



STRATEGIC PLAN 2020 – 2025

Prepared by: Collaborative Strategies Incorporated,
Tracey Seabrook and Marianne Seaton
Date: August 31, 2020



Maplegate Strategic Plan 2020 – 2025

Table of Contents

Authors of the Report.....	3
Executive Summary	4
Signature Page.....	7
Introduction and Process.....	8
Language Is Important	9
Maplegate Organizational Description	12
Strategic Intent	14
Key Strategic Directions	15
Relationships and Partnerships.....	15
Strategic Direction #1.....	15
Strategic Direction #2.....	15
Strategic Direction #3.....	16
Capacity Building.....	17
Strategic Direction #4.....	17
Strategic Direction #5.....	18
Strategic Direction #6.....	19
Operational Issues	19
Strategic Direction #7.....	19
Strategic Direction #8.....	20
Strategic Direction #9.....	21
Public Outreach and Education/Advocacy.....	22
Strategic Direction #10.....	22
Evaluation and Measurements	23
Appendices:.....	24
Strategic Planning Consultation Participants.....	25
As It Was Heard Reports	27
Bibliography	40



Authors of the Report

Tracey Seabrook and Marianne Seaton have worked together in varying capacities over the last thirty years.

Tracey Seabrook

- 28 years working municipally in human services, 20 in senior management roles
 - Implemented numerous provincial initiatives
 - Led provincial and Northern working groups to respond to various commission reports
 - Chaired both Northern and Provincial committees on various topics related to the delivery of human services
 - Worked collaboratively at a community and provincial level with municipal and provincial partners
- 6 years working provincially for the Ministry of Community, Children's and Social Services corporately
 - Worked in partnership with a number of internal branches within the ministry to implement provincial initiatives
 - Developed strategic position papers to steer provincial political positions
 - Was a key collaborator with delivery agents municipally and in the non-profit sector

Marianne Seaton

- Marianne Seaton is the principal of Collaborative Strategies Inc.
- Marianne is the former acting Executive Director and Director of Professional Development for the Ontario Municipal Social Services Association (OMSSA).
- Following a successful career as a social assistance and employment programs front-line worker and manager, Marianne has achieved recognition in her consulting role as a leader in development and change.
- The mainstay of Marianne's career has been in policy and professional development.
- Organizational excellence is the outcome Marianne strives for in all her work.
- She describes her passion in her work as building better lives and environments with staff, organizations, consumers and communities.



Executive Summary

The world in which this strategic plan for Maplegate has been developed is not the same as the world in which the previous plan was developed. The world is now experiencing its first pandemic which has put incredible demands on human services. Opportunities for funding, while increasing during the pandemic, are often time limited and have specific mandates attached to them. In general, funders are often requiring that organizations work in partnerships with other organizations in their community to secure new funding. In fact, larger foundations such as Trillium and Laidlaw are moving to funding communities as opposed to funding individual organizations. Additionally, within the past five to ten years there has been more emphasis on holistic client centred case planning which requires the mobilization of many community partners to meet the diverse and often complex needs of the people we serve.

Our observations were that Maplegate is successfully working with many community partners in order to meet individual client needs. There is a great deal to build on in formalizing those working relationships. Maplegate has developed and maintains a most committed staffing group and board and is recognized as a critical service in supporting the community's needs.

“HOME IS NOT SAFE FOR EVERYONE: DOMESTIC VIOLENCE DURING A PANDEMIC | CANADIAN LABOUR CONGRESS. CANADA’S UNIONS ARE CALLING FOR INCREASED VIGILANCE AND AWARENESS TO THE GROWING RISK OF DOMESTIC VIOLENCE AMIDST THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC. THE RECOMMENDATION THAT PEOPLE STAY IN THEIR HOMES, ALONG WITH ADDED FINANCIAL PRESSURE AND STRESS, CAN ELEVATE THE RISK OF VIOLENCE AND FURTHER ENTRENCHES ISOLATION, WHICH INCREASES OPPORTUNITIES FOR ABUSERS TO EXERT POWER AND CONTROL.”

Canadian Labour Congress

Issues of domestic violence remain prevalent in all communities and as a result of the pandemic were anticipated to be on the rise. Additionally, there were new demands in communities as some supports were reduced for families resulting in new pressures for Maplegate.

Securing funding within this vulnerable sector remains the number one challenge for many organizations. As a result it requires creative approaches to securing any new sustainable funding. There are times when funding is announced with very little turnaround time to apply and using the funds. As a result, community planning is essential in meeting short applications times for funding. This also requires



relationships to be formalized in a manner conducive to funding requirements and governmental directions.

The consultants found that the strategic directions fell into four categories including: Relationships and Partnership, Capacity Building, Operational Issues, Public Outreach and Education/Advocacy. In conclusion, in consultation with board, staff and key community partners the following plan outlines ten strategic directions to be further explained in the body of this report:

- ❖ **Strategic Direction #1:** Gain a better understanding of the broader human service system and how each service interacts/impacts one another.
- ❖ **Strategic Direction #2:** Develop a community plan for the broader human services system to identify service gaps and overlaps and to help to secure funding for meeting gaps in services.
- ❖ **Strategic Direction #3:** Written protocols be collaboratively developed as to how Maplegate works with each organization.
- ❖ **Strategic Direction #4:** Prepare a case for an Operational Manager to support the ongoing work of Maplegate. Funding be pursued to support the new position including potential partnerships with other organizations.
- ❖ **Strategic Direction #5:** Secure sustainable funding to support full time equivalent Outreach Co-ordinator(s). This would further support an interim plan for transitional housing.
- ❖ **Strategic Direction #6:** To explore opportunities to provide more structured programming for the children of Maplegate residents.
- ❖ **Strategic Direction #7:** Complete review of current policies with a lens on what is missing. Develop an implementation plan to support the ongoing use of the policies and procedures.
- ❖ **Strategic Direction #8:** A professional education plan be developed for Maplegate staff as a whole.
- ❖ **Strategic Direction #9:** Ensure there is a common understanding of Harm Reduction and that Maplegate ensures that all



services associated with Harm Reduction approach are available to the women in their program.

- ❖ **Strategic Direction #10:** More effectively engage the community in working collaboratively on violence against women's issues on both an individual and global level.



Signature Page

The report was reviewed and approved by the Executive Director and Board of Directors of Maplegate prior to being presented at their Annual General Meeting September 24, 2020.

Melody Rose, Executive Director

Date

Susan Jenkinson, President

Date



Introduction and Process

The intent of this report is to outline a strategic vision for Maplegate for the period of 2020 – 2025. The consultant met with the Maplegate board of directors in the fall of 2019 at which time the need to develop a comprehensive strategic plan was determined. This would further support the board and staff when making operational decisions on how to move forward, as well as providing the necessary plans for ensuring more secure funding.

In late January, the consultants met with staff to gain a greater understanding of their needs, opportunities and challenges they had in the direct delivery of services. It was evident this is a strong and committed group of individuals who work well with each other. During the same week the consultants re-met with the Board of Directors to further understand their perspectives and concerns related to how Maplegate should and could move forward. They identified general concerns related to sustainable funding, staffing as well as more global issues of concern about violence towards women.

As a result of Covid, planned engagements with community partners was delayed and resulted in individual one on one discussions in July - August, 2020. The detailed findings from all three groups can be found in the Appendix under “As It Was Heard” reports.

The report in its final form was approved by the Board prior to it being presented at the Annual General Meeting, September 24, 2020.

“Maplegate is an essential service in the community and the staff are very approachable and most eager to meet client and community needs.”

As stated by a community partner



Language Is Important

Throughout this strategic plan we have used many terms several times. As such here are the definitions of these terms as used within this report.

Accountability

To be responsible for and able to explain decisions and actions taken. Knowing what we are accountable for can be a support as standards against which our behaviours are clearly defined and understood.

Partnership

An agreement between two or more parties to work together to achieve a common purpose or goals. Partnerships are supported by formalized agreements on how parties will work together.

Consensus

An accepted decision or opinion amongst a group of people. Consensus decision making is a formalized process wherein everyone feels heard and attention is paid to the opposing voice.

Collaboration

Two or more parties working together to achieve a common goal. Collaboration requires the fundamental human interaction skills including but not limited to communication, principled negotiation, problem solving, and conflict management.

Client Centric

A method of service that puts the client at the centre of staff efforts. The term arises from a growing trend in healing services to acknowledge and respond to the client as the necessary focus of the work.

Trauma Informed



Services are provided in ways that recognize needs for physical and emotional safety as well as choice and control in decisions affecting ones plan. In trauma informed services there is attention in policy, practices and staff approaches to safety and empowerment for the client.

Empowerment

A set of measures designed to increase autonomy and self-determination in clients in order to allow them to represent their interests in a responsible and self-determined way, acting on their own authority.

Evidence Based

Use of facts and knowledge to determine actions, particularly the use of objective information criteria, such as found in science and research.

Harm Reduction

Harm Reduction is an evidence-based, client-centred approach that seeks to reduce the health and social harms associated with addiction and substance use, without necessarily requiring people who use substances from abstaining or stopping. Included in the harm reduction approach to substance use is a series of programs, services and practices.

<https://ontario.cmha.ca/harm-reduction/>

Warm Handoff

In the client-centric approach, the rationale for the referral and the expected outcomes should be arrived at and implemented collaboratively. Referrals are important benchmarks in case work, as they represent implementation of all or part of a plan of action. Preparing the client to get the best possible results from the program or service to which they are referred helps maximize the opportunity. A warm hand-off includes summarizing the features, benefits and advantages of the program or service.

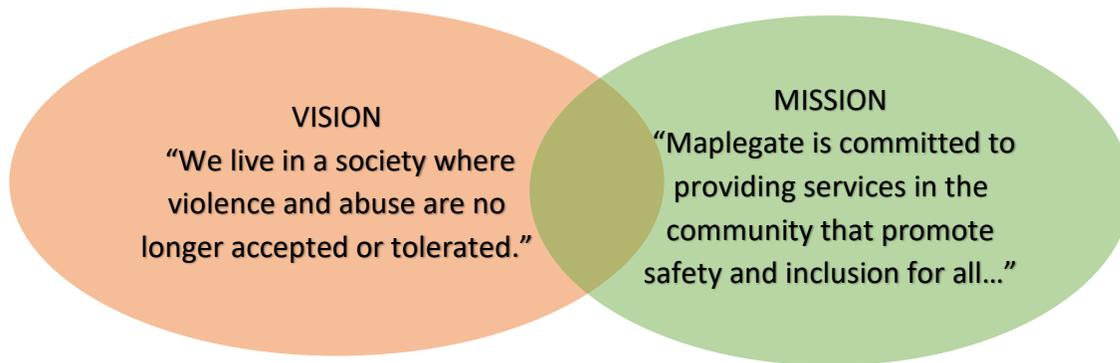
Systems Thinking



Systems thinking is based on the belief that the sum of the parts of a system is greater than when individual parts or services work independently on one another. A system is something that functions as a whole through the interaction of its parts. It also acknowledges that when a change is made in one component of the system it impacts the system as a whole.



Maplegate Organizational Description



The Women’s Crisis Centre was formed as a shelter for abused women in July of 1982. Previous to this date, the police would bring the women and their dependents to a designated volunteer’s home and they would drive them to the Sault Ste. Marie shelter. This shelter, then called the Women’s Crisis Centre, was housed out of the Captain Kidd building also known as the Sault College on Mississauga Ave. It was a 2-bedroom apartment that was facilitated by volunteers such as Rita Harten who was the Coordinator. Contact was made through the local police or St. Joseph’s Hospital. The five founding board members recognized the need to have a local shelter and were integral in the formation of this agency. These members included Doug Strong, Roger Denis, Kathy McCarty, Linda Wilkins and Marion Kennedy. The annual budget that was raised to support this service was \$95,000.

To this day, the Elliot Lake Women’s Group Inc. is still the charitable umbrella under which the Maplegate brand falls. The programs and services include the Maplegate House for Women (shelter) as well as various outreach and transitional services that we offer to residents and community members within Elliot Lake and surrounding areas.

Maplegate operates from a trauma informed care and harm reduction approaches to all of its services and supports throughout the organization which stems from a client centric approach. They are committed to providing services in a manner that is welcoming and appropriate to the special needs of those affected by trauma and creating a space conducive to healing and growth.

They are community members who are dedicated to providing advocacy and support to women and children. They believe that women and children have the right to



freedom from abuse, violence and oppression. They support all women and children with care and compassion, empowering them to make informed choices to define their own lives.

Maplegate Shelters have recently expanded to 24 beds to meet the needs of the Algoma East region in Northern Ontario.

Homelessness and lack of services for men led Maplegate shelters to open a 6-bed men's emergency home in June of 2018. Larry's Place provides support to serve men in distress. In October of 2018, Maplegate shelters opened a 5-bed Transitional House for women and are currently resourcing additional transitional housing for men as well as women to address the housing crisis.



Strategic Intent

- ❖ There is a reduction of violence against women
- ❖ The community is working from a system thinking perspective and they acknowledge their roles and responsibilities within that system (note: working within a system of services is essential to working within a client centric approach)
- ❖ The complex needs of clients can be better met within a system of services
- ❖ Improved access to services for clients through increased empowerment of clients through a warm hand-off from one organization to the other
- ❖ Maplegate staff are in a position to better case plan with their residents as they move to greater self-reliance
- ❖ Lessening of staff stress through the provision of organizational tools and supports all of which are designed to increase staff confidence in executing their roles and responsibilities (note: we have observed that increased confidence in decision making is a primary self-care tool for staff)
- ❖ Increased capacity for Maplegate to execute their role in the community
- ❖ Reduced liabilities for Maplegate board and staff (note: using a community-based decision-making model reduces liabilities for all individual organizations)



Key Strategic Directions

Relationships & Partnerships

Capacity Building

Operational Issues

Public Outreach & Education/Advocacy

Relationships and Partnerships

Strategic Direction #1: Gain a better understanding of the broader human service system and how each service interacts/impacts one another.

Rationale: Through community consultation we identified there was often uncertainty about the services provided within the service system including Maplegate's. As well, Maplegate staff identified they were not certain about some of the key services offered by their community partners that would benefit the women and children in their care. In order to effectively serve the community it is critical that each organization understands the services accessible by their clientele.

Operationalizing:

- 1) Develop a new or refresh an existing committee structure at which current information can be shared among partners.
- 2) Review the membership to ensure all necessary parties are at the table
- 3) Where possible engage staff in these meetings but at the very least ensure there is venue to share and discuss on an ongoing basis the information.
- 4) Provide staff a venue to identify where there are potentially challenges and feed back to the committee for resolution.
- 5) Develop a service system menu for clients accessing agency services and provide a feedback loop for clients.

Strategic Direction #2: Develop a community plan for broader human services system to identify service gaps and overlaps and to help to secure funding for meeting gaps in services.



Rationale: We heard similar needs identifying the same gaps in services for women from varying organizations. Ie Transitional Housing and the required supports. In addition we heard of some of the challenges in ensuring that indigenous women are provided shelter and supports that ensures cultural safety. An agreed upon plan will assist in securing and utilizing any available funds. A community response sets the stage for future funding partnerships and working with government organizations to secure new funding. Government funding is often delivered in a piecemeal and short-term approach and a community plan helps you leverage funding quickly. A community plan ensures ownership and accountability to gap/overlaps in service at a community level rather than an organizational level. With a community plan in place it is easier for clients to navigate the system themselves and alleviates staff time in assisting clients navigate the system itself.

Operationalizing:

- 1) Through the committee structure, consensus is achieved to develop a community plan.
- 2) Develop protocols on how each organization works with one another (see Strategic Direction #3) which will form the basis for developing the community plan.
- 3) Come to consensus on the gaps/overlaps in the services system. Where possible empower front line staff to engage in this process.
- 4) Work collaboratively to develop the community plan within that service system.
- 5) Develop an implementation plan.

Strategic Direction #3: Written protocols be collaboratively developed as to how Maplegate works with each organization.

Rationale: We did hear referrals were made on a case by case basis which was working fine, however there appeared not to be a consistent understanding of services and supports Maplegate offers. A clear understanding of how to refer and what can be anticipated empowers the client in making decisions about their situation. A concern was also identified in that where there were good relationships between partners, should a key member leave the organization there was no documentation to support how the organizations worked together. This is critical for continuity of service and sustainability of partnerships. Good written protocols



assist each organization understanding their and their partners roles within the service system.

Operationalizing:

- 1) Protocols need to be flexible enough to adapt to extraordinary client needs and circumstances.
- 2) Priorities to be set for OPP, ADSAB, CAS, Oaks Centre, St. Joseph Hospital and East Algoma Counseling Centre.
- 3) Protocols are developed from a client centric perspective and in collaboration with the organization identified in the protocol.
- 4) They should include: referral processes, case planning, communication protocols, roles and responsibilities. Consideration to be given where possible to an integrated case plan to support a holistic approach in working with the client and assisting them in managing their activities with multiple agencies.
- 5) Maplegate's policies should reflect the approved protocols when established.
- 6) Maplegate's training and orientation for new staff should reflect the mutually agreed upon protocols.

Capacity Building

Strategic Direction #4: Prepare a case for an Operational Manager to support the ongoing work of Maplegate. Funding to be pursued to support the new position including potential partnerships with other organizations.

Rationale: We consistently heard there was not enough capacity within the management team at Maplegate to handle both operational and strategic leadership initiatives. This was consistently communicated by Board, Management and Staff by identifying situations where capacity impacted delivery of services. In order to operationalize the new strategic directions it will be critical to have an appropriate management structure in place to enact the goals and plans.

Operationalize:

1. Develop a job description for the new position identifying clear roles and responsibilities for the Operational Manager and the ED
2. Determine the necessary funding and pay grid for the position



3. As an interim step formalize a lead staffing position to act as a lead for operational issues. Pursue funding for front line staff to free up time for a senior staff to take a more active role operationally. (this would need to be done in collaboration with the union)
4. Identify potential funding sources and if potential partnerships could exist. This should be further informed by understanding the funding mechanisms within the community of services. (see Strategic Direction #1 and #2)

Strategic Direction #5: Secure sustainable funding to support full time equivalent Outreach Co-ordinator(s). This would further support an interim plan for transitional housing.

Rationale: We consistently heard there was not enough capacity within the staffing team at Maplegate to better support the women and their families within the organization during and post their stay. Management and staff identified situations where capacity impacted delivery of services and success post stay. To operationalize the new strategic directions it will be critical to have an appropriate staffing structure in place to enact the goals and plans.

Operationalize:

1. Refine the job description for the position identifying clear roles and responsibilities for the Outreach Coordinator
2. Determine the necessary funding and pay grid for the position based on any potential changes to the roles and responsibilities
3. Identify potential funding sources and if potential partnerships could exist. This should be further informed by understanding the funding mechanisms within the community of services. Ie Are there opportunities for shared positions as an Outreach Co-ordinator?



Strategic Direction #6: To explore opportunities to provide more structured programming for the children of Maplegate residents.

Rationale: Evidence supports how critical the early years of a child’s development is. Additionally, for all children involved in family violence situations it is extremely traumatic. There are currently no formal relationships with children’s services for Maplegate residents. To support a continuum of service and address this vital need a community approach is necessary. This would also support continuity of services post residency at Maplegate and maintain supportive relationship to sustain wellness for the family unit as a whole.

“Impact of Family Violence on Children
Children who live in situations of family violence can suffer immediate and permanent physical harm, even death. They can also experience short and long-term emotional, behavioural and developmental problems, including post-traumatic stress disorder.”

Government of Canada

Operationalize:

1. Identify the gap in services for children residing in the shelter in collaboration with staff and residents of Maplegate.
2. Mobilize the children’s services sector to develop an approach to address the gaps.
3. Work with the children’s services sector to develop an implementation plan.
4. Continually assess program’s effectiveness and address future gaps.
5. Utilize the Outreach Co-ordinator to support the approach.

Operational Issues

Strategic Direction #7: Complete review of current policies with a lens on what is missing. Develop an implementation plan to support the ongoing use of the policies and procedures.

Rationale: The consultants consistently heard from management and staff that some policies and procedures required updating. We also heard there was a need to ensure ministry standards were reflected in the current policies and procedures. Within the organization, staff appeared to have varying perspectives and understanding of the current policies and procedures which impacted their ability to function effectively within the organization on a day to day basis. Good policies also empower clients to be more engaged in their own case planning and assists them in understanding the



services they are using. It promotes transparency for community, staff and clients in the services that are being provided.

Operationalize:

1. Engage consultants to review policies and procedures.
2. Set up staff session to do a consultation of what is currently there and where confusion and gaps exist and where policies no longer reflect current practices.
3. Consultants to review policies to ensure provincial standards are met.
4. Draft policies to be provided to organization for final review and amendments to be discussed and completed for a final draft.
5. Final draft intent of each policy to be provided to the board and approved for implementation
6. Implementation plan to be developed to support the effective use by staff and ongoing maintenance.

Strategic Direction #8: A professional education plan be developed for Maplegate staff as a whole.

Rationale: The human services sector is ever evolving. It is critical to have well trained staff who are kept up to date on research and development within the human sciences. Maplegate's services have evolved and as they do professional development is imperative to effectively deliver services and mitigate liability for Management and the Board.

Operationalize:

1. Identify key areas of concern with staff and management to support the development of a plan to include but not limited to others:
 - a. Harm Reduction and safe practices in administering the program
 - b. Duty to Report (CAS)
 - c. Privacy: Responsibilities and super-ceding legislation such as workplace health and safety
 - d. Cultural safety
 - e. Indigenous awareness
 - f. Gender based issues
 - g. Use of Discretion
 - h. Responsibilities for documentation and potential liabilities surrounding it



2. Develop the professional education plan
3. Develop an orientation and mentorship program for new staff
4. Secure partnerships and funding to support the implementation of the identified professional development needs
5. On an annual basis review the plan and update accordingly

Strategic Direction #9: Ensure there is a common understanding of Harm Reduction and that Maplegate ensures that all services associated with Harm Reduction approach are available to the women in their program.

Rationale: The consultants heard there was not a common understanding of what Harm Reduction looks like at Maplegate. Community organizations did not appear to have a good understanding of the “what” and “how” of harm reduction at Maplegate. There was also a concern identified that while a harm reduction model supported those who use, the current delivery approach at Maplegate neglected those who are in recovery from accessing their services. While not all harm reduction services may be offered by Maplegate it is imperative they have direct access to them within the community. We acknowledge that when people are using substances in a group setting there is inherent risk and potential liability that needs to be thoughtfully considered in the delivery model. Liability can be addressed through due diligence and working in partnership to ensure all aspects of the harm reduction program is available to women.

Operationalize:

1. Outline the supports and services which are fundamental to a harm reduction approach
2. Review the existing policies and procedures to support the ongoing implementation of a fulsome harm reduction approach with community organizations supporting a harm reduction model
3. Review the existing delivery model in consideration of all of the above
4. Ensure there is a common understanding of the harm reduction model as a treatment program within Maplegate for both staff and the women accessing the service
5. Develop clear communication protocols for the women accessing the service so they understand their roles and responsibilities while residing at Maplegate
6. On an ongoing basis review the model with staff, community partners and where possible women accessing the services to validate an effective approach and adjust where necessary



*Strategic Direction #1, #2, and #5 will be critical to the ongoing implementation and partnerships necessary to effectively deliver a harm reduction model at Maplegate

Public Outreach and Education/Advocacy

Strategic Direction #10: More effectively engage the community in working collaboratively on violence against women's issues on both an individual and global level.

Rationale: A clear mandate of Maplegate is to provide leadership in working in the community on violence against women. It is important to continually provide clear and consistent messaging to support women in the community. Advocacy should be a natural byproduct of working and educating the community on a day to day basis. The role and responsibility of advocacy then extends beyond Maplegate to include its community partners.

Operationalize:

- 1) Strategic Directions #1, #2 and #3 will provide opportunity for a greater community understanding of the needs of the residents at Maplegate and how as a community they can promote a greater understanding of the issue of family violence.
- 2) Strategic Direction #1 will provide opportunity to raise issues and concerns to more collaboratively and at macro level address issues.
- 3) Promote an evidence-based approach to solving both micro and macro issues in the area of family violence. There is a general need for regular communication with partnering agencies to update them on the services they provide and problem solve any issues.



Evaluation and Measurements

Each strategic direction has a plan for operationalizing which the consultants have translated into a workplan for the organization. Therefore, the implementation of the workplan is in fact the evaluation of the strategic plan. Inherent in the workplan are the annualized goals to measure progress for the organization.

A review of the status of workplan should occur with the Board prior to the Annual General Meeting annually.



Appendices:

1. Strategic Planning and Consultation Participants
2. As It Was Heard Reports
 - a. Staff Consultation
 - b. Board Consultation
 - c. Community Consultation
3. Bibliography



Strategic Planning Consultation Participants

Board Consultation January 23, 2020:

Susan Jenkinson	President
Jennifer Carling	Vice President
Valerie Ralph	Secretary
Susan Sorrell	Treasurer
Cathy Groh	Director
Tammy Roberts	Director
Laurie Ann Reddick	Director
Nathalie Bray	Director
Melody Rose	Executive Director
Shelby Gelineau-Wernie	Administrative Support

Staff Consultation January 21, 2020:

Megan Chisholm	Staff
Samantha Carley	Staff
Theresa Hiuser	Staff
Lynn Thompson	Staff
Caitlyn Prest	Staff
Lauren Bastien	Staff
Nicole Pelletier-Southwind	Staff

Community Consultations July 30 – August 21, 2020 (as provided by Maplegate ED):

Shelley Watt-Proulx	East Algoma Counselling Centre
Deborah Dubois	Children's Aid Society
Tyler Sturgeon	OPP
Connie Free	St. Joseph General Hospital, Nursing Dept.
Leslie Chambers	St. Joseph General Hospital, Nursing Dept.
Suzette ?	St. Joseph General Hospital, Nursing Dept.



Barbara Ridley	The Oaks Centre, St. Joseph General Hospital
France Schellekens	Algoma District Services Administration Board
Karen Chisholm	Algoma District Services Administration Board
Laurie Pierre	Algoma District Services Administration Board
Christine Hull	Elliot Lake Family Health Team
Dan Marchisella	City of Elliot Lake



As It Was Heard Reports

Staff Consultation January 21, 2020 As It Was Heard

February 28, 2020

Submitted to: Melody Rose, Executive Director

By: Collaborative Strategies Inc., Tracey Seabrook and Marianne Seaton

In attendance: Megan, Samantha, Teresa, Lynn, Katlyn, Lauren, Nicole

Facilitators: Tracey Seabrook and Marianne Seaton

As part of the strategic plan development process for Maplegate House for Women, the staff kindly met with the consultants to provide insight on the following **questions:**

1. What are the things that you must achieve over the next five years to sustain your organization?
2. What are the greatest opportunities for the organization? Do you want to grow and if so how?
3. What are the current challenges facing the organization? What are your non-negotiable in terms of must haves? What are the nice to haves?
4. In achieving the must dos what are you willing to do to meet them, what are you not willing to do?
5. In an ideal world what would you want to hear from individuals accessing your services, staff and community about Maplegate?
6. Anything else you think we should know that hasn't come up yet?



Please note that these questions were used only as a guide to the discussion. Staff was most generous with their time and expertise and a solution focused conversation ensued. It was noted that staff were not engaged in the last strategic planning process so were happy to be involved this time.

Highlights:

- Incredibly committed group of individuals
- Team oriented, provided a number of concrete examples of how they support each other in the workplace
- Acknowledgement of how hard the ED works and in how many different roles she must function.
- Solutions focused, where concerns were identified they proposed solutions for consideration
- Identified the necessity to have good relationships with external partners in the community to support the families they serve
- Well prepared for the engagement and eager to have discussions
- A keen desire to enhance services for the people they serve to better prepare them for their future
- Acknowledged that despite a lack of resources Maplegate is doing exceptional work with families with complex needs in an environment where there is simply not enough housing including transitional housing and accompanying supports.
- Supportive of the client centric approach adopted by Maplegate

Opportunities for Maplegate's Future Strategic Plan

- A desire to further develop their services to support indigenous people in Elliot Lake and neighbouring communities
- A desire for more information on Cultural Competencies. Recent training appears to have whet the appetite for more information.
- Suggested having an Elder from a local First Nations Community come in to assist with this learning.
- Suggested having the 7 Grandfather teachings incorporated into the intake package.
- Enhancing staff's ability to identify any cultural need and be in a position to help meet it.
- Cultural safety essential to a client centric service model



- Highlighted the value of speaking with those who have used Maplegate's services. Suggested this could be done as part of the peer to peer group.
- Need to enhance person centred planning and case planning in general. Noted that this is challenging due to lack of staff time and the time a woman stays at Maplegate. Also acknowledged the challenge of having a women drive a plan that is realistic given a lack of resources.
- Would benefit from having a VAW counsellor on site. A clinical counsellor would also help in meeting the complex needs some families present with.
- Identified a need to further understand how the harm reduction model is delivered and integrated into the organization to ensure the safety of the individuals and families accessing services as well as the safety and comfort of staff
- For example how to balance harm reduction with having elders come in to provide supports to the families.
- Would like more training on the variety of safe and sterile supplies available to the women and how to safely and better administer.
- What can we do and not do in regards to harm reduction? What is the big picture we are working from and are there pieces of legislation we need to adhere to?
- How much alcohol can we give and what is staff's level of responsibility and liability?
- Identified a need and desire to review in detail current policies and procedures to understand the intent and direction and to have an opportunity to discuss what works well and where improvements can be made (there appeared to be confusion among staff members related to some policy and procedures)
- Suggested that a staff retreat could be used to go through the most relevant policies. It was suggested that a team approach for the policy review would be most beneficial as it would lessen the work load and ensure adequate input.
- It was noted that there are a total of 475 policies some of which greatly overlap and may appear contradictory.
- Some policies need to be updated and cross referencing of policies would make the volume of policies more manageable.
- It was also noted that getting consistency in policies is work in progress and that it requires clear communication.
- Suggested that further work on policies could be done during staff meetings.
- Suggest guidelines for the use of discretion afforded in many policies and which is essential for client centric service. An



example was around managing the ripple effects of the harm reduction approach which allows women to drink in the shelter. What about other residents and their children?

- Identified a need to review job descriptions and see how they all intersect. Also see how job descriptions intersect with the policies. This could lead to better collaboration between front line staff and outreach.
- Suggestion to look at staff orientation when new staff is hired. Provision of policies, job descriptions to assist in consistency of service for families.
- More flexible staff hours for outreach staff to keep with a client centric approach. Flexible hours would make for more client flexibility as well.
- In regards to staffing:
 - Provide opportunities for staff to use the skills they were hired for and have developed through their work at Maplegate
 - In an ideal world double staff on shifts to allow for more case planning and to deal with safety issues
 - Could a person be on call to deal the high-risk situation as they arise?
- Identified a need to further understand and lobby for accessible services and supports available to the women and families they serve (i.e. Medical travel and transportation to indigenous counselling services available in Blind River, online applications for OW and ODSP, in house counselling services, etc.)
- Identified the need and desire to sustain and enhance current relationships with community partners to better support the individuals and families they serve as well as ensure the safety of families and staff
- Support women and families by introducing basic skills and competencies when appropriate to their daily routines i.e. light cleaning, etc. To also support their transition into permanent housing
- This could occur when staff are cleaning the shelter.
- Could provide a framework for what families can learn while in the shelter – designed to give them skills to sustain their independence.
- Noted that at present there is not an assessment of women and family needs as they enter the shelter. How to best identify their needs? They are presenting with many needs in addition to housing. It is also believed that the lack of assessment can impede referrals to other agencies.
- Would benefit from more learning re: trauma and its impact on behaviour.
- Discussion of the opportunity for staff to participate in family focused discussions during shift change to provide a more consistent service to the families served. It was acknowledged that this would have to be done with the highest regard for family confidentiality.



- Also look at how and where to keep notes on families so that the family is respected and focus on how to best serve the family. Again, with an emphasis on confidentiality.
- Suggested a feedback loop when decisions made by staff are overturned. Understanding that there are good reasons for overturning decisions and feedback would aid in learning and continual improvement. Staff need to feel backed up when they make decisions – especially around family and staff safety.
- Build children’s programming to also support and encourage development and healthy lifestyle behaviours
- Families would greatly benefit from a Child and Youth Worker being on staff.
- Address safety concerns related to one staff rotational model
- Ensure essential information is passed onto rotational staff to support the continuity of decision making and delivery of consistent services
- Explore the need to develop training for staff on narrative writing
- Explore the opportunity for clinical supervision to support harm reduction model
- Explore where opportunities exist to address compassion fatigue and general fatigue of staff



Board Consultation
January 23, 2020
As It Was Heard

February 28, 2020

Submitted to: Melody Rose, Executive Director

By: Collaborative Strategies Inc., Tracey Seabrook and Marianne Seaton

In attendance: Carol, Tammy, Jennifer, Val, Lori-Ann, Cathy, Melody, Shelby, Susan, Susan, Natalie

Facilitators: Tracey Seabrook and Marianne Seaton

As part of the strategic plan development process for Maplegate House for Women, the Board of Directors kindly met with the consultants to provide insight on the following questions:

1. What are the things that you must achieve over the next five years to sustain your organization?
2. What are the greatest opportunities for the organization? Do you want to grow and if so how?
3. What are the current challenges facing the organization? What are your non-negotiable in terms of must haves? What are the nice to haves?
4. In achieving the must dos what are you willing to do to meet them, what are you not willing to do?
5. In an ideal world what would you want to hear from individuals accessing your services, staff and community about Maplegate?
6. Anything else you think we should know that hasn't come up yet?

Please note that these questions were used only as a guide to the discussion. Board members were most generous with their time and expertise and a solution focused conversation ensued. Attention was primarily on goals for Maplegate for the next 5 years.

- It was noted that this is a most progressive and forward moving board. (This was in fact illustrated throughout the meeting)
- Clients provide positive feedback when asked about their experience with Maplegate. This was related to the strong focus on client centred services.



Current initiatives and opportunities (Update on Securing Funding)

- There was a focus on turning challenging situations into opportunities. For example, there is an opportunity to tie the men's shelter into the provision of transitional housing which is seen as a large gap in services. Financial planning is underway to acquire property to provide this much needed transitional housing.
- Staff is very supportive in seeking transitional housing.
- Private donors and the banks have been approached and appear to be on board to help provide this critical service. (Commitment for \$10,000 from a private donor with for more to come. Also, this donor is spreading the word for additional funding from other private sector organizations.)
- Looking at a new building for transitional housing as well as having 4 beds at Larry's (the men's shelter) used for transitional housing.
- Always a discussion re: new shelter vs. old shelter for revenue purposes.
- Always looking for rental properties to offer safe space for community members fleeing from abusive situations.
- Sagamok is a key community partner and has been engaged with Maplegate to provide collaborative cultural restorative practices. This has involved establishing an elders committee to ensure cultural appropriation does not occur.
- Approaching ADSAB for a 5-year commitment for funding.
- The provincial association (OWIF) has lobbying the provincial government through submissions to the budget process – trying to get monies that were clawed back put into core funding. Even so government funds are not enough.
- Through recognition of the housing continuum, the service gaps in the community have been identified and there is ongoing work to secure funds from both the government and the private sector.
- In development: a program to help men move towards employment:
 - Looking at corporate sponsorship and potential for apprenticeships
 - Seeking resources for those starting work such as steel toed shoes etc.
 - Sudbury is looking at a shortage in skilled workers so this will help ready people for work in the trades.

What is to be achieved over the next 5 years? A wishlist



- In essence need to focus on 1) prevention, 2) awareness and 3) capacity issues.
- Always looking for ongoing and sustainable funding from both government and the private sector. This is a current and ongoing task.
- Men's shelter: round the clock staff, the addition of more beds and transition services
- Warming and cooling facilities – noted that there are men living in the woods in the surrounding area.
- Many calls are received from around the province looking for men's shelter services as most communities are without sufficient services for this population. Other areas often want to send homeless men here.
- Preventative services – especially for those who are being stalked and for the stalkers
 - How to make young adults understand that stalking is inappropriate and a precursor to abuse.
 - A study showed a drop of 75% when there are preventative programs in place.
- As another form of prevention how to ensure women have a stronger sense of self
 - How to get into the school system
 - An education program for teachers and for coaches
 - Recognition that the education must be ongoing
 - Any education program should be evidence based
 - Working with the attitudes of the larger society.
 - Noted by some that there have been some small changes happening
- Monies for accessibility: currently there are 5 residents with mobility devices at Larry's. (60% of Larry's residents have a physical disability.) This was noted as a big issue.
- Need to continue with a trauma informed approach for women. Without a trauma care system in place it is hard to move women forward. A spectrum of trauma services need to be in place – need more than cognitive behavioural training to treat trauma. For example, there are approaches to help the trauma survivor release trapped energy.
- 70% of women present with concurrent disorders – an evidence based cross systems approach is required. Systems need to be working together.
- Need to strengthen the management team. Monies are received from the



Elliot Lake Counselling Centre to support admin services but there is a need to diversify funding for this essential aspect of services. Budgets through grants and government funding so include dollars for administration but it is never enough.

- Need to hire an operational manager so ED can focus on finding dollars through a variety of grant programs. For example, applying for a Trillium grant program is a cumbersome labour-intensive process which there is not time to do.
- Need more help for ED like a second line of management
- Need to consider succession planning in the event ED leaves.
- Need more staff (Staff, as well, identified this need in terms of safety issues.)
- Need sustainable funding so time can be made to apply for all monies available.
- Need a contingency strategy in the event funding is pulled. Always need a plan B if monies promised do not materialize.
- Need packages for reaching out to the private, corporate sector. Information readily available would be a time saver and ensure consistent messaging.
- Always the need to look at the big picture when approaching any funder.
- Volunteer system to be addressed

Assets

- All of the initiatives currently in play as listed above
- Dedication and passion of staff and board members
- Community partnerships are a major asset: LHINs, Oak Centre, Counselling Centre, CMHA – These organizations help support the mental health and substance use issues with women. They are also helping with the transitional services piece and at Larry's Place.
- Pet friendly shelter is a huge success.

Challenges

- Sustainable funding
- Lack of affordable housing causes a bottle neck of people in shelters
- How to move people into transitional housing when it is not available even though transitional services are provided.
- Transportation e.g. to get women to day programs in neighbouring First



Nations Communities. Need to pay for buses to help get women to the services required which are outside of Elliot Lake e.g. complex PTSD.

- While medical travel and transportation may be available through Ontario Works or Ontario Disability Support Program these monies are not easily nor consistently accessible. Many pots of money but how do we know about them and how do we access?
- Women still have to go to Sault Ste. Marie for support in the event of a sexual assault. This has been an issue for the past 4 – 5 years and it is still being worked on.
 - Elliot Lake Hospital has a policy to not do the sexual assault intervention as they do not have the free drugs and do not have the necessary infrastructure in place. They will also not store the evidence. Not good communication with the hospital.
 - SSM is happy to provide the service as it keeps up their numbers to keep their funding.
 - Clinics so not have the infrastructure either.
 - This is a province wide issue which requires advocacy.
 - Why not piggy-back on the shelter system to provide this service?



Community Partner Consultations
July 30 to August 21, 2020
As It Was Heard

August 28, 2020

Submitted to: Melody Rose, Executive Director

By: Collaborative Strategies Inc, Tracey Seabrook and Marianne Seaton

In attendance: Children's Aid Society, Algoma District Services Administrative Board, Ontario Provincial Police (Elliot Lake Branch), City of Elliot Lake, Counselling Centre of East Algoma, St Joseph's Hospital (Nurses and Oak Centre), Elliot Lake Family Health Team

Facilitators: Tracey Seabrook and Marianne Seaton

As part of the strategic plan development process for Maplegate House for Women, Community Stakeholders were indented by the Executive Director and were contacted by the consultants by phone. Originally the plan was to meet with all the identified community stakeholders in a group setting but the pandemic made this impossible. The following questions were used to guide the discussion.

1. How do you currently work with Maplegate? (How do you interact with Maplegate and in what capacity? Who in organization interacts with Maplegate and what may they say – may we speak with them?)
2. What do you see as opportunities in working with Maplegate?
3. What do you see as the challenges in working with Maplegate?
4. What do you see as Maplegate's role in the community and the service system?

Please note that these questions were used only as a guide to the discussion. Community stakeholders were most generous with their time and expertise and a solution focused conversation ensued.

- There was overwhelming and consistent support for Maplegate staff and services and the critical role they play the community.
- It was also acknowledged that without sustainable and adequate funding Maplegate still is able to provide services through a client centric lens.
- These positive working relationships provide the greatest opportunity for



Maplegate and the service system as a whole. Agencies which support Maplegate are eager to continue to do so and those which receive support from Maplegate are as well eager to have that support continue.

- The majority of interaction between Maplegate and their community partners is referring clients to and from Maplegate. At present there are not formalized protocols to guide such interactions. While there appeared to be an understanding of the importance of such documents there was wide spread support for the fact that such protocols should be flexible in nature and not fetter the creative thinking that often goes into ensuring client's needs are met.
- It was noted that there are not a lot of community wide committees nor initiatives currently active. This of course, has been a greater challenge due the pandemic.
- It was also stated that there can be challenges navigating through the various services at play in the community – understanding who does what under what circumstances can be a challenge.
- In terms of client service, situations were identified where clients may have more than one case plan. This occurs when more than one organization may be involved with one client. This is seen as an opportunity to streamline services and define roles and responsibilities within the service system to ensure clients are with one holistic case plan.
- There is also an opportunity to ensure all community agencies are dealing with a common understanding of the key legislation they must work within. This is especially so in regards of duty to report and privacy legislation. Having all agencies work within the same legislative framework is also seen as a client centric approach as services are more predictable from a client's perspective.
- Another opportunity to enhance the service system and Maplegate's role within it, is provided within the harm reduction approach adopted by Maplegate. Harm reduction is not readily understood by some community services and by some clients. For example it was stated that some women who may be using abstinence to deal with their substance use issues may not



feel comfortable staying in a home where it is believed woman can use any substance at any time. It was also not clearly understood that a harm reduction approach relies on a continuum of services some of which can be provided by community services.



Bibliography

Women's Shelters Canada

<https://endvaw.ca/home/>

More Than a Bed: National Profile of VAW shelters and transition homes

<https://endvaw.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/More-Than-a-Bed-Final-Report.pdf>

Building A National Narrative: A Select Review of Domestic Violence polices, Legislation, and services across Canada

https://endvaw.ca/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/Building_a_National_Narrative_Dec_2019.pdf

Harm Reduction – Wet Shelters

<https://www.heretohelp.bc.ca/visions-alcohol-vol2/harm-reduction-alcohol-and-homelessness>

https://bccewh.bc.ca/wp-content/uploads/2012/05/2010_GenderingNatFrameworkWomencentredHarmReduction.pdf

<http://triggered.stanford.clockss.org/ServeContent?url=http://btci.stanford.clockss.org%2Fcgi%2Fcontent%2Ffull%2F7%2F4%2F345>

<http://opendoorsproject.ca/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Harm-Reduction-Report-April-2013-final.pdf>

Systems Thinking

<https://learningforsustainability.net/systems-thinking/>

The Effects of Family Violence on Children – Where Does it Hurt? – Public Health Organization of Canada, Health Promotion, Stop Family Violence

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/health-promotion/stop-family-violence/publications/effects-domestic-violence-children-hurt.html>

