

# Deputation to Town of Blue Mountains Council Committee of the Whole Meeting

December 9<sup>th</sup>, 2024



## **Events for Life Centre Inc.**

Enriching the lives of individuals with special needs

Kevin Whyte – Chair, EFL Board of Directors

# **OUR MISSION**

**To enrich the lives of individuals with special needs by providing educational, social and recreational day programs geared towards lifelong learning in the Town of Blue Mountains and surrounding area**

## Why are we here today

- We are here in support of Staff Report CSOPS.24.090 Events for Life Land Request Update and to answer any questions.
- As you know, EFL has been working with the Town to secure land to build our Program Centre since early 2023 which, at that time, was 3 years from when we are required to move from our existing facility (June 2026).
- Director Gibbons has shared in his report the timeline history that outlines the selection of our first location of 2-3 acres at Peel Street in 2023 to the present parcel of land recommended to EFL at the Beaver Valley Community Centre.
- Since the decision from Council in July 2024 to select the land at BVCC and negotiate a contract, we have been working with Director Gibbons and staff to confirm that we could have a building footprint and enough green-space around that would comply with any planning requirements, zoning, by-laws, etc and be a good fit for the space being allocated to us.
- We believed, when presented with the option in July 2024, that our preliminary review of the space available could satisfy our needs for a building footprint. This included a multi-purpose facility, garage/workshop, parking spaces & drop off/pickup drive through with enough green-space around the buildings for outdoor programming.
- From a location perspective, we agreed this was a great solution as we would have direct access to the Arena Café, Gym, Arena, Commercial Kitchen, BVCC parking lot, Moreau Park and all of the amenities close by including short walks into town for work experience opportunities, cultural events and recreation.
- This was a very different plan from the 2-3 acres we originally requested. We engaged third party support to get to the next level of design and space requirements along with high level costing to ensure this was a good option for our future.
- We also attempted, through the process, to work out a layout that would allow for the Community Gardens to remain in the same parcel of land but all agreed, in the end, this was not possible.
- Director Gibbons has outlined our requested items to the Town that are important to provide us the best chance to successfully fundraise, plan, and execute the build working hand in glove with Town staff to work within the tight timelines.

# What is Our Ask

- Our goal continues to have a permanent EFL Program Centre to allow us to deliver high quality support to a growing community. We believe this location is in the best interest of all involved including the residents & Town of Blue Mountains as it not only serves the needed services EFL provides but also opportunities to other groups for access to space.
- Our planning continues and once this motion is approved, EFL is ready to launch our capital campaign to help fund the build of our permanent centre over the next 18 months. Our window of time to fundraise for this large level of donations has been squeezed significantly and we will be appealing to the community to step up quickly to support us. With Council support of a loan to draw from, we will still need 50% of the overall cost donated before we can commit to the build!
- The space will be designed for multi-use purposes, adhere to the **Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act, 2005 (AODA)** and other regulatory standards, and provide other community groups & associations access to much needed space during evenings and weekends.
- Both Council and staff have been incredibly supportive of this initiative during this long & winding road and the support of the motion today is a critical step in making this project possible. As the only day program supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities within the TOBM, we strongly believe the financial commitments requested from the Town are an important **investment** in our collective future as an inclusive and diverse community.
- **Our ASK is for Council to support the motion presented today so we can continue to work closely with staff on a detailed plan, Memorandum of Understanding, and Municipal Capital Facility to secure the EFL Program Centre in the Town of Blue Mountains.**

# EFL Strategic Imperatives

- **Build Strong Foundation**
  - Increase staffing for growing demand
  - Ensure sustainability in funding and support
  - Build strong partnerships in the community
- **Facilitate Access to Housing for Participants**
  - Educate families on planning for aging & housing solutions
  - Collaborate with agencies in securing long term housing options
  - Assist with support models to ensure success
- **Expand Program Offerings**
  - Deliver growing and diverse program streams
  - Manage growing demand for spaces in program
  - Deliver work experience and employment opportunities
- **Deliver a Secured Location “Forever Program Space”**
  - Buy, Build, or partner to secure a long-term space for delivering program
  - Bring awareness to community for need and support of a “forever” property

**Team EFL thanks Council and the  
Staff at TOBM for your ongoing and  
outstanding support**

**<https://eventsfor.life/>**

