

IDEAS AND PROPOSALS SUBMITTED TO IEPC

Idea: My Sister's Place Accessibility

Submission Type: Organization

Description: Create an accessible home for My Sisters' Place in London to increase the services provided to women who are homeless, at risk of homelessness or street involved. MSP offers women a full spectrum of supports including access to basic needs (a hot meal, laundry, showers), counseling, health care, employment and housing supports, skill development and case management.

The services at MSP have a long track record of success in the community of helping women who have exhausted other supports and services to be fully integrated back into their communities, engaging and participating as contributing citizens. This takes considerable pressure off other government services including emergency services and the health system. Currently there are 80-110 women a day who visit My Sisters' Place.

What is the status of this idea – is anything already happening?

My Sisters' Place is currently fundraising for a capital campaign which includes an elevator to make our current home accessible and increased space for programs and services. We are just over 40% of our \$1,000,000 goal. The elevator is a critical need for our services since almost half of the women who come here have physical disabilities that restrict them from accessing programs and services (such as our health clinic) that are not on the main floor. We will continue to raise funds until we can install the elevator.

Who are the partners that would need to be involved? What are their roles?

In order to complete this project we will be hiring a wide variety of local businesses to build and install the elevator and renovate the currently unusable basement and third floor. This will help to create jobs in a many areas, specifically trades. The accessibility will also allow us to expand our partnership with Western University's School of Nursing to provide access to health services and to train nurses in the unique care requirements for the homeless population.

Cost to implement: \$1,000,000

Funding Requested from City (\$) if any: \$200,000

Will this idea move forward without City of London funding? Yes. It is a critical requirement for My Sisters' Place and accessibility is now mandated by the Government of Ontario.

Will your idea create jobs? Yes

How many jobs will be created? 21-50

Full or Part-time: Full time (32 hrs/week +)

Permanent or Temporary: Temporary

Job Level: Mid-level

Job Salary: Salary of \$40,000 - \$60,000 (\$20-\$30/hour)

What sector(s) will this create job(s) in?

- Construction
- Health care and social assistance
- Utilities

Is there anything else you can tell us about your idea that will create jobs?

Jobs will be created in the trades that are required to complete this major project. Also, part of the goal of the Capital Campaign is to create more space for our Micro Enterprise program that provides women with a unique opportunity to gain financial independence through the creation and sales of artisan crafts. This program is highly successful and has helped women earn an income and in some cases, create small businesses.

Will this idea leverage investments from others? What kind? How much?

Yes. We are encouraging local businesses and community partners to help us complete this project and an investment from the City of London would show strong leadership and support for this initiative. We anticipate that we will fundraise the remaining portion of our goal once other businesses see the City is behind the project.

Will this idea stimulate spin-off benefits? What type? How? Where?

Yes. There are significant and wide-spread benefits that will result from supporting an accessible My Sisters' Place. Specifically it supports this marginalized group of women to become contributing members of our community. It also creates new partnerships with local businesses and community groups and reduces stigmas associated with poverty.

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Will this idea build new or existing partnerships? How?

Already it has created a new partnership with the Western University School of Nursing by creating space for health services. It has also created new partnerships with local businesses who have stepped forward to support the project. Building these important partnerships helps contribute to the sustainability of My Sisters' Place through increased community support.

Will this idea benefit emerging or established industry sectors? How?

Yes, it will benefit a variety of trades and construction companies.

Will this idea fuel transformative change in London's economy? If so, how?

An accessible My Sisters' Place will fuel transformative change in London by supporting women who are homeless or at risk of homelessness so they can once again be contributing members of our community. So far this year (in five months) we have been able to identify over six hundred unique individuals have accessed our services and over 40% have significant disabilities. An accessible building also helps create unique opportunities for women to earn an income or create small businesses through the Micro Enterprise program. The creation of small businesses is important for the economic growth of our city. Also, there have been many studies that have demonstrated that supporting women to move out of poverty is beneficial to the overall economy.

Contact:

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