

Brookfield Community Food Cupboard

A Food Security Project located at Brookfield High School

(logo will go here when it is developed!)

Vision:

- Open a Food Cupboard at Brookfield High School on Wednesdays – mid-afternoon to early evening.
- Open for individuals/families in the Riverside Park/Hunt Club area, as well as students and families served by Brookfield who live in other areas.
- Provide food for one day (3 meals), once a week
- This food would supplement other food security programs, including Heron Emergency Food Centre (the designated food bank for this area)
- Offer food in a way that offers dignity and respect, with low barriers to access

The Need:

- Heron Emergency Food Centre is the Food Bank for this area. In Dec 2023, they served 742 families, up from 569 in Dec 2022
- Transportation to and from HEFC has been identified as a barrier for people from Riverside Park and Hunt Club accessing food.
- HEFC offers a 7 day supply of food once a month to a household.
- Brookfield High School has identified that approx. 75% of their students live with food insecurity.

Background

- In the fall of 2023, Riverside United Church facilitated two Food Security Table gatherings. Representatives from faith communities, food security programs, helping agencies, interested community members, and Councillor Riley Brockington met to discuss the reality of food insecurity and worked to see if there were possibilities.
- In December of 2023, a meeting was held with staff from Brookfield, the local OCDSB trustee and representatives from the Food Security Table to see if Brookfield HS would be a possible location. The Ottawa Carleton District School Board has given their support to this project.

BCFC Opening

- Target date for opening is March 20, 2024
- The Food Cupboard will be housed in an office and classroom off the cafeteria at Brookfield HS. There is direct access to this room from outside.
- Shelving and bins are being purchased through a grant from the Brookfield School Council

Co-ordinating Group:

- A sub group of 8 has been meeting weekly to bring the vision into reality.
 - - 3 member of Brookfield staff
 - 2 from Riverside United and 1 from The Meeting House Ottawa
 - 2 community members of Riverside Park

Food Sources:

- Donations from the community will be necessary!
 - Drop off locations: Brookfield High School, Riverside United Church, ...
- is expanding to Ottawa. Lionsheart - A charitable organization which does food recovery which started in Kingston is expanding to Ottawa. One of our Co-ordinating group is chef for Lionsheart and is working on building the connection between Lionsheart and BCFC.
- Conversations will be happening with local stores to see if food recovery can be channeled to BCFC.

Relationship to Ottawa Food Bank network:

- The Ottawa Food Bank Programs and Planning staff have been consulted on the work of establishing BCFC.
- The Ottawa Food Bank does not partner with an agency until there is demonstrated sustainability (normally at least a year of operation) and the agency has non-profit status.
- The Ottawa Food Bank does not have in its mandate to support programs in schools; the Ottawa Network for Education handles in school programs.
- The vision of BCFC seeks to bridge that distinction.
- The Ottawa Food Bank recognizes the pressure on Heron EFC.

Partners/Support

So far, BCFC has the support of:

Brookfield High School

Riverside United Church

Ottawa Carleton District SB

The Meeting House Ottawa

Brookfield School Council

Hunt Club Riverside Park
Steering Table

Councillor Riley Brockington

We are looking for more groups to add to this list.

Work to do:

- Develop a logo (a design class at Brookfield is working on this)
- Develop a website
- Recruit volunteers – to coordinate planning, and to work during operating hours
- Develop financial processes for receiving financial donations.
- Begin food drives to collect food.

How can Riverside Park Community Association help?

- Become a partner/supporter of this project.
- Help with communication into the community, through newsletter, website, FaceBook, etc
- Encourage wider community support