village”





**A SPECIAL THANK YOU TO THE
FOLLOWING FOR SUPPORTING
CARMAN WELLNESS
CONNECTIONS INC.**

Direct Farm Manitoba
Carman Area Foundation
Rural Municipality of Dufferin
Town of Carman
Pioneer Hi-Bred Corteva
MMJS
Carman MCC Thrift Store
Carman Mennonite Church
Harvest Manitoba
Friends Community Church
Boyne Book-It Fun Run
Access Credit Union - pancake breakfast
Elm Creek Canada Day
Dufferin Agricultural Society
Royal Canadian Legion - Branch 18
Carman Kinettes
Nakonechny & Power Chartered Accountants Inc.

Graysville Mennonite Church
Canadian Reformed Church
BSI (ONE) Insurance
Greenland Equipment Ltd.
Homestead Co-op
Janzen Chevrolet Buick GMC
Nutrien AG Solutions
Sea Hawk
Southern Health Santé-Sud
TR-S Truck Shop
True North Foods
Walinga Inc.

FOOD CURRENCY PROGRAM



It was another satisfying year for all those involved with the Manitoba Community Food Currency Program. Once again, 25 participants received weekly support to buy fresh food at the Carman Farmers' Market. This time, each participant was given a sheet of ten \$3 coupons per week. Arlene Termeer was instrumental in the distribution of 350 sheets of coupons. She writes, "They (participants) were very punctual, there were no leftover sheets. ...It was a very positive year, more so than in previous years. I think they know who I am now after doing this for a few years, so they feel maybe more comfortable with me. When I meet them in town now, they always say 'hi' and chat for a few minutes."

That is very meaningful to me; people forming relationships and being comfortable in the community! Thank you Arlene!

The program is funded by the MB government, administered by Direct Farm MB, and sponsored by Carman Wellness Connections. Arlene distributes the Currency and Edith repays the vendors at the Market when they hand in the coupons. DFMB sends funds to Carman Farmers Market, and Edith uses these funds to repay the vendors. Edith also reports weekly to DFMB the number of coupons reimbursed. It's quite a system, but it works well and holds everyone accountable.

In 2024:

- 350 sheets of \$30 were distributed. Possible value - \$10,500.
- 342.1 sheets were redeemed for a total value of \$10,263. That is 97.75%!
- Carman has one of the highest rates of redemption in the province. We have applied for funds to support 30 participants in the year 2025.

Thanks goes out to everyone involved for keeping the program running smoothly. We are looking forward to another positive year.

Submitted by Edith Rook

CWC Board

Goal 1: Retention and Recruitment - Sustainable, capable leadership for CWC is imperative.

2024 Activities:

- Received Funding from the Province of Manitoba
- Created Job Descriptions
- Recruited a Coordinator and two Office Administrators
- Develop Employee Handbook
- Tamarack one-on-one coaching 2023-24 (4 sessions)
- AGM in June
- December Team Building Gathering
- Develop and publish volunteer orientation packages
- Implement elevator pitch with the public
- Regularly update and post on the CWC website and social media accounts
- Advertise volunteering opportunities on Volunteer Carman
- Develop volunteer skills at workshops (regarding writing grants; through Volunteer MB, Heartland, Achieve, CTRI)
- Initiated Strategic Planning with Homefield People and Strategy



Planned 2025 Activities

- Staff and Board professional development and capacity-building opportunities - Created Human Resources Committee with defined role
- Exploring ways to conduct a thorough Community needs assessment
- Recruitment and diversity - Created a Nomination Committee with defined role
- Regularly evaluate board performance - consider Board Governance Committee? Executive?
- Clearly define roles with staff
- Implement the use of Volunteer Orientation Package
- Increase use of Volunteer record processes - evaluate some
- Introduce recognition process i.e. volunteer of the month, appreciation events
- Develop mentor-ship program (experienced with new volunteers - training)
- Implement Nomination committee term of reference and process

Goal 2: Resources (data, financial, and human)

2024 Activities:

- Continue having a Tamarack Membership for 2024
- Connect and network with other communities with Poverty Reduction Groups (Watch Party 2024/Many Hands (Morden)/Central Station (Winkler)/Steinbach, PLP, and Winnipeg)
- Anticipate and review data from SHSS Community Health Assessment
- Access Funding for CWC initiatives: collaborate with local government for sustainable funding for paid position, Grant Collaboration with Town/Healthy Communities, and Donations/Sponsorships
- 211 Drive (speaker)
- Honorariums for people with lived experience
- Ensure to have members of our community with expertise (Educated and Living)
- Utilize Make Poverty History Manitoba for Data
- Build relationships with other local organizations and governments

Planned 2025 Activities:

- Create a funding committee
- Consider regular fundraising events/online campaign/partner with businesses for sponsorships
- Process for Thank-Yous
- Apply for 10 new grants
- Ensure diversity in funding
- Strengthen partnership with governments, foundations, sponsors
- Planned Giving/Bequest Program?

Goal 3: Develop Communication Strategy/Marketing

2024 Activities:

- Review as needed to increase confidence and competence of using CWC Communication Tools: Annual Action Plan, Event Planner, and Request for Funding
- Upgrade the CWC website
- Enhance our social media presence
- Partner with the Town of Carman and RM of Dufferin to develop Communication Policy/Strategic Plan
- Use resources already created e.g. Elevator Pitch/PP to increase awareness
- Sponsorship and Donations

Planned 2025 Activities:

- Increase social media presence/hold info sessions/webinars re cause of poverty
- Process of Thank-Yous
- Increase visibility through outreach and created handouts and key visible partners

Goal 4: Develop a Poverty Reduction Strategy

2024 Activities:

- Use Tamarack: one-on-one Coaching
- Use relationship built through networking with communities with Poverty Reduction committees
- Collaborate with Town of Carman and RM of Dufferin
- Introduce W.R.A.P. to our board and major community partners with expertise and evidence from Altona and Morden
- Partner with Boyne River Keepers for the Clearwater Memorial Playground Project
- Obtain ASIST training to be better equipped and educated and to share this knowledge with businesses and community members alike
- Planned the program Carman Community Corner - a drop in where folks can come to ask questions, obtain assistance with documentation, and have access to the internet
- Began tracking our volunteer hours and the nature of calls to better know where our resources are needed

Planned 2025 Activities:

- Develop a 5-10 year Strategic Plan
- Conduct needs assessment of the community Town Hall and Focus Groups/Surveys
- Expand CWCs outreach i.e. HF WRAP
- Work with community to consider Vital Signs
- Organize advocacy campaign i.e. 1-2 per year (educational/petition letters)

Goal 5: CWC Administration

2024 Activities:

- Annual Calendar Update
- Review Bylaws
- Evaluate Board Meetings

Planned 2025 Activities:

- Evaluate newly created tracking process for Volunteer Hours, Volunteers, Nature of Calls, and CWC Events/Programs
- Evaluate CWC Forms; RFFs, EPFs, and APs
- Evaluate grant applications and reporting systems
- Develop Comprehensive Resource List - Assess 211

Working Groups

Affordable Housing Working Group

Goal: Increase options to affordable and accessible transportation in our community

Working Group Members: Brenda Bryson, Rose Durupt, Kelly Dyck, Madison Fehr (Housing Outreach, Genesis House), Tyler Friesen, Lorna George, Karen Kucharsky, Lisa Lehmann (Coordinator), Trish Middleton Karen Tjaden (Chair), Jocelyn Vankoughtnet, Susan Wepler, Jo-Ann Wood

The Affordable Housing Working Group is working to increase housing options in the community of Carman that meet the definition for truly affordable housing – housing costs that do not exceed 30% of household income. They are looking at solutions within the region and from housing agencies.

2024 Activities:

- Participated in webinars to learn more about the Cooperative Housing Development Fund from Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC)
- Researched and clarified a definition of truly affordable housing: no more than 30% of income should go onto a place to live
- Membership with Manitoba Non-Profit Housing Association (MNPHA) provided access to expertise, research and resources, including webinars and the annual conference, as well networking and opportunities to learn from social housing and community housing projects across Canada
- CWC Coordinator Lisa Lehmann, Susan Wepler, and Karen Tjaden attended the annual MNPHA conference in Brandon in October 2024
- Have a volunteer from Genesis House (Housing Outreach) participate in Affordable Housing Working Group to provide housing and support to women in our community
- Met with MLA Lauren Stone and assured cooperation with her and her constituency office to address housing concerns related to MB Housing and accessing provincial and federal funding sources

Plans for 2025

- Explore if cooperative housing is a good fit to meet some of Carman's housing needs
- Continue our membership in MNPHA and send delegates to their annual conference
- Work with the Town of Carman to assess housing needs and to address zoning and bylaw changes to accelerate construction of new housing options in Carman
- Continue exploring options to ensure some newly constructed units are truly affordable for people in our community who are low income, rent geared to income and based on the accepted definition of affordable housing that does not exceed 30% of gross annual income
- Participate in MB Right to Housing Coalition and Tamarack Institute



Affordable Recreation and Leisure Working Group

Goal: Increase access to affordable recreation and leisure activities for children, youth, and adults

Working Group Members: Sheila Dick, Rose Durupt, Susan Wepler

The Affordable Recreation and Leisure Working Group works in partnership with other community organizations to provide low cost or free activities to those in the Carman area who may experience barriers to recreation or are newcomers.

2024 Activities:

- Bowling (Spring 2024, 3 sessions in October and November - 1 hour) at Carman 5 Pin Bowl, for a variety of ages & abilities; CWC gratefully appreciates the partnership and welcoming experienced with the staff of Carman 5 Pin Bowl
- Introduction to Pickle Ball (Spring & Fall 2024, 4 sessions - 1 1/2 hours) with instruction & games offered at the Tennis Courts in King's Park; equipment provided by Carman Dufferin Recreation for no fee and Carman Tennis Club allowed the group to use their facilities
- Introduction to Disc Golf (Summer and Fall - 2 sessions), facilitated by Jeremy McGill & Joel VanKoughnet (who designed the course in King's Park); equipment provided by Carman Dufferin Recreation
- Pool Rentals (June - Parents & Tots, July and August, all ages - 1 hour) for 25 or 50 people
- Drop In Art (throughout the year on Tuesdays from 11:30 am to 1:00 pm, Saturdays from 1:00 pm to 2:30 pm) at the Golden Prairie Arts Council for all ages & all skill levels (max. 10 participants); Nigel Bart & GPAC staff offered the community the time to be creative and feel safe
- Christmas at the Museum (December 2024) at the Carman Dufferin Museum, King's Park; hot chocolate, cupcakes, oranges, and snacks were included, along with a craft table, music, and hay wagon rides through town

Plans for 2025

- Bowling
- Introduction to Disc Golf
- Pool Rentals
- Drop-In Art
- Christmas at the Museum
- Introduction to Fishing (in the spring or fall)







Education & Employment Working Group

Goal: Increase educational and employment opportunities

Working Group Members: Allison Abbott-Wiebe, Wendy Durand, Deb Russell

The Education and Employment Working Group strives to increase adult educational and employment opportunities through improved awareness of, and access to, work opportunities identified in our area. We seek to explore partnership opportunities between local school, local businesses and post secondary institutes. We welcome input from interested persons and are always seeking new ideas and fresh perspectives surrounding education, training, and employment opportunities.

2024 Activities:

- Continued our working group action plan to identify challenges and opportunities for adults in accessing local education, training and employment
- Recruited a new Education and Employment working group member
- Hosted a spring One Stop ID Day at Boyne Regional Library, to provide in-person assistance for clients to order or replace primary identification whether Manitoba birth certificates, Social Insurance Number, or Manitoba Health cards
- Cultivated partnerships with service organizations and community businesses for navigating education and employment options
- Coordinated a successful October Roads to Success day at the Active Living Centre, by inviting several service providers and scheduled presenters to address needs around fraud prevention, government services, education, employment, financial and settlement services
- Planned a 4-day Workplace Education Manitoba (WEM) Launcher Assessment Workshop at the Active Living Center (cancelled due to low registration)

Plans for 2025

- Investigate collaboration with another working group and local merchants in an event that could provide clothing options and services for educational or employment needs
- Partnering with Carman & Community Chamber of Commerce on a fall Career Fair hosted at Carman Collegiate, with our focus on adult learners and job seekers

- Coordinate with Workplace Education Manitoba (WEM) for delivery of personal development workshops to the area this calendar year
- Strengthen relationships with Regional Connections Immigrant Services to cultivate their existing settlement and employment services within the community
- Actively advocate and promote available free programs offered by WEM and Regional Connections Immigrant Services in Carman
- Expand capacity within our working group through recruitment of additional Education and Employment community members and through connections in partnered activities



Food Security Working Group

Goal: Increase access and options to mental health and addiction services

Working Group Members: Beth Bartley, Julie Ruban McDonald, Terra Huston, Claudia Kohler, Lisa Lehmann, Cosmo Paton, Jackie Paton, Edith Rook, Sandy Scott, Jocelyn Vankoughnet

The Food Security Working Group works towards ensuring individuals and families have access to affordable healthy food. This group is working with families to offer food preparation and learning opportunities. The group will plan more activities and opportunities in the future.

2024 Activities:

- Community suppers held each month (except December) on second Wednesdays; supper was provided by local community groups and churches and was open to all members of the community at no cost (approximately 75 people attended the supper each month)
- Two Jam-processing workshops held on November 5th and November 6th at the Carman Community Hall (23 participants in total); workshops were hands-on and taught participants how to make blueberry and sour cherry jam
- A one-day, hands-on food processing workshop held to educate participants how to prepare and freeze vegetable packs for soups and stews
- 2 Vegetable Stands provided an opportunity for the community to share with others, increasing awareness of the need for food sharing; one vegetable stand in the North End and one vegetable stand in the South End
- Food Currency program in partnership with Direct Farm Manitoba and the local community farmer's market

Plans for 2025

- To increase access to local produce for families on limited income
- Continue with the 2 vegetable stands in Carman and build a stand for Roseisle
- Continue with Community Suppers
- Continue with the Food Currency program
- Jam making workshops
- Freezer Vegetable hands on workshop



Supporting Emotional Health Working Group

Goal: Increase access and options to mental health and addiction services

Working Group Members: Nigel Bart, Audi Dewit, Julie Hesketh, Lisa Lehmann, Linda MacNair, Louise Sanders, Linda Sylvester, Terry Warburton

CWC Supporting Emotional Health is committed to nurturing resilience and wellness through accessible programs. We aim to support individuals across our community with a focus on vulnerable populations and young families. We partner with key stakeholders and other community groups to provide and strengthen initiatives to support emotional wellness, increase knowledge and reduce stigma related to mental health and illnesses.

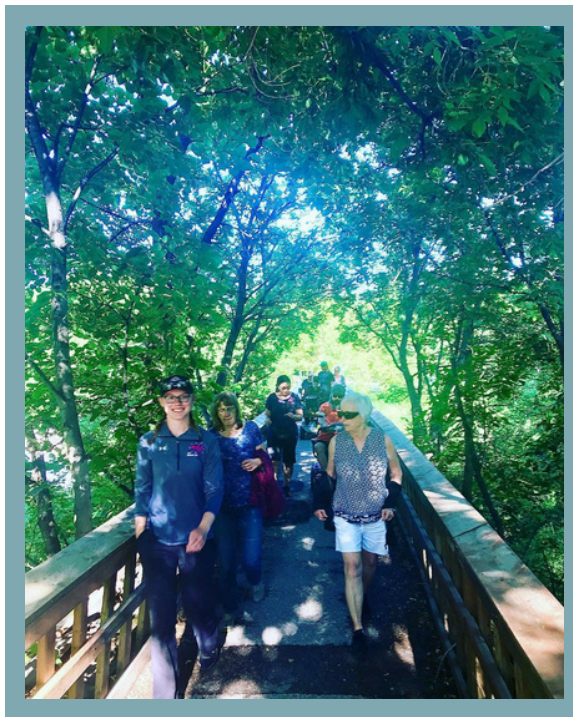
2024 Activities:

- Supporting Emotional Health Support Group; a monthly peer support meetings held starting February 2024. Speakers at the support meetings included SHSS Crisis Team, Tawny Veldman Cox - Breathwork, Jolene Knight - yoga therapy, Claudette Durupt - sound therapy, Terry Warburton - managing emotions, Louise Sanders - Emotional Freedom technique, and George McDonald - mental health hacks
- Walk in Counselling in March and in June/July. We requested and received 8 sessions of adult walk in counselling provided by Southern Health Sante Sud
- Nature in the Park series - September/ October. Yoga in the park with Jolene Knight, and art therapy with Chris Larsen
- Hosted Community Supper - October
- Game night with Adam in September/October. 8-week series facilitated by Adam Memme
- Suicide Prevention Day talk - September 9 (sponsored by SHSS)
- Small Town Run & Walk (Organized and led by Chris & Sheila Dyck). Thursday evenings during the summer/fall and every other Saturday morning during the winter. Windup celebration held in December hosted and sponsored by Barbara Alarie at Bell Aura

Planned Activities for 2025

- Small Town Run & Walk
- Supporting Emotional Health Support Group
- Host Community Supper October
- Circle of Security - parenting training January - March 2025

- Narcotics Anonymous Carman
- Emotional Freedom technique training
- Book study - emotional connection with food
- Art therapy - Partnership with Golden Prairie Arts Council
- Domestic Violence prevention - Partnership with Genesis House
- Roots of Hope initiative - Partnership with community stakeholders & SHSS
- Collaborate with school counselors to meet student and family needs
- Learn more about current addiction issues in our community



Transportation Working Group

Goal: Increase options to affordable and accessible transportation in our community

Working Group Members: Melissa Emerson-Froebe, Kathie Findlay, Rob McClement, Evelyn Rempel Petkau, Karen Tjaden

Transportation accessibility in rural communities is vital to ensure residents can reach essential services like healthcare and education, access employment opportunities, maintain social connections, and improve overall quality of life. The Transportation Working Group will continue to explore how other communities have addressed their transportation needs, and how communities in the Pembina Valley can work together to develop regional and affordable transportation solutions.

2024 Activities:

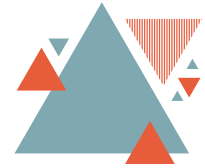
- Continued partnership with Seniors Resource Council and Carman Handi-Van.
- Carman Handi-Van partnered with the Carman Food Pantry in the fall.
- Explored resources such as GO Manitoba and Tamarack.
- Communicated with other communities in southern Manitoba who are advancing more transportation options in their communities.

Plans for 2025

- Increase the number of volunteers in the Transportation Working Group.
- Explore opportunities to extend the volunteer driver program for medical and other appointments for younger people who are currently eligible for the current service.
- Consider future advocacy for medical transportation not covered.
- Exploring cooperation with ECO West, MERX, and/or other groups to do a more formal needs assessment in regards to transportation in the community.
- Negotiate with Town/RM to explore viable regional transportation solutions and identify additional transportation funding sources to subsidize rides for more people and demographics.
- Work with the Town in a supportive way to encourage the development of a bike lane through the community.
- Explore other ways to bring more active transportation in our community.



Partnerships



Ministerial Association

The Carman and District Ministerial Association has been providing grocery vouchers to Carman and surrounding areas for 25 years (started in 2004). The Grocery Assistance fund is funded entirely by area churches and community members.

Carman and Area Food Pantry

Board Members: Joyce Beichter, Brenda Bryson, Chris Dick, Mandy Dyck, Terra Huston, Berthe Lelond, Bob Pauls, Evelyn Rempel Petkau

In the fall of 2022, the conflux of several opportunities and people kick started a local food bank; a one-time grant from Mennonite Church Manitoba for \$5000 for projects that reach out to the community, a grant from Mennonite Disaster Service for community service, the availability of a large kitchen and walk-in fridge in the basement of the Carman Mennonite Church, and some concerned individuals finding each other. When they learned that our area was considered a 'dead zone' by Harvest Manitoba because there was no food bank in or near our community and more and more of our people were showing up at their door in Winnipeg, this group of people became even more determined to create a food bank here. Harvest Manitoba extended support and assistance to us in many ways that were extremely helpful.

We continue to operate every fourth Thursday out of the basement of the Carman Mennonite Church which has graciously allowed us to use their facilities at no cost since our beginning. One of the ways we have expressed our appreciation to the church is through a donation at the end of each year. At the end of 2024 we donated \$2500 to the church. We are deeply grateful for their generosity and for the generous services of their caretaker, Art Drewlo.

Our Board Member, Bob Pauls, has been our liaison with the church and we have become aware that we have about two more years that we can operate out of their facilities. (We are taking up more and more of their space as well as creating a lot of wear and tear on their elevator.) We have begun discussions about searching for another space that will be on ground level and provide space for other services and/or agencies under one roof. We are in the process of forming a committee for the task of moving this forward; a committee that would include someone from our board, from CWC, perhaps a realtor, someone from town council, someone with fundraising experience.

We continue to operate as a member of Harvest Manitoba. They are extremely helpful, providing resources and information as well as groceries. The Tuesday before our Food Pantry our trailer goes into Winnipeg where it is loaded with groceries. A crew of volunteers prepares for the trailer's arrival at the church and helps unload and set up the groceries for the Food Pantry. We are very grateful for the class of grade 8 students from Dufferin Christian School that comes every time and offers lots of energetic manpower. A number of homeschool families also come every month and give generously of their time. Altogether, on the Tuesdays and Thursdays of the week that we operate the Food Pantry, we have approximately 40-50 volunteers.

Our client numbers over the last few months have not demonstrated the rapid growth of the previous years. On February 27, we served 151 households. On January 30 - 166 households, January 2 - 152 households, December 5 - 160 households.

Some of the changes and developments this year have been:

- establishing policies and procedures and writing up a Governance Plan
- updating the Food Pantry link on the CWC website
- moving from distributing pre-packed hampers to offering a shopping-style experience for our clients, with the hope of empowering and giving more dignity to them as well as decreasing food waste
- Receiving a \$10,000 grant from FCC enabling us to purchase 2 large fridges
- setting up a policy whereby we remove clients from our list if they have now shown up for three successive times. The hope is that this will give greater accuracy to our food orders for Harvest Manitoba. A client can always sign up again at any time.
- we have really appreciated and benefitted from the services of the HandiVan, providing transportation for our clients to and from the Food Pantry. We are very sorry that the Library grant which enables this service has come to an end. We will need to look at other ways to provide this service.

We are looking forward to hosting a volunteer appreciation Barbeque on May 13.

Our gratitude goes out to our community which has generously supported us through generous financial donations as well as food donations, for a local potato farmer who provides all our potatoes, for Prairie Flour Mills, for a local market gardener who regularly donates fresh produce, for Co-op's Hunger Bag program, Red Apple's food drive, for the services of Toews Printing and for all our volunteers. We are also deeply grateful for CWC and how they have supported us and allowed us to partner with them.

Submitted by Evelyn Rempel Petkau

On behalf of the Board of Carman and Area Food Pantry