



GREATER FORT ERIE COMMUNITY HUB FEASIBILITY STUDY

Our Vision: A Healthy, Inclusive, South Coast
Community.

McLean Consulting Group

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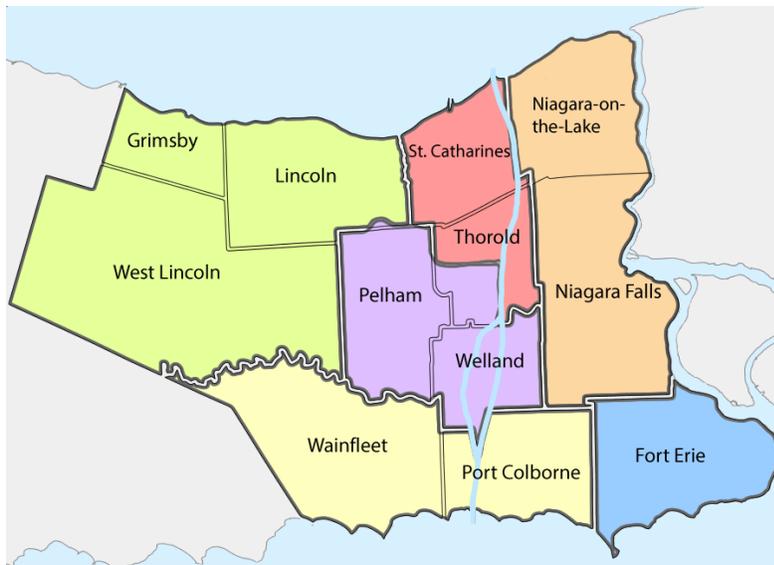
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Using multiple sources of data, the Greater Fort Erie Community Hub Task Force Feasibility Study provides an in-depth understanding of the current deficits in community services and community spaces in the Town of Fort Erie and assesses the feasibility of a community hub as an important step to addressing some of these deficits. The report identifies, assesses, and prioritizes community needs; identifies community assets and resources; outlines demographic information; captures the unique needs of the area; identifies accessible locations for community space; records specific areas of interest and programming needs; establishes potential partnerships and identifies potential governance models. The study builds on the preliminary work of the Steering Committee of the Greater Fort Erie Community Hub Task Force which is made up of Advancing Crystal Beach, Beachcombers, Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre and the Town of Fort Erie.

Figure 1 Fort Erie is located at the South Coast of the Niagara Region on Lake Erie

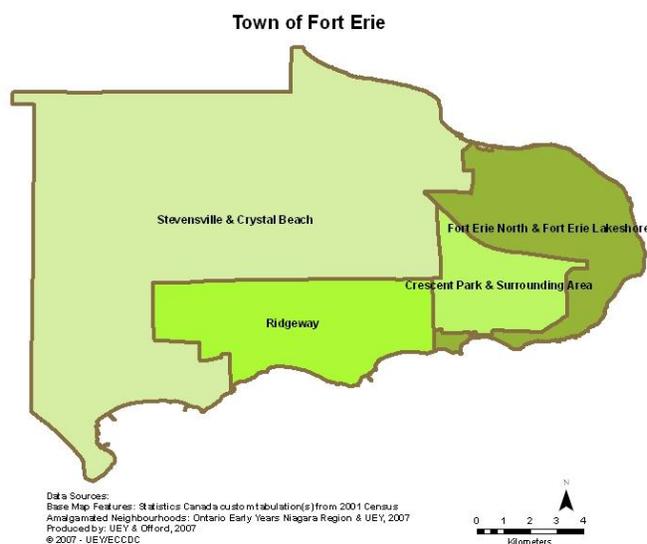


There has been growth in the Town of Fort Erie and with it has come opportunities and challenges. The Town itself is unique being located on the Niagara River in the Niagara Region, Ontario, Canada. It is directly across the river from Buffalo, New York and is the site of Old Fort Erie which played a prominent role in the War of 1812. Fort Erie is one of Niagara's fastest growing communities and has experienced a high level of

residential and commercial development in the past few years. Garrison Road (Niagara Regional Road 3) is the town's commercial corridor, stretching east to west through Fort Erie. Fort Erie is also home to other commercial core areas (Bridgeburg, Ridgeway, Stevensville, and Crystal Beach) as a result of the 1970 amalgamation of Bertie Township and the village of Crystal Beach with Fort Erie. Crystal Beach Amusement Park occupied waterfront land at Crystal Beach, Ontario from 1888 until the park's closure in 1989.

In addition to the primary urban core of Fort Erie, the town also contains the neighbourhoods of Black Creek, Bridgeburg/NorthEnd/Victoria, Crescent Park, Crystal Beach, Point Abino, Ridgeway, Snyder, and Stevensville. Smaller and historical neighbourhoods include Amigari Downs, Bay Beach, Buffalo Heights, Douglastown, Edgewood Park, Erie Beach, Garrison Village, Mulgrave, Oakhill Forest, Ridgemount, Ridgewood, Rose Hill Estates, Thunder Bay, Walden, Wavecrest, and Waverly Beach. Fort Erie Secondary School and Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School were two public high schools serving Fort Erie and area communities until September 2017 when Greater Fort Erie Secondary School opened on Garrison road the first new high school since 1971 in the region.

Figure 2 Map of Fort Erie and with neighbourhoods



Most of these neighbourhoods have retained their identity and thus the Town of Fort Erie is a collection of different and unique areas with diverse demographics, perspectives, and needs. Although Fort Erie is the terminus of the Queen Elizabeth Highway, Provincial Highway #3 and the gateway to the United States of America via the Peace Bridge, it is still a very rural setting aside from the urban core. These drivers make municipal governance challenging such as creating a common Town vision

among geographically dispersed communities and demographically/philosophically divergent communities. It can also make the discussion regarding the need for renewed investment in community resources and infrastructure interesting.

Each neighbourhood could forward a reason for investment depending on the lens used to assess priorities such as communities with recent large developments, neighbourhoods where the social determinants of health are not as robust as others, areas with emerging unique demographic needs or areas that have not been invested in municipally for a while in comparison to others. This report considers all these perspectives measured against the data in order to inform decision making by the Steering Committee of the Greater Fort Erie Community Hub Task Force.

To better understand the needs of the community, this research engaged a broad range of stakeholders, including residents, service providers, community leaders, community workers, elected officials, and their staff. Based on the 785 surveys, 13 community organizational surveys, 4 community engagement sessions and 14 key-informant interviews, participants prioritized the following perceived neighbourhood needs:

- A doctor
- More community meeting space
- A grocery store
- A larger senior centre
- Mental health services
- Youth drop-in centre
- Service Ontario office
- Seniors recreation
- Youth recreation
- Clothing/food bank
- Substance abuse counselling
- A gymnasium
- Affordable housing
- Legal clinic
- Indigenous services
- Arts and culture
- Education and training
- Seniors support services
- Daycare
- Drug store
- Ontario Works office
- ODSP office

- Lawyer
- Chiropractor
- Dentist
- Newcomer services
- Gas station
- Banking
- Hardware store



Figure 3 Town of Fort Erie Logo

Stakeholders also gave input on where the Community Hub should be located, how far they were willing to travel to access a Hub, levels of financial and volunteer support in the community and what organizations should work together on such an initiative or could be anchor tenants. There was also an opportunity for general feedback which identified trends such as a concern about increased taxation to support a Hub, reminders not to duplicate services and suggestions regarding private/public partnerships.

The study finds that a community hub would be the most cost-efficient and impactful way to address community deficits including local space needs and service gaps in Greater Fort Erie. Hubs become essential access points that can support youth, seniors, newcomers, individuals living alone, and families, enabling them to interact and become fully engaged, healthy, socially included, and active residents. A community hub would support collaboration, provide opportunities for referral and coordination, and work to improve collective impact by breaking down service silos and creating integrated supports to address the needs of the community.

This report includes potential scenarios that can be used to facilitate decision making by the Steering Committee of the Greater Fort Erie Community Hub Task Force. The scenarios have not been fully analyzed however they do illustrate the pros and cons of each direction. Scenario one is utilizing the recently decommissioned Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School and repurposing it for a Community Hub. There are many examples across the Province of Hubs being created in vacant schools. Scenario two is building

on to already existing community assets such as the Crystal-Ridge Centre owned and operated by the Town of Fort Erie. Scenario three is a new build of a gymnasium and 17,000 square feet of office, kitchen, and meeting/medical space.

BACKGROUND

**Figure 4 Advancing
Crystal Beach Logo**

In 2015, a group of dedicated community members formed a small but mighty non-profit called Advancing Crystal Beach (ACB). These residents felt advocacy was required politically in order to bring services to the area which is geographically isolated from the core of the Town of Fort Erie. Without a vehicle, it can be difficult to get to medical and social appointments, so ACB has agreements with a variety of service organizations to provide services to clients at Crystal Ridge Community Church. Some of the services include, medical, special needs, social, legal, educational and senior services. Organizations like Bridges Community Health Centre, Job Gym, Justice Niagara and Positive Living Niagara are now more accessible to residents.

In 2016, ACB was asked to lead the concept of creating a Community Hub in Crystal Beach that would offer space for health services, education, training in accessible classrooms and a social-recreational space for residents. ACB did contract a consultant who had experience in assisting with the establishment of the Bridges Community Health Clinic however no significant progress was made. ACB shared their Hub idea with a senior's group in Ridgeway (only 1-2 km away) called the Beachcombers, and they were very receptive to such an initiative. Beachcombers own and operate their own recreational centre with an commercial kitchen, recreation hall and meeting rooms. Their membership was exceeding 300 so they were interested in more space for the ever-growing senior's demographic in Ridgeway/Crystal Beach.

These two community groups reached out to the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre (FENFC) who essentially operate an Indigenous Hub in the Fort Erie neighbourhood of Crescent Park.



Figure 5 Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre Logo

FENFC has experience and knowledge in community development, grant applications, and formal partnerships and they advised ACB to write an Ontario Trillium Foundation Seed Grant. The three organizations formalized their relationship with a Memorandum of Understanding and formed the Steering Committee of the Greater Fort Erie Community Hub Task Force. A Trillium Grant application was submitted in 2018 for \$75,000; \$25,000 to hire a consulting firm to do a feasibility study and \$50,000 to hire a Community Developer/Animator once the Steering Committee as made decisions based on the feasibility report.

The Steering Committee met with Mayor Redekop and Town staff and they were supportive, especially considering the significant energy brought by volunteers supporting the initiative. The Town of Fort Erie dedicated staff to attend all the Steering Committee meetings and have graciously made their assets available to host meetings, copy posters and link like-minded agencies together. The strategic plan of the Town also mentions a community Hub and Town councilors have confirmed that this initiative is definitely “on their radar”. ACB began to attend the Fort Erie Service Providers group, and this has furthered opportunities for collaboration.

There have been some frustrations with the initiative during this time. The location of Bridges Community Health in the core of Fort Erie was criticized by some who had heard the location was to be in Fort Erie West, and some residents expect that Bridges should be an anchor tenant in any future Hub. Additionally, the school boards closed two public schools in Crystal Beach and Ridgeway which residents felt would be perfect for a Hub, however, the schools were sold to private developers quickly and residents feel that great opportunities have evaporated. This may explain much of the community anticipation over the fate of the decommissioned Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School, which sits on 15 acres of prime real estate and has had its entrance protected as historically significant.



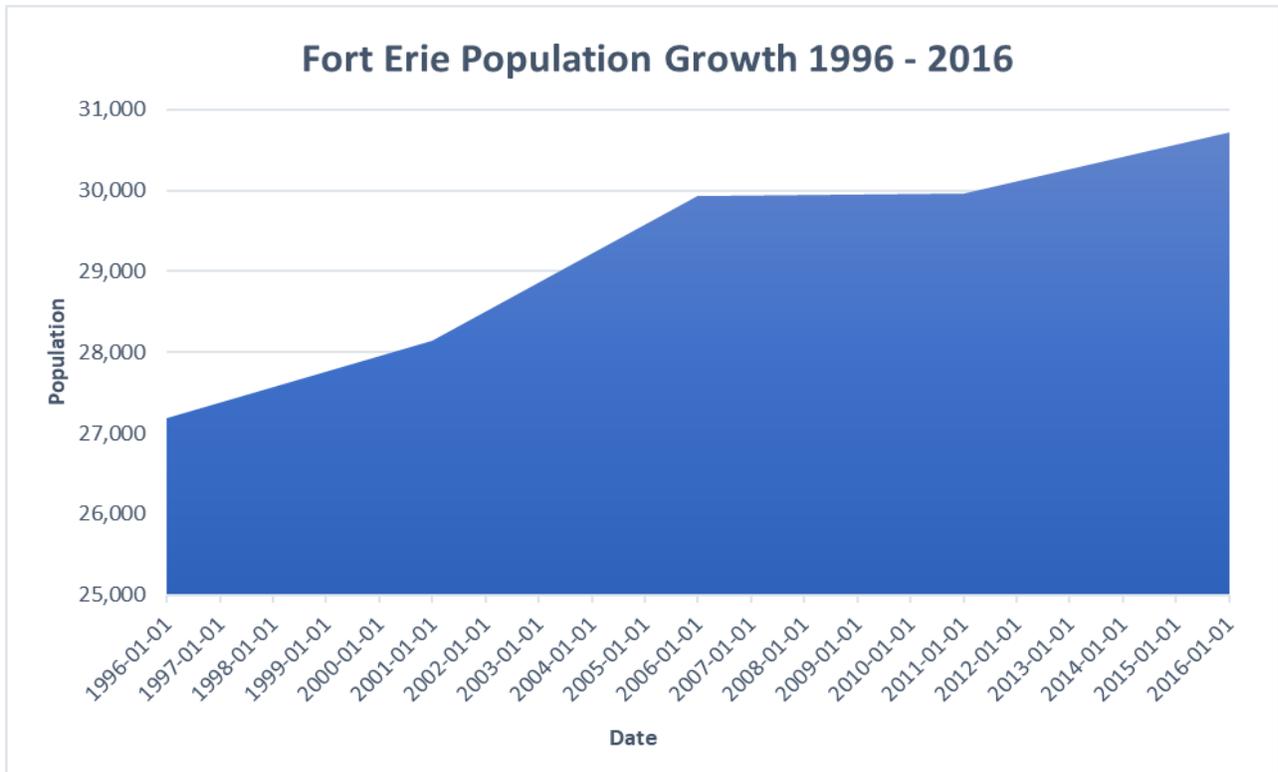
Figure 6 Beachcombers Seniors Centre building in Ridgeway ON

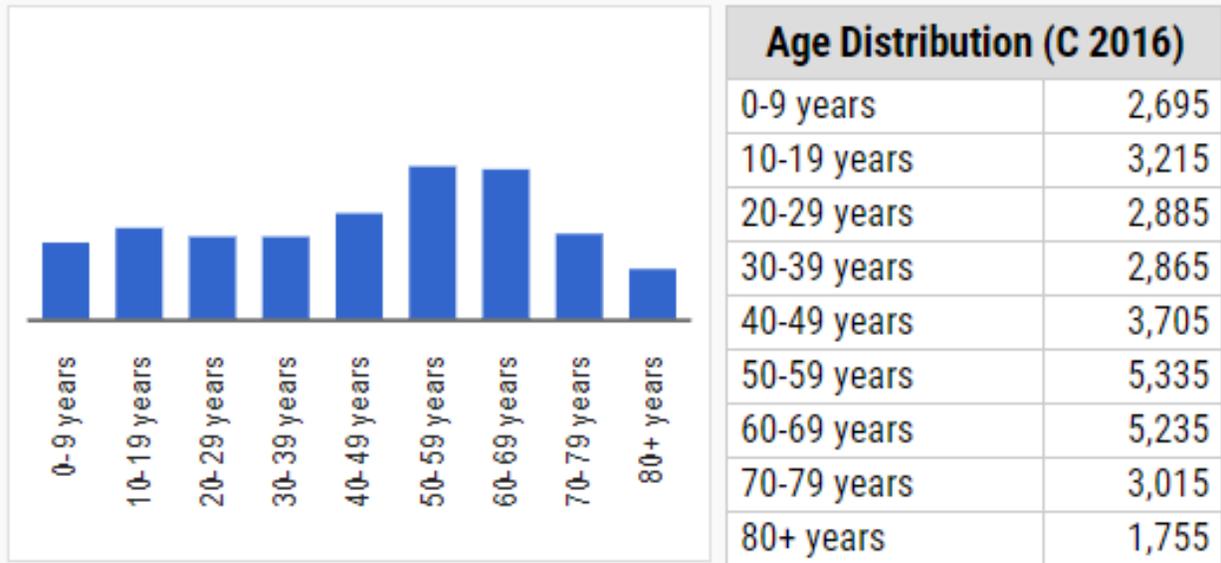
In September 2018, ACB found out that their Ontario Trillium Foundation Seed Grant was successful. They hosted a community event in Crystal Beach wherein the official announcement was proclaimed, and they secured a consulting firm quickly thereafter to research the feasibility of the Hub. Not wanting to miss any further opportunities, the Steering Committee of the Greater Fort Erie Community Hub Task Force requested that the feasibility study be completed by January 31st, 2019, giving the consulting firm four months to do all the research, conduct interviews, review significant literature, facilitate a community agency survey as well as a citizen survey.

DEMOGRAPHICS AND COMMUNITY PROFILE

Demographics of the Town of Fort Erie.

<u>Name</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Population</u> Census 1996-05-14	<u>Population</u> Census 2001-05-15	<u>Population</u> Census 2006-05-16	<u>Population</u> Census 2011-05-10	<u>Population</u> Census 2016-05-10
Fort Erie	Town	27,183	28,143	29,925	29,960	30,710
Area: 166 km ² – Density: 184.7/km ² [2016] – Change: +0.50%/year [2011 → 2016]						





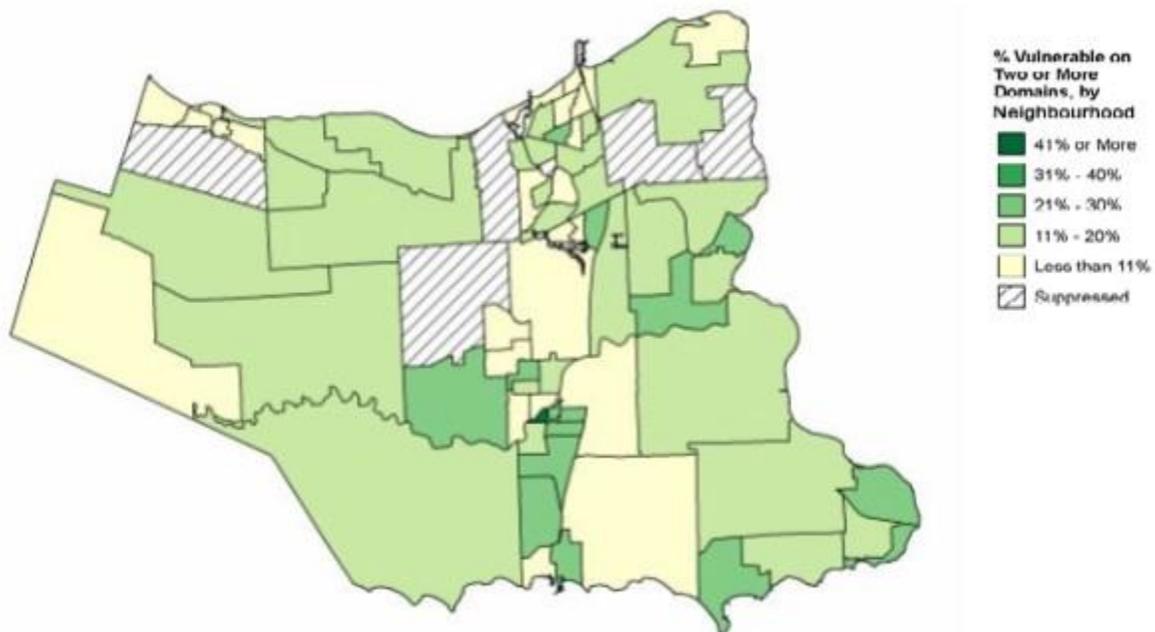
CENSUS AGE DISTRIBUTION

14% 
0 to 14 years

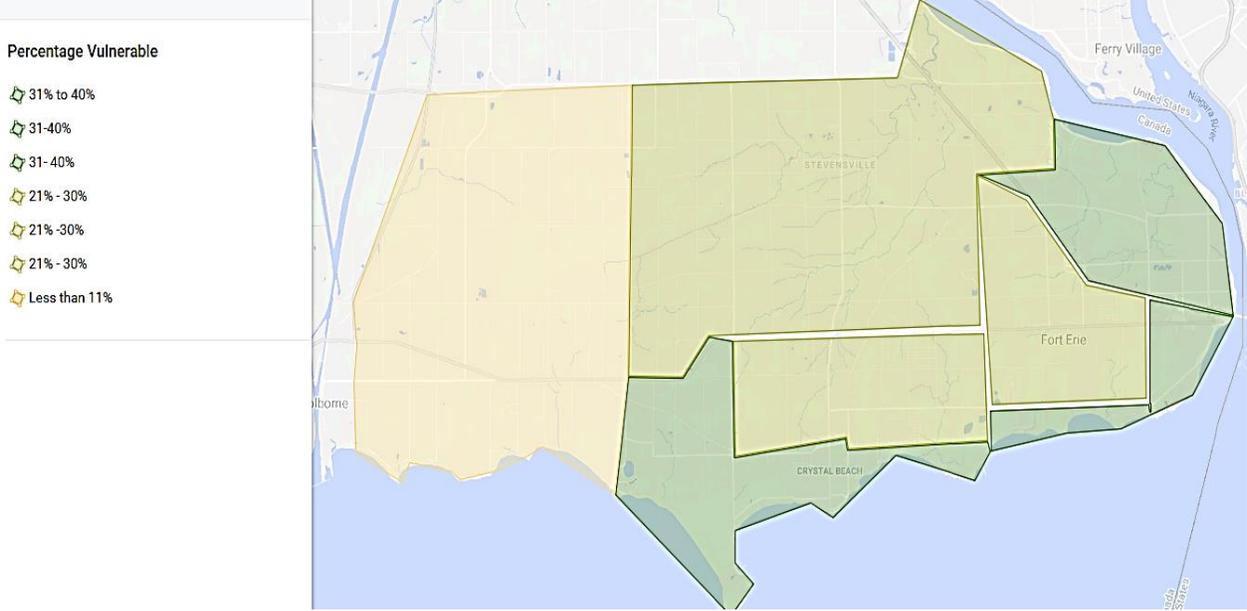
62% 
15 to 64 years

27% 
65 years and over

EARLY DEVELOPMENT INSTRUMENT (EDI) IN NIAGARA



The EDI (Early Development Instrument) is largely based on the National Longitudinal Survey of Children and Youth, and other existing tests. The EDI is a population-based measure for communities to gauge school readiness of children at the kindergarten level. The EDI is completed by kindergarten teachers after knowing the child for approximately six months and is estimated to take about twenty minutes of the teacher's time per child. The instrument measures child characteristics by way of a variety of questions related to five developmental domains that have been identified as important in evaluating a child's readiness for school. These domains are physical health and well-being, social competence, emotional maturity, language and cognitive development, communication skills, and general knowledge. The EDI mapping of neighborhoods in Niagara indicates that there are areas in Niagara where the EDI is strong and areas that are in need of attention for a positive change that may be supported by a community Hub.



According to 2008 EDI Data, you can clearly see that using a breakdown of various Fort Erie neighbourhoods that 31% to 40% of children need support in the southern area of Fort Erie. This is tied with the other areas of Niagara with the highest EDI needs.

Greater Fort Erie Income by Neighbourhood. The following demographic information is based on the dissemination areas below as defined by Statistics Canada based on Census 2016 Data. Legend \$0 Income Range (households).

The combined gross income of all the members of a household who are 15 years old and older. Individuals do not have to be related to be considered members of the same household.

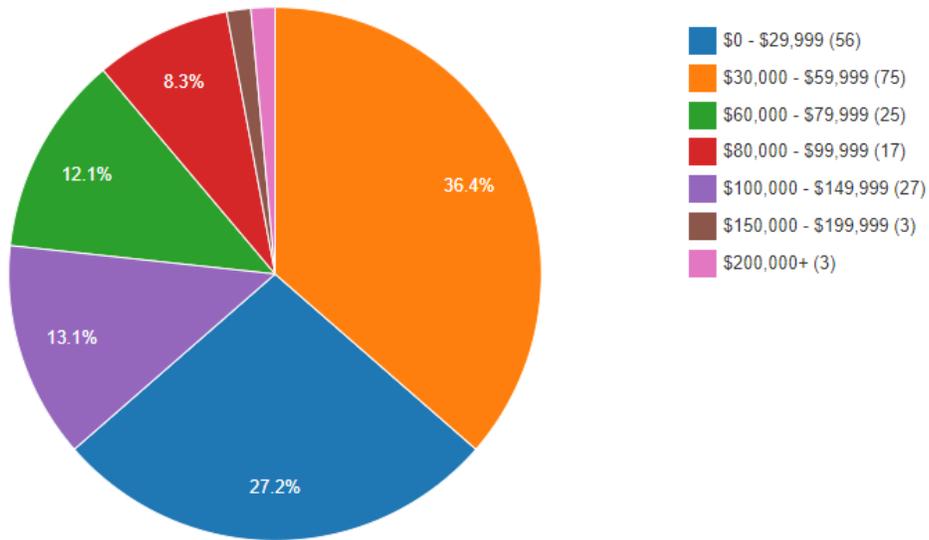


Figure 7 Crystal Beach Household Income Average Income of \$69,761

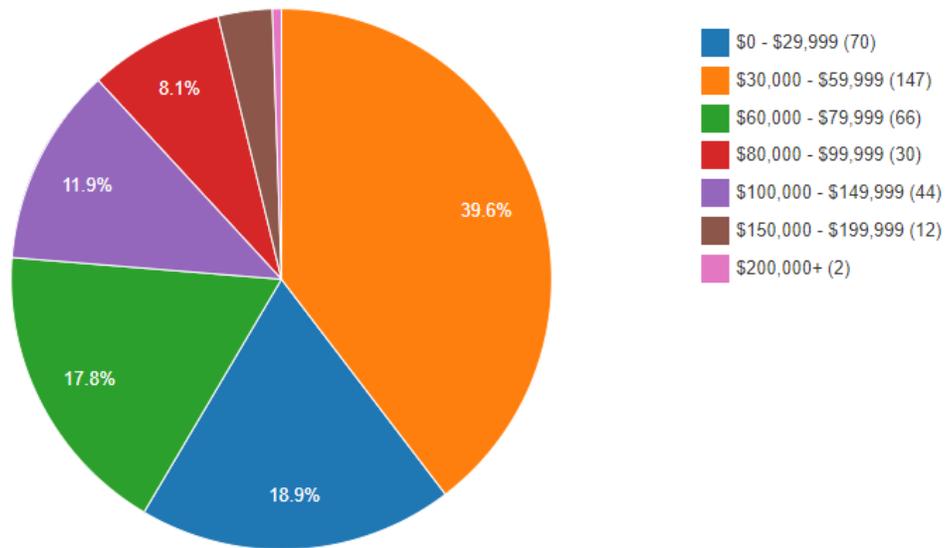


Figure 8 Ridgeway Household Income Average Income of \$63,131

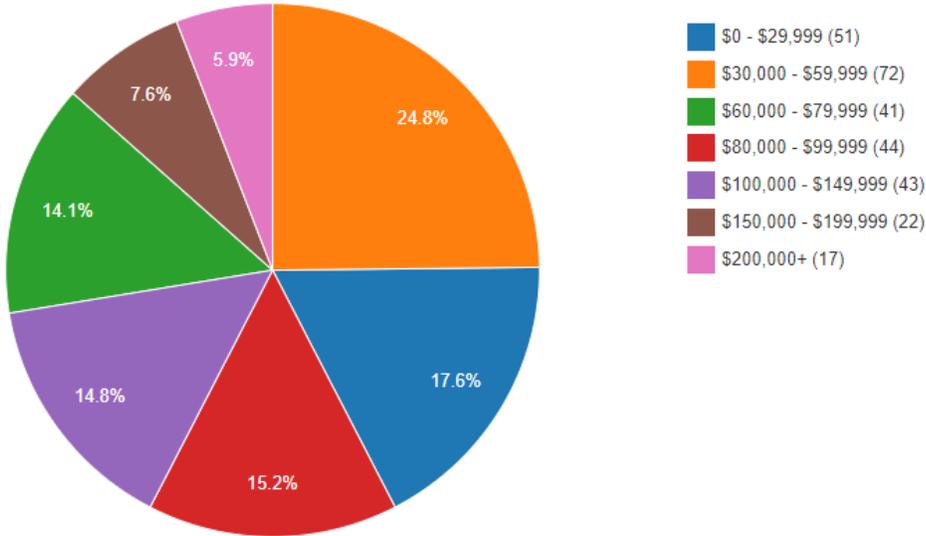


Figure 9 Stevensville Household Income Average Income \$86, 478

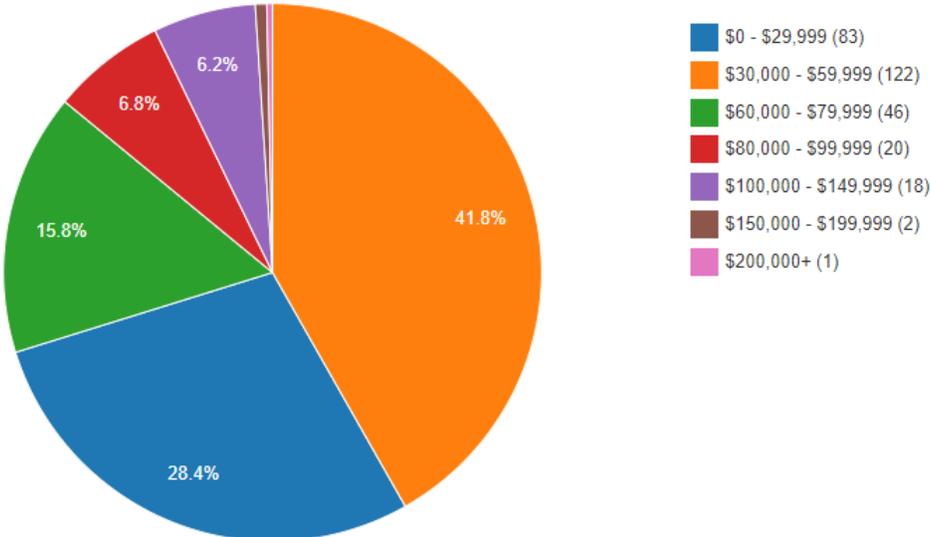


Figure 10 Urban Core of Fort Erie Household Income Average Income \$51,386

Real Estate Niagara and Fort Erie Comparison October 2018:

Niagara - Municipal Summary

October Residential Activity



Areas	Number of New Listings		Number of Sales		Average Sale Price		Sales to List Price Ratio		Average Days on Market	
	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018	2017	2018
Fort Erie	109	118	53	57	\$349,898	\$387,590	97.4%	96.7%	55	58
Fonthill/Pelham	23	44	20	18	\$541,145	\$577,927	98.3%	97.5%	37	61
Lincoln	33	62	29	23	\$479,691	\$497,188	98.2%	98.1%	34	39
Niagara Falls	178	247	121	111	\$368,855	\$407,956	97.4%	97.7%	38	37
Niagara-on-the-Lake	49	66	26	23	\$881,417	\$798,991	96.9%	95.8%	43	56
Port Colborne/Wainfleet	37	48	32	35	\$309,450	\$397,150	98.1%	97.5%	31	42
St. Catharines	274	337	145	167	\$345,796	\$389,150	97.5%	97.9%	37	37
Thorold	35	57	26	29	\$344,168	\$391,974	96.4%	97.0%	43	49
Welland	95	121	72	62	\$319,032	\$348,389	98.7%	97.3%	33	47
Niagara Total:	833	1100	524	525	\$387,001	\$417,993	97.6%	97.5%	39	43

Note: Number of sales represents sales reported on properties listed on the Multiple Listing Service (MLS®) for the Niagara Association of REALTORS® (NAR).

Figure 11 Graphic courtesy Niagara Realty Association

Real Estate pricing information can show home affordability in a Region, Town or individual neighbourhood and possible continuing trends. The Niagara region overall has had a sharp price increase in 2017 and the trend continued in 2018. In Niagara overall, the residential average sale price of \$402,813 had an increase of 4.3% versus last December 2017 while the number of active residential property listings increased by 22.0%. The 10-year trend is even greater with average prices in January of 2009 slightly below \$200,000 to an average price of over \$400,000 today. Since rental rates are directly affected by home purchase prices, in its January Canadian Rent Report, PadMapper.com notes the average listing price for a one-bedroom rental in the region was \$1,200 a month, a 15.2 per cent increase over 2017. Due to the sharp price increases and lack of affordable housing in Niagara overall, Niagara’s shelter services are being stretched running at above 100 per cent capacity after years of stable numbers around 85 per cent. Housing shelter stays are stretching as well, from 11 days in 2016 to 19 days in 2018, as an expensive this rental market keeps individuals out of long-term housing.

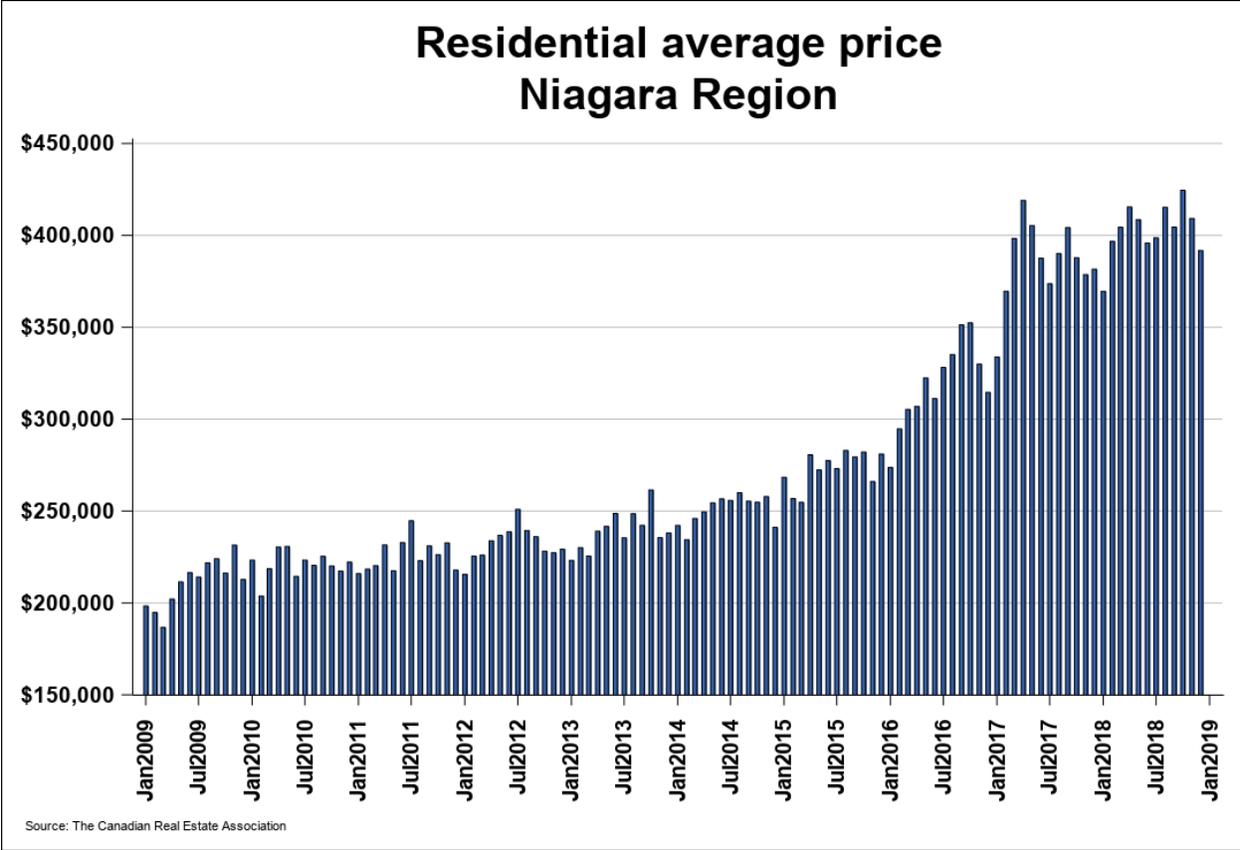


Figure 12 Fort Erie Residential Permits by the Year 1996-2017 courtesy Niagara Realty Association

In Fort Erie the average sale price for 2018 was \$387,590 vs \$349,898 in 2017. This increase of 9.7 percent was well ahead of Niagara’s 4.3% price increase. Fort Erie is still below the average home price in Niagara and due to its accessibility to the large markets of both Buffalo and Toronto makes it an attractive area to live for people relocating. The overall increase in Fort Erie’s population in the last 10 years, increased residential development and a retiring and aging population relocating to the area, residential prices in the Fort Erie area should continue this trend.

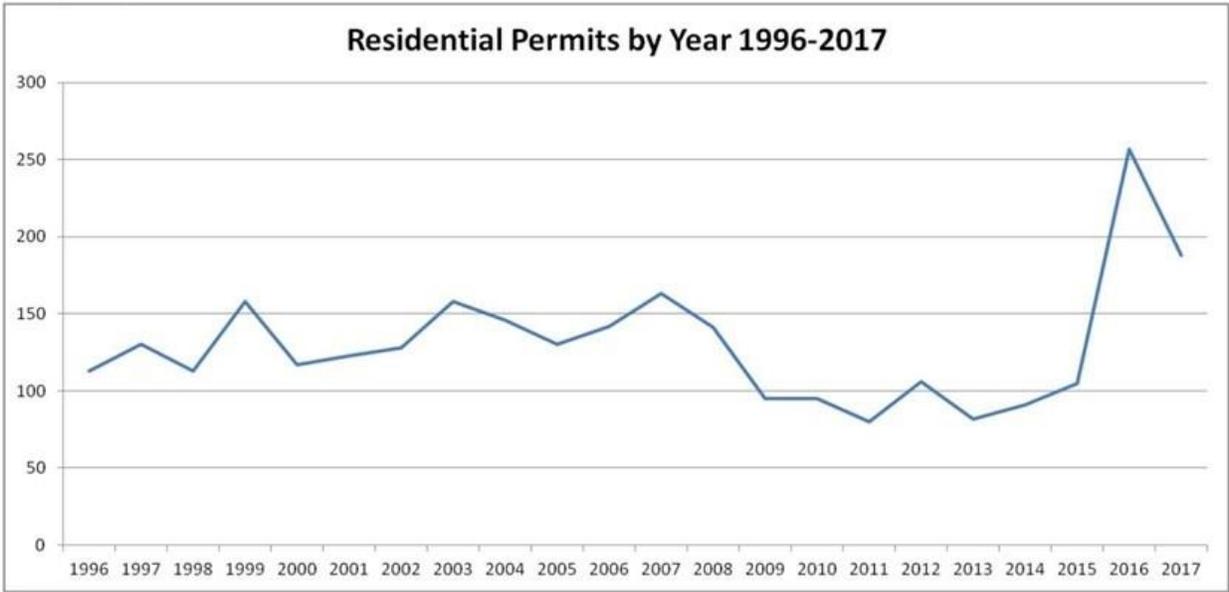


Figure 12 Fort Erie Residential Permits by the Year 1996-2017 courtesy Niagara Realty Association

Even with the doubling of building permits from 2015 to 2017 average prices continue to rise. Much of the new development has come in the Ridgeway community with several larger suburban development projects aimed at higher priced homes.

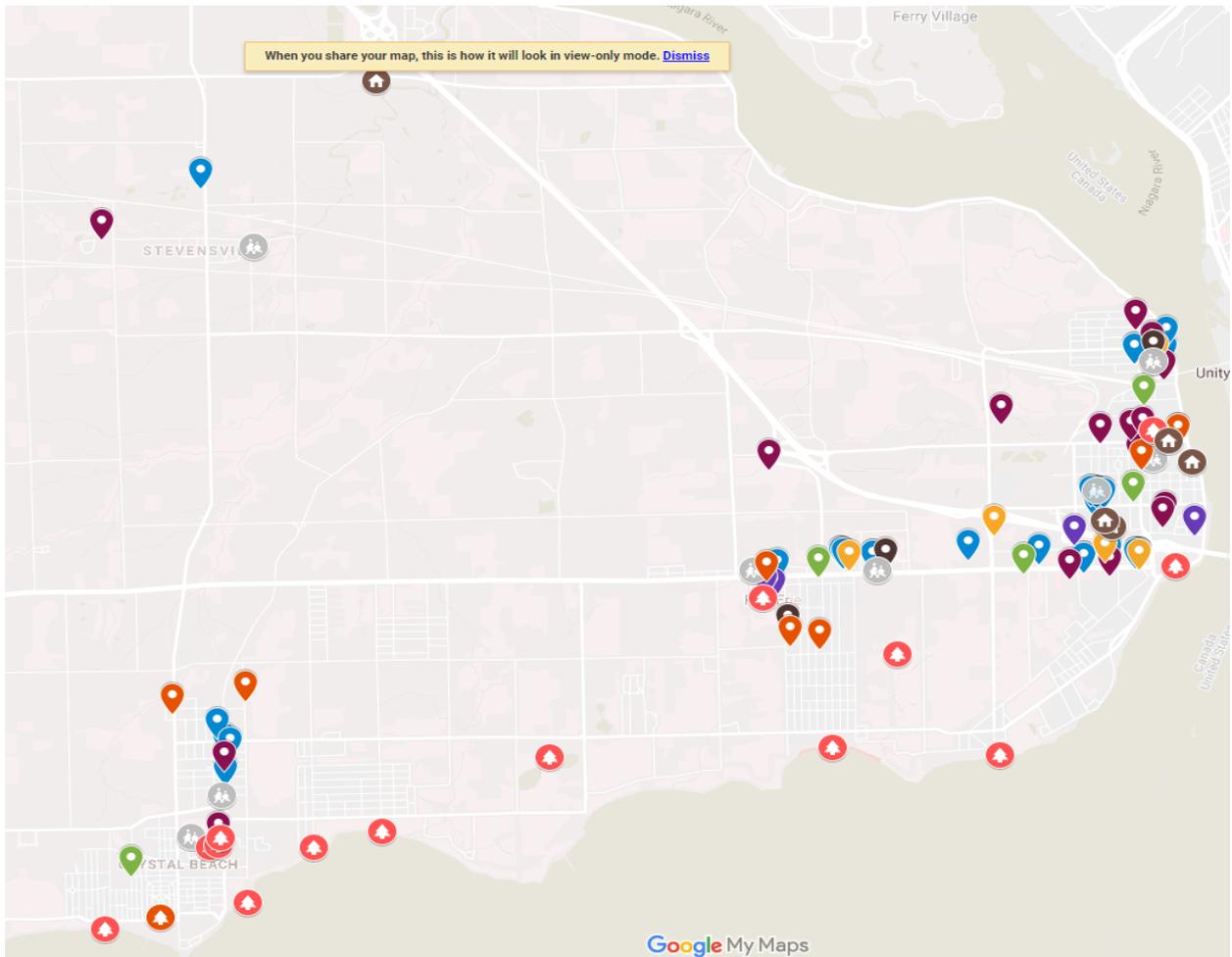


Figure 12 Current Service Locations

(Interactive Version of Map link below)

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/viewer?mid=1Mmj9qNyXO5jMU5m9DzX2DiwBEZ6OY7Gi&ll=42.913038064963345%2C-78.99033799999995&z=13>

The interactive map includes the latest listings of services available at the time of this report. This listing was created based on available services listed in local directories and created based on the best available data. This is may not be a complete list based on new or unlisted services.

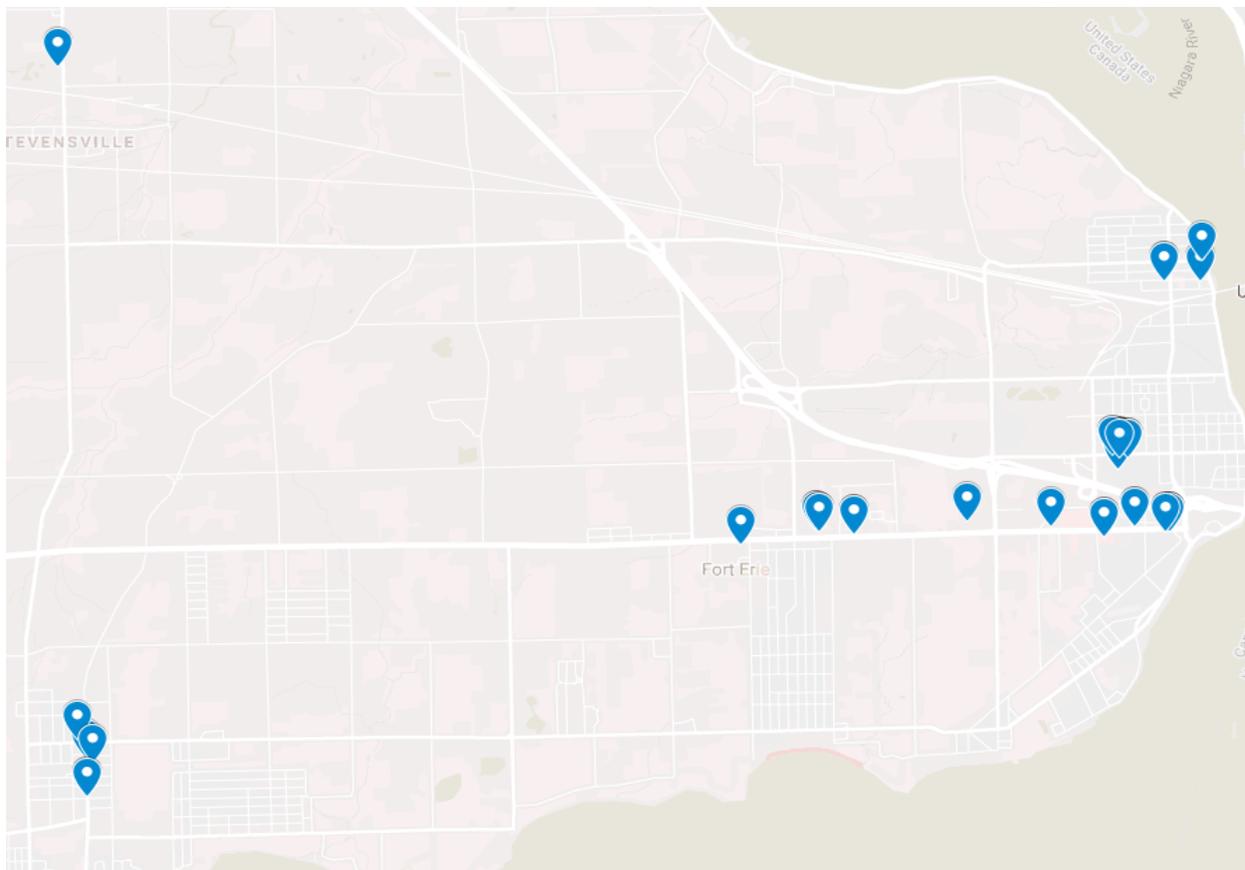


Figure 13 Medical Service Locations

The map includes the following Medical Service office: *Complete list with addresses available on map link.* Medical Center Clinic, Che Claudius Dr, Dr. David Aksoy, Spencer Paul Dr, Kim M G Dr, Fort Erie Group, Nexus Health Management, Orbitz Podiatry Clinic, Fort Erie Dental Group, Scher, Dr Kim Eric Makken H a Dr., Bridges Community Health Centre, Ridgeway Urgent Centre, Canadian Diabetes Association, Diabetic Foot Clinic, Niagara Region Sexual Health Centre - Fort Erie, Douglas Memorial Site Services, Bertie Dental Office, Ordinario R Dr, Dr. William F. Schneider, Dr Inigo, Riverside Dental Center, Canadian Diabetes Association, Diabetic Foot Clinic, Dubé Francis Dr., Walmart Vision Centre, Amore Eyewear, Vision Clinic, Spencer Paul Dr., Csanadi M A Dr., Claudius Che MD, Makken H a Dr. , Dr Inigo, Ordinario R Dr. Fort Erie Dental Group, Bertie Dental Office, Riverside Dental Center, Dubé Francis Dr., Vision Clinic, Douglas Memorial Site Services, Wellspring Niagara, Fort Erie Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation Centre, Activecare Physiotherapy & Rehabilitation Centre, Head Injury Assoc Of Fort Erie.

The above map shows the locations of various medical services in Greater Fort Erie. The map clearly shows a concentration of medical services along the Garrison Road corridor and in the Urban Core of Fort Erie. A small concentration is shown in

Ridgeway and none available in the Crystal Beach neighbourhood area. Stevensville only has a Wellspring Niagara Office listed.

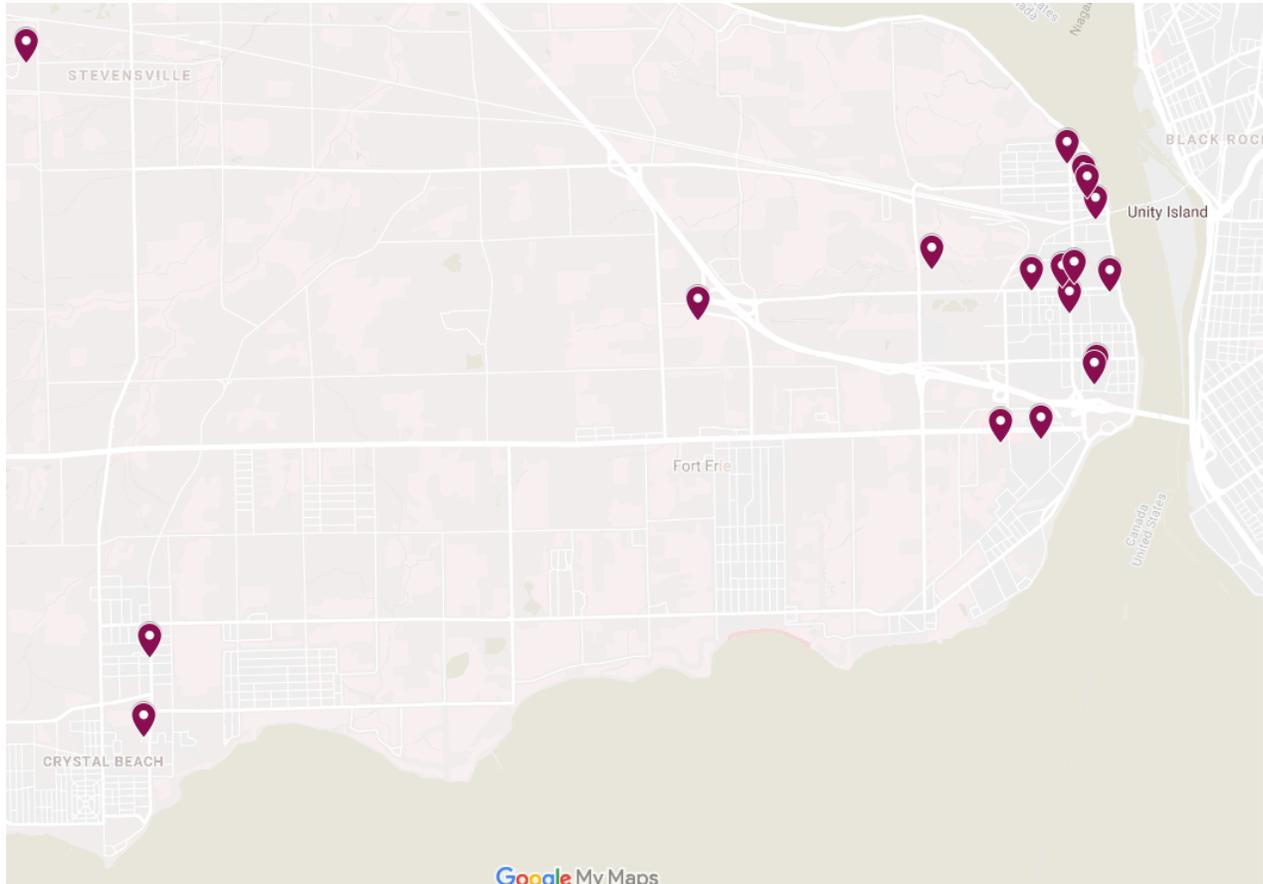


Figure 14 Service Organization Locations

Adult Literacy Council, Beachcombers Senior Citizens Association, Boys and Girls Club of Niagara, Casa El Norte, Community Living, Community Outreach Program-Erie, Crystal Ridge Community Centre, Douglas Heights Seniors Centre, Fort Erie Conservation Club Inc, Fort Erie Multicultural Centre, Fort Erie Municipal Non-Profit Housing Corporation, Garrison Place, Lyons Douglas Height Senior Center, Meals On Wheels Fort Erie, Optimist Club Of Fort Erie, Person Centered Care Inc., Rotary Club of Fort Erie, The Salvation Army Fort Erie-Community & Family Services, John Howard Society.

The above map shows the location of various service agencies. Again, a concentration of offices is in the Urban Core of Fort Erie. Beachcombers Seniors and the Crystal Ridge Centre located in the Western End of Fort Erie and the Fort Erie Conservation Club Inc. located in the Stevensville Neighbourhood.

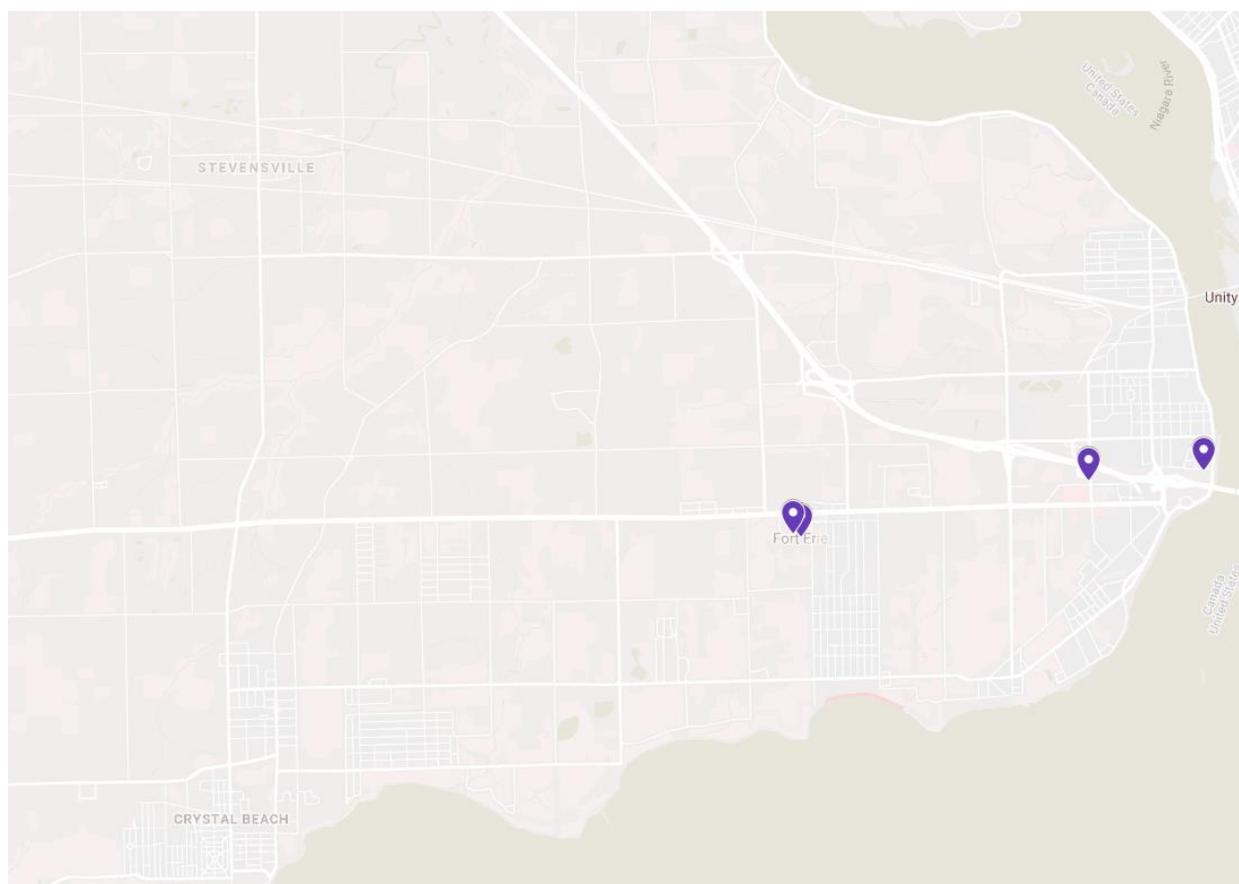


Figure 15 Government Office Locations

Service Ontario, Canada Border Services Agency - Peace Bridge Port of Entry, Customs Border Services, City Municipal Centre.

Government Services are mainly located at the City Municipal Cent at 1 Municipal Centre Dr, Fort Erie. No direct government services are in the western end of Greater Fort Erie.

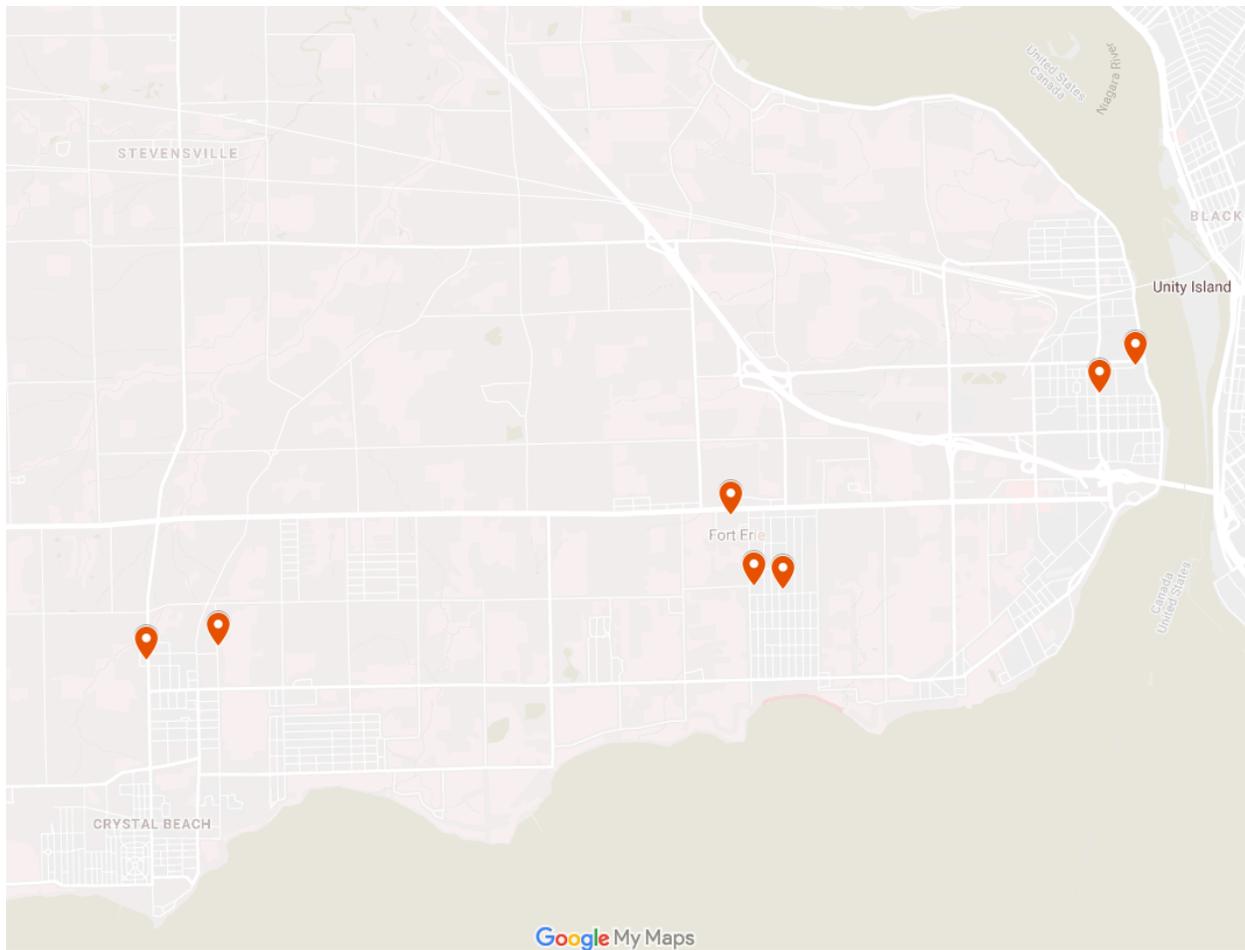


Figure 16 Children's Day Care Locations

Ft Erie Regional Child Care Centre, YMCA Child Care Centre, St. Philomena YMCA Child Care Centre Under the Rainbow Child Care Services, Top Of The Ridge Daycare, Turtle Club Day Care Fort Erie Co-Operative Nursery School.

Daycare service is always in demand, especially in lower-income communities. The above map shows the location of currently listed daycare services. None are currently located in the Crystal Beach area.

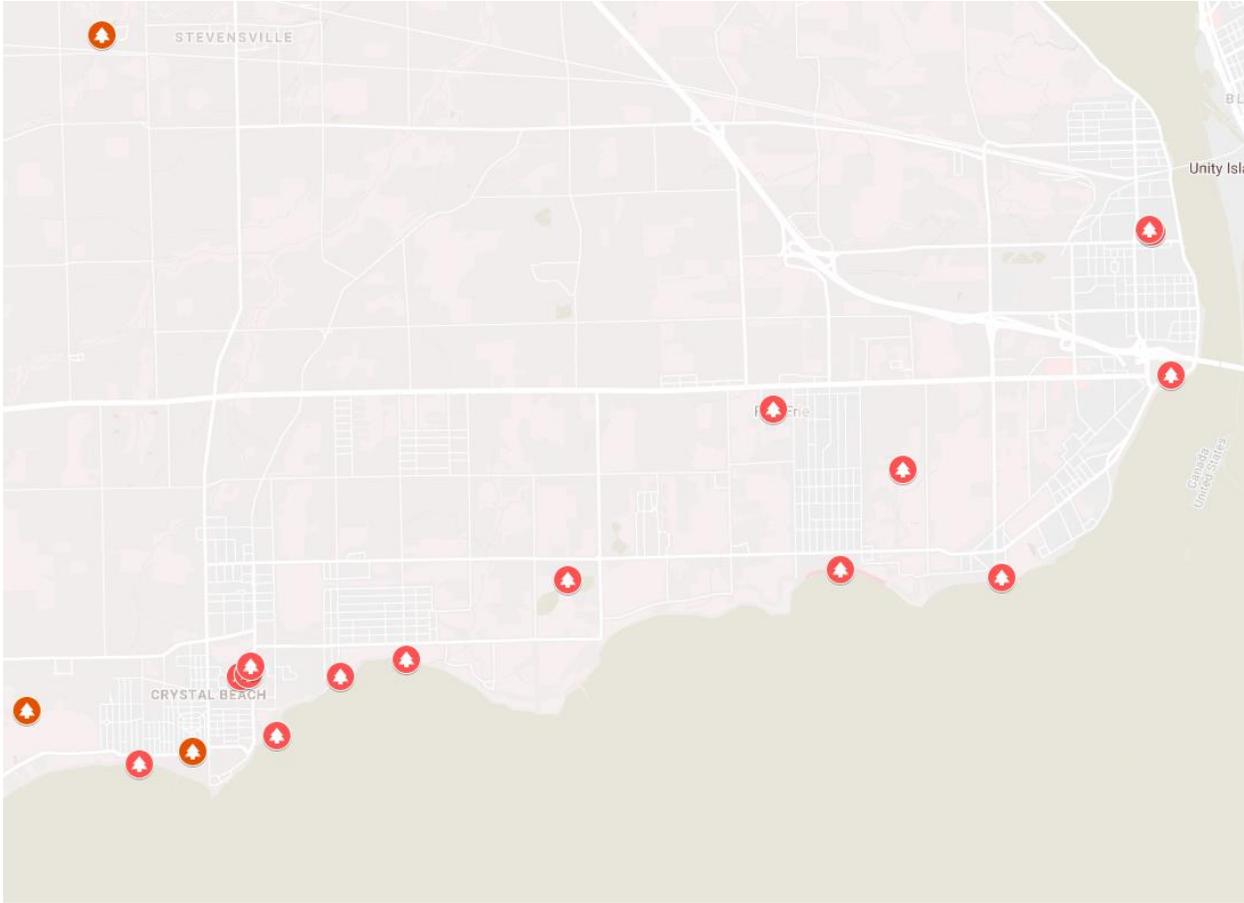


Figure 17 Parks and Recreation Locations

Crystal Ridge Park, Windmill Point Park, Mather Park, Lions Sugarbowl Park, Sugarbowl Park, Crystal Ridge Arena, Ridgeway Minor Hockey Association, Greater Fort Erie Minor Hockey, Crystal Beach, Prospect Point Beach, Burleigh Beach, Bernard Avenue Beach, Crescent Beach Park, Waverly Beach Park, Crescent Beach, Coach House CrossFit, Point Abino Conservation Area, Stevensville Conservation Area.

RESEARCH PLAN

This report adopts a mixed-methods approach to data collection. Multiple forms of data and various research tools were used to develop a better understanding of local needs and ways to address those needs. For example, statistical data sources were used to develop a demographic profile; findings from interviews, focus groups and surveys were used to consider community needs and possible hub locations; GIS mapping was conducted to visualize spatial relationships and display disaggregated data to provide a more detailed assessment of the community.

The report draws upon quantitative data from a variety of sources including:

Fort Erie Official Town Website <https://www.forterie.ca/index.html>

Community Hubs Ontario: <https://www.communityhubsonario.ca/>

Fort Erie Service Map:

<https://www.google.com/maps/d/edit?mid=1Mmj9qNyXO5jMU5m9DzX2DiwBEZ6OY7Gi&ll=42.91300985810744%2C-78.99033799999995&z=13>

Fort Erie Strategic Plan:

<https://www.forterie.ca/pages/20152018CorporateStrategicPlan>

Census Information:

<https://www.citypopulation.de/php/canada-ontario-admin.php?adm2id=3526003>

Fort Erie Zoning Maps and plans:

[https://www.forterie.ca/resource/files/E70FFDAE802C499A852579E6004B0182/\\$File/ZBL%20\(MAP%20%20INDEX\).pdf](https://www.forterie.ca/resource/files/E70FFDAE802C499A852579E6004B0182/$File/ZBL%20(MAP%20%20INDEX).pdf)

[HTTP://www.forterie.ca/resource/files/E39C44E6E523580B8525764200602D55/\\$File/Town%20of%20Fort%20Erie%20Official%20Plan%20Schedule%20A1.pdf](HTTP://www.forterie.ca/resource/files/E39C44E6E523580B8525764200602D55/$File/Town%20of%20Fort%20Erie%20Official%20Plan%20Schedule%20A1.pdf)

[HTTP://www.forterie.ca/resource/files/9CFFE4FEC59C9032852579E3006FF19C/\\$File/Town%20of%20Fort%20Erie%20Official%20Plan%20Text%20\(Current\).pdf](HTTP://www.forterie.ca/resource/files/9CFFE4FEC59C9032852579E3006FF19C/$File/Town%20of%20Fort%20Erie%20Official%20Plan%20Text%20(Current).pdf)

Various other demographic information, articles and community hub project reports:

https://mcleanconsultinggroup-my.sharepoint.com/:f/p/mitch/Ek9ZUcp8SB5MsOIhFutzQroB5rmi_chaBiYY2zY4jaqhsW?e=fN3kUL

Niagara Early Development Instrument : <http://www.livinginniagarareport.com/04-learning-education-2011/early-development-instrument-edi-in-niagara/>

Niagara Prosperity Report Data Reports: <https://www.niagararegion.ca/social-services/niagara-prosperity-initiative/indicators/data-sources.aspx>

Niagara Region Housing Reports: <http://nrh.ca/about/reports.shtml>

Pad Mapper: <https://blog.padmapper.com/2019/01/15/january-2019-canadian-rent-report/>

The report also includes a summary of a literature review with a References page at the end.

Unique quantitative and qualitative data was collected by conducting a robust citizen survey. A total of seven hundred and eighty-five surveys were completed online, in person or via paper-based submissions. Considering the population of Fort Erie is around 30,000, this represents approximately a 3% response rate which is well above statistical thresholds for validity. The survey respondents represent a sample of convenience, a common sampling technique based on available respondents. The survey overcame some significant response challenges. It was launched publicly right after a Provincial election which often causes “survey fatigue” among the general populace, especially with the robust technological advances in campaigning. The survey ran over the Christmas holidays which is typically a time wherein people are too busy with commitments to be responsive. The survey ran over the school break which made it a challenge to obtain youth input.

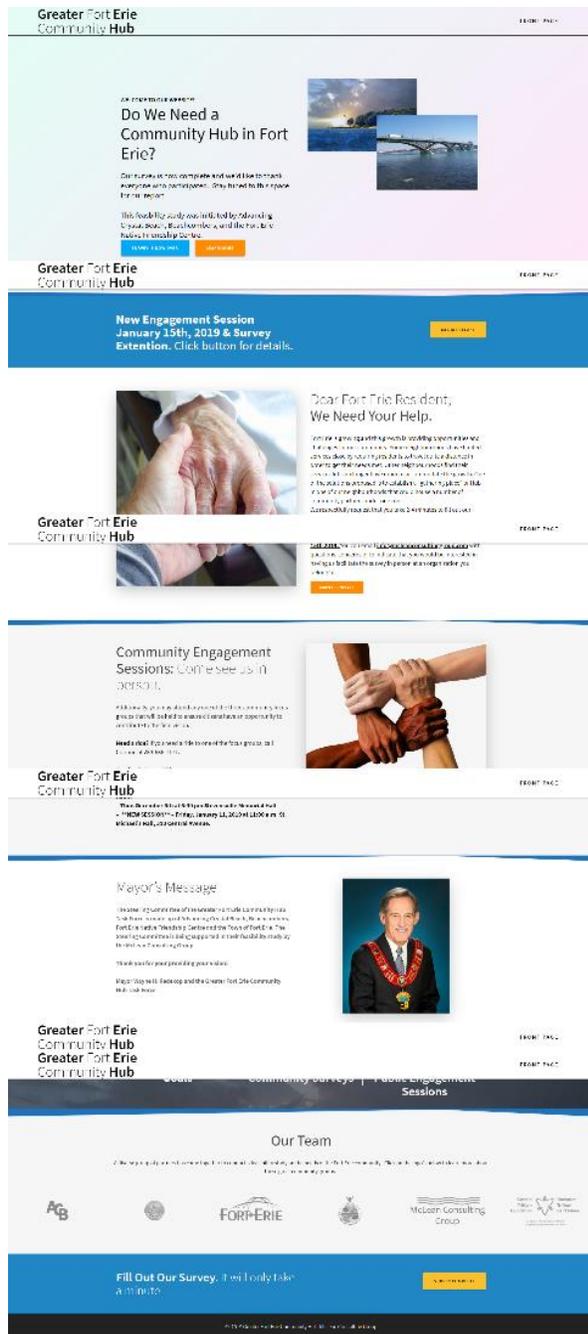


Figure 18 Screen Cap of GFE Hub Website

To overcome these challenges, it was necessary to publicize and deliver the survey in as many modalities as possible. A website with background on the hub project and survey links was developed at www.gfehub.ca. The site was used to direct the incoming traffic and an outgoing link to the online survey. The website was used to streamline the process of getting more survey responses. Surveys were also made to be mobile-phone friendly, attracting more responses. Paper-based surveys were located at all town facilities, and group surveys were done in-person with several groups that requested this level of

service. In-person survey facilitation was delivered at all four community engagement sessions. The survey was publicized on the Town website, all partner agency websites, at televised Town Council meeting, in all local newspapers, eight radio stations including an interview on the popular Lee Stery show on 610 CKTB. Posters were hung up in local business windows and over four thousand “postcards” promoting the survey were distributed. Over one thousand postcards went home with students from the local schools, and the dedicated Steering Committee distributed them far and wide among their networks.

A separate Human Service Agency survey was sent out via email invitation to 172 agencies that state they service the Town of Fort Erie. The purpose of this survey was to plumb interest in and need for a Community Hub as well as get an idea of what types of facilities would be required to encourage community partners to co-locate at the Hub. A total of 14 surveys were completed and 12 organizations requested a follow-up phone call. Only one organization expressed interest in being an anchor agency in the hub (agencies who make a long-term commitment to renting or purchasing space in the hub), 9 surveys were completed by organizations and group who indicated they would like to be an itinerant partner in the hub (partners who rent space out on an intermittent basis), and 4 organizations and groups indicated that they were community groups and organizations that were looking for shared free or low-cost office, meeting and program space. A follow-up meeting was held for the interested agencies, and five showed up to discuss in more depth what their needs would be for partnering.

Do We Need A Community Hub in Greater Fort Erie?

Visit www.gfehub.ca to fill out our survey.

The Steering Committee of the Greater Fort Erie Community Hub Task Force is made up of Advancing Crystal Beach, Beachcombers, Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre and the Town of Fort Erie.

The Steering Committee is being supported in their feasibility study by the McLean Consulting Group.

Thank you for providing your vision.

Wayne H. Redekop and the Greater Fort Erie Community Hub Task Force

Survey
Deadline
Jan 15 2019



Figure 19 Postcard for community distribution

Finally, some key interviews were conducted confidentially with doctors, lawyers, property developers, business owners, politicians, Town, and Regional staff as well as property owners in order to gain general insight from people who will likely influence this project. A thematic analysis was conducted using transcripts from interviews and focus groups to identify emerging themes and patterns.

LITERATURE REVIEW

- A Fort Erie HUB faces dynamics like rural Hubs in other Ontario locations
- Transportation, insular community dynamics, resistance to change are all rural issues

Challenges experienced in rural service delivery and rural service access are well established within modern literature. Rural communities are geographically isolated and often experience gaps in service delivery, with services that are inconsistent, unpredictable, or altogether absent, leading to extended travel times to access the services in the nearest city or larger community. Often public transit does not exist or is inadequate, exacerbating the distance from services and severely limiting access to support. Rural areas typically have a high density of elderly individuals and distinctly cultural populations, coupled with increased mental health conditions, chronic disease, and overall social isolation factors, contributing to increased and more complex needs (Multi-Sector Rural Health Hub Advisory Committee, 2015).

Fort Erie, although not completely rural, does carry most of the characteristics of a rural community. The Urban Core is the terminus of the Queen Elizabeth Way and is located directly across from Buffalo New York. However, driving 10 minutes in any direction other than towards Niagara Falls brings one to farmland and distinct pockets of settlement. In fact, the Steering Committee of the Hub initiative began their lobbying efforts precisely because of a feeling of isolation and lack of transportation to where services are located. Fort Erie West (Crystal Beach, Ridgeway, Stevensville) is a 20-minute drive to the Urban Core and a 20-minute drive to the City of Port Colborne (population 19,000).

Due to the numerous factors that are unique to rural communities and contribute to an increased need for services, but decreased access to services, a filter was initially used in the search for and analysis of relevant literature. The research focused in Ontario, and particularly, rural Ontario was prioritized. However, following the commencement of the literature review, the challenging nature of this narrowed search quickly became apparent. Rural communities, and subsequently rural community hubs, do not receive adequate attention and focus in research, exposing a significant gap (DeKeseredy & Schwartz, 2009). Therefore, the search was broadened to include areas and neighbourhoods that experience community dynamics comparable to rural Ontario communities.

For example, a community hub was implemented in Rideau Heights, a neighbourhood within Kingston, Ontario (Meagher, 2007). Although there is a slight difference in population as compared to Western Fort Erie and Rideau Heights is attached to an urban city, this community has comparable dynamics to a rural community (Meagher,

2007). Rideau Heights is lacking geographic isolation and inadequate transportation often unique to rural communities; however, residents feel a deep disconnect and abandonment from the urban city and service providers (Meagher, 2007). This disconnect has led to a phenomenon wherein times of need and crisis, individuals turn to each other for support rather than to external service providers (Meagher, 2007). This creates a close-knit, homogeneous, insular community with strong, but exclusive social networks, bringing community resilience, but making it increasingly difficult for newcomers to assimilate, and causing a resistance to travel to urban cities to seek support, while also resisting service providers travelling to the rural community (Matthews, Pendakur, & Young, 2009; Meagher, 2007). These insular community dynamics are typical of rural communities, leading to additional challenges and barriers when considering how to effectively deliver support services in such areas. Therefore, within the literature review, research focused on communities with dynamics comparable to Fort Erie was prioritized, rather than population size and geographic location.

PROVINCIAL LANDSCAPE

- The new provincial government is unlikely to continue the previous governments Hub supporting initiatives however Trillium is mentioned as the non-profit vehicle
- Research and resources remain from the previous governments support of Hubs and this work is extremely helpful for future initiatives

Major changes have resulted from the election of the Conservative government in 2018. The focus of the new government is on tackling the huge provincial deficit, and major debt reduction initiatives have already taken place. The previous Liberal government invested a lot of time and resources into the Hub model, so it behooves any group wishing to implement a Hub to study the resources and best practices learned regardless of the potential for funding. At press time, the provincial links to the Hub department of the Ministry of Infrastructure had been deactivated and email inquiries from the writer have gone unanswered.

The Liberal government recognized the importance of improving access to services in communities where individuals live (Ontario Municipal Social Services Association, 2015a), which is increasingly relevant to rural communities, due to geographical distance from urban service centres. In 2015, Ontario's Premier launched the Community Hub Initiative with the overall goal of promoting this collaborative model of service delivery and reducing the barriers preventing communities from implementing a local community hub (Community Hubs Advisory Group, 2017). With the assistance of a Special Advisor on Community Hubs and a Community Hubs Advisory Group, the Community Hubs in Ontario: A Strategic Framework and Action Plan was released, along with two consecutive progress reports in recent years (Community Hubs Advisory

Group, 2015). These reports outlined numerous recommendations, primarily at a governmental level, to reduce the barriers to community hub implementation (Community Hubs Advisory Group, 2015). The Community Hub Initiative also launched an online tool entitled the Community Hub Resource Network, which facilitates the exchange of information and experiences between communities and organizations across Ontario who are interested in, planning for, building, or operating a community hub (Community Hubs Advisory Group, 2017). Finally, the Surplus Property Transition Initiative was released as a funding opportunity to allow local organizations to hold a surplus property in public ownership for a specified period, allowing for the development of a business plan and creation of community partnerships prior to renovating the property into a community hub (Community Hubs Advisory Group, 2017). The Ministry of Infrastructure has not announced whether this initiative will continue yet.

COMMUNITY HUBS

- there are general and focussed Hubs
- The focus can be recreation, social service, medical, age or ethnicity-specific

As stated, a community hub is a general term that essentially ensures a single point of access for service users and prioritizes the collaboration of organizations (Community Hubs Advisory Group, 2017). Although electronic hubs exist in the form of an online network of multiple organizations utilized to track referrals and collaboratively-achieved outcomes (Zeigler, Redding, Leath, & Carter, 2016), for the purpose of this report and the community of Fort Erie, physical community hub buildings will be the focus.

Community hubs are consistently referred to as an effective model of multi-agency working and collaboration throughout the literature (Atkinson, Jones, & Lamont, 2007; Atkinson, Wilkin, Stott, Doherty, & Kinder, 2002; Percy-Smith, 2005). Community hubs are described as shared space centres, location-based collaboration, centre-based collaboration, co-location, centre-based delivery, one-stop shops, and multi-agency centres by a variety of authors, all with the common organization of multiple collaborative services under one roof (Ginsburg, 2008; The Non-profit Centers Network, 2016; The Premier's Community Hubs Framework Advisory Group, 2016). When considering physical community hubs, there are a variety of types, from recreational community centres that provide opportunities to engage community members and provide safe hobbies for youth, to community hubs that promote art and culture, and community hubs that house human service organizations and deliver local, often non-profit support (Meagher, 2007; Ontario Municipal Social Services Association, 2015; Waterloo Region District School Board, 2016).

The literature also breaks down human service delivery community hubs into focused and general hubs. Focused hubs are overwhelmingly present throughout the literature

and describe community hubs that are focused on one specific human challenge. A great amount of research details community hubs focused solely on children and youth (Ginsburg, 2008; Horwath & Morrison, 2011). Community hubs targeting health, often referred to as community health centres, are also increasingly common (Armitage, Suter, Oelke, & Adair, 2009; Wistow & Waddington, 2006). The latter, and the less researched human service delivery hub model, that of a general nature, refers to community hubs that deliver a variety of human services targeting various societal challenges; the co-location of employment services, domestic violence support, legal assistance, addictions programs, government agencies, etc.

ORGANIZATIONAL COLLABORATION

- Collaboration at Hubs is not organic and must be worked on consistently
- Agencies located at Hubs that have a culture of collaboration always out-perform stand-alone agencies

Collaboration between service providers is referred to consistently throughout the literature as vital to effective service delivery (Davidson, 2013; The Non-profit Centers Network, 2016). In fact, in their study on effective inter-agency collaboration, with a specific focus on children, Horwath and Morrison (2011) state that collaboration is internationally recognized as essential in effectively meeting the needs of vulnerable children and their families. The authors illustrate the progression of collaboration throughout past years that has resulted in the need for community hubs. Collaboration in human service delivery historically took the form of information sharing amongst practitioners, followed by a low level of joint working when warranted by individual cases (Horwath & Morrison, 2011). Although the push for inter-agency collaboration remained, it became apparent that complete agency autonomy and organizational separateness prevented frontline collaboration from being achieved (Horwath & Morrison, 2011). “A lack of shared ownership; inflexible organizational structures; conflicting professional ideologies; a lack of shared funding arrangements; communication problems; poor understanding of roles and responsibilities; and mistrust amongst professionals all affected the quality of frontline collaboration” (Horwath & Morrison, 2011; Milbourne, Macrea, & Maguire, 2003; Percy-Smith, 2006; Webb & Vulliamy, 2001). To overcome the numerous barriers impeding frontline collaboration and subsequently, effective service delivery, a shift to collaboration at higher management was required (Horwath & Morrison, 2011). To this effect, the co-location of organizations within a community hub is consistently cited as a strategy that improves inter-agency collaboration and assists in overcoming these barriers (Atkinson et al., 2007; Doyle, 2008; Ginsburg, 2008).

Throughout the literature, various levels of engagement or collaboration within community hubs are detailed. The Non-profit Centres Network (2016) illustrates a low level of collaboration as simply networking; relationship building over a shared coffee break, with an overall focus on creating a positive environment inside of the hub. This level of collaboration requires a very little behaviour change (The Non-profit Centres Network, 2016). Community hubs that focus less on social interactions and more on the coordination of program activities and referrals amongst co-located organizations are employing a medium level of engagement, also referred to as coalition or collaboration (The Non-profit Centres Network, 2016). This level of collaboration requires modest behaviour changes on the part of individual service providers, and the sacrifice of some organizational autonomy (Horwath & Morrison, 2011; The Non-profit Centres Network, 2016). Finally, a high level of engagement, also referred to as integration, is apparent through risk and reward sharing amongst organizations, individual organizations striving to enhance other agencies' capacities, and the community hub functioning as its own entity, having a collaborative positive impact on the community (Horwath & Morrison, 2011; The Non-profit Centres Network, 2016). Therefore, the co-location of organizations into a community hub does not immediately result in a single model or level of collaboration. Depending on the vision and purpose of the hub, various measures will be implemented that will determine the position on the spectrum of collaboration that the community hub will exist.

BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY HUBS

- Hubs create a community focal point where everyone can belong
- Hubs overcome barriers of lack of connectivity, limited resources
- Community outcomes are better because of wraparound services

The benefits of community hubs are abundant within pertinent literature (Atkinson et al., 2007; Davidson, 2013; Frost & Lloyd, 2006; Ginsburg, 2008; Ontario Municipal Social Services Association, 2015b), however, research tends to categorize the benefits depending on who the immediate recipient of the positive impact is. For example, many research studies discuss the benefits of community hubs in terms of benefits for service providers, benefits for service users, and finally, benefits for the community. For the purpose of this feasibility study, the benefits will not be separated in this manner because of the inherent relationship between these three groups. A positive impact on service providers will result in improved services delivered to service users, which will benefit the community as a whole. Service providers also exist as service users and vice-versa, while all comprising the community. As such, these individuals and the associated benefits will not be discussed as three distinct groups for the purpose of promoting the egalitarian, holistic nature of community hubs.

Not only do community hubs assist in overcoming the barriers uniquely experienced by rural communities, as discussed above, but these collaborative models also address challenges in modern service delivery, in general. Community hubs address problems of fragmentation of services, limited resources, difficulty navigating a system of uncoordinated supports, lack of collaboration amongst organizations, and duplication of services (Davidson, 2013; Ontario Municipal Social Services Association, 2015b). Community hubs positively impact individuals and communities through improved communication, increased information sharing, improved access to more appropriate services, the use of service provider time and resources more effectively, and reduced stigma for individuals utilizing the co-located services (Atkinson et al., 2007; Davidson, 2013; Frost & Lloyd, 2006; Moran, Jacobs, Bunn, & Bifulco, 2006; Williams, Shore, & Meschan, 2006).

A greater acceptance of referrals has been found when services are delivered out of a community hub, due to the familiarity of the shared location and warm referrals (Ginsburg, 2008). Studies have found that community hubs encourage clients to access multiple services, which results in a fuller, more holistic assessment of needs, along with a faster referral, assessment, and service delivery process (Davidson, 2013; Maslin-Prothero & Bennion, 2010). Community hubs reduce travel costs typically dedicated to seeking services, as well as reduce time that service providers and service users typically spend navigating the system; individuals are no longer knocking on multiple doors, repeating their story to a variety of unconnected service providers (Ontario Municipal Social Services Association, 2015b; Sloper, 2004).

Researchers have discovered that collaborative community hubs result in increased knowledge of available services, institutional empathy in which organizations genuinely understand and have an appreciation for service delivery from another agency, increased trust between service providers, and subsequently, improved relationships overall (Atkinson et al., 2007; Banks, Dutch, & Wang, 2008; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2015). Increased opportunities for joint problem solving, reduced waiting lists, and significant savings for co-located partners in program resources, trainings, and marketing have been found to result from co-location within a community hub (Davidson, 2013; Maslin-Prothero & Bennion, 2010). Finally, a greater focus on prevention and early intervention, a unified voice presented to service users, and overall greater success for clients are also among the numerous positive impacts that a community hub can have on service providers, service users, and the community. (Davidson, 2013).

CHALLENGES IN COMMUNITY HUBS

- Funding and corporate culture clashes, tenant identity crisis
- Fear of job loss due to found efficiencies
- Power struggles

Although the benefits of community hubs are abundant within literature, challenges also inevitably arise when historically distinct organizations co-locate into a shared space. Power dynamics exist throughout every layer of society, including human service delivery, however, these inequalities become increasingly visible when organizations are physically placed in close proximity, with the intent of sacrificing some autonomy for collaboration (Wistow & Waddington, 2006). Social service organizations differ in the amount of funding received as well as the physical size of the organization, which can result in a significant power imbalance where large organizations drive the agenda and small agencies do not have the resources to participate (Public Interest Strategy and Communications Inc., 2008). A lack of role and identity clarity is referred to in numerous studies as a consistent challenge within community hubs (Davidson, 2013; Armitage et al., 2009; Atkinson et al., 2007). This includes a lack of clarity and understanding of others' roles within the community hub, uncertainty surrounding a service provider's own professional identity, and confused loyalties (Armitage et al., 2009; Atkinson et al., 2007).

When co-locating in a community hub, individual service providers and entire organizations must find a balance between their identity as an individual agency and their loyalty and role in the collective community hub (Davidson, 2013). Without this balance, ambiguity in one's professional identity and role within their organization and community hub will result. Conflicting organizational cultures and a difference in commitment to collaboration have also been cited throughout the literature as dynamics that impact organizations' ability to effectively co-locate and collaborate, therefore impacting the success of the community hub as a whole (Atkinson et al., 2007; Wistow & Waddington, 2006). Research regarding workload after re-locating into a community hub is mixed, however, the majority of evidence is weighted toward an increase in workload, which may produce hesitation in joining the community hub and maintaining tenancy (Atkinson et al., 2007). Finally, the development of collaborative communication, the ability to secure adequate resourcing in terms of time, staffing, and funding, and support from organizations' upper management are noted as necessary, and a lack thereof could be particularly damaging to the community hub (Atkinson et al., 2007; Stewart, Petch, & Curtice, 2003).

BEST PRACTICES

- Have a clear concept of what the Hub is and is not
- Governance roles must be clearly defined
- Collaborative corporate culture will require commitment and communication

Throughout the literature, strategies, models, and protocols are discussed as solutions to the above challenges. When considering the internal environment of a community hub, collaboration must be a priority. Organizations cannot be placed under one roof and simply expected to collaborate. Due to our historic model of delivering services from discrete locations and perspectives, the true collaboration will not develop organically in a community hub; time and resources must be dedicated to creating collaborative opportunities. Recommendations throughout the literature on fostering collaboration include working together with colocated partners to define what it means to collaborate, building a common culture for the community hub, encouraging joint programs and activities, developing one website for the centre with individual agency websites linked off of it, and distributing a joint newsletter illustrating updates from all co-located agencies (Davidson, 2013; Stewart et al., 2003; Scragg, 2006). In order to implement these collaborative efforts, a community hub should have one staff member that is employed by the hub (The Non-profit Centers Network, 2016). This centre director, coordinator, or community hub manager would be responsible for the daily operations of the hub and encouraging collaboration between co-located partners (The Non-profit Centers Network, 2016).

Reciprocal referrals are an indicator of successful collaboration and mutual trust, and therefore must be encouraged within a community hub. Referrals can be fostered by implementing measures that ensure appropriate referrals and the exchange of information regarding shared clients (Davidson, 2013). This includes a common referral form and an inter-agency case management approach where the needs of the client are assessed and the organizations that will assist in meeting each individual need are clearly determined and laid out, which may include a checklist to record the agencies that are involved with a single individual (Davidson, 2013).

As evidenced by the discussion of benefits and challenges within a community hub, communication must be prioritized. Within their study on multi-agency work, White and Featherstone (2005) found that the co-location of multi-disciplinary services and organizations will not automatically, straightforwardly, lead to improved, collaborative communication. Collaborative communication cannot occur within a community hub if individuals do not change their thinking and practice. Co-located, collaborative partners cannot remain in their past professional narratives utilized in their geographically and organizationally separate practices (White & Featherstone, 2005). Agencies must be open to exploring their past professional communication strategies and considering those of a new, collaborative nature (White & Featherstone, 2005). This transition can

be challenging and intimidating because it opens organizations to scrutiny; however, to adopt a collaborative perspective, agencies must accept their incompleteness and limitations and open themselves up to others' models of service delivery (White & Featherstone, 2005).

Collaborative communication includes using a variety of channels including face-to-face events and meetings, as well as passive communication such as bulletin boards and newsletters, to ensure all agencies are reached and included, and installing a large calendar that lists all agency workshops, events, and information in a common area (Davidson, 2013; The Non-profit Centers Network, 2016). It is also recommended that community hubs implement an interagency committee where complaints and problems can be brought and discussed (Davidson, 2013). A mix of formal and informal communication needs to be encouraged and all co-located partners should be provided the opportunity to understand the language, terms, and acronyms utilized by other agencies (Davidson, 2013).

When conceptualizing the feasibility of a community hub, the location must be consciously considered, and the service user perspective should be prioritized. The location of a community hub needs to promote both physical and geographical accessibility (Davidson, 2013). The hub should be centrally located in the community, convenient, for example on a bus route if public transportation is present in the community, and in a safe area (Davidson, 2013). It is also recommended that the community hub is in close proximity to other social service organizations that have not chosen to co-locate, to ensure ease in referring and maintain a community approach (Davidson, 2013).

A clear governance model or arrangement has been described as a vital factor when considering the success of collaboration and potentially, integration, within a community hub (Cameron, Macdonald, Turner, & Lloyd, 2007; Wistow & Waddington, 2006). Within their report on governance, partnership, and community inclusion in community hubs, the social enterprise, Public Interest Strategy and Communications Inc. (2008), detail the multiple potential governance structures for multi-agency shared spaces. Community hubs can employ a staff-led model, in which the hub is governed by the executive directors of co-located organizations, who also comprise the management of the hub, and implement all hub policies (Public Interest Strategy and Communications Inc., 2008). The standard non-profit model of an elected board of directors (BOD) is also a possibility. The BOD would govern the community hub, particularly surrounding strategic direction and policy, and a lead agency or community hub manager would oversee the daily operations (Public Interest Strategy and Communications Inc., 2008).

A lead agency model is also present within the literature as a potential management model, where the community hub is overseen and managed as a program of a single organization. The lead agency rents space to partners and the hub is overseen by the lead agency's BOD, with many in-hub committees and coordinators managing the daily operations (Public Interest Strategy and Communications Inc., 2008). An additional model of governance in community hubs is a resident steering committee, where the overseeing committee is comprised of equal representation of co-located agencies and local community residents (Public Interest Strategy and Communications Inc., 2008). This model promotes shared ownership and encourages decision-making from local community leaders. Severed accountability models also exist in which a trustee body holds decision-making power in legal and financial matters, while a BOD manages policies and programs, as well as participant-based governance, where service users play a role in developing services and sit on the BOD (Public Interest Strategy and Communications Inc., 2008).

When considering funding and budgets within community hubs, multiple research studies recommended seeking opportunities to share resources and pool budgets amongst co-located organizations (Atkinson et al., 2007; Davidson, 2013). As referred to numerous times above, re-locating into a community hub requires a transition, and when considering funds and budgets, this same sentiment persists. Funding in silos is referred to as a challenge in community hubs within the literature because it promotes competition, rather than cooperation (Public Interest Strategy and Communications Inc., 2008). Therefore, organizations must work together across agency boundaries by pooling resources and budgets (Maslin-Prothero & Bennion, 2010). Joint funding or pooled budgets can fund joint programs, community hub resources, and costs associated with collaboration-encouraging activities. Davidson (2013) also recommends implementing clearly written agreements surrounding where funding is shared and encouraging co-located organizations' upper management to recognize the importance of shared resources on the environment, service delivery, and unified voice of the community hub.

IMPLEMENTED COMMUNITY HUBS

The following are examples of implemented Community Hubs in Ontario. These may serve as a model for the Greater Fort Erie Community Hub based on our agency and public surveys.



PORT CARES



Port Cares Main Centre: 92 Charlotte St. Port Colborne ON L3K 3E1

www.portcares.on.ca

Port Cares was founded in 1986 and incorporated as a not-for-profit registered charity in 1988. Port Cares is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors and derives revenue through a combination of government funding, foundation grants, private donations, memberships, and fundraising activities.

Port Cares mission is to provide leadership, support, and resources to assist the community to improve the quality of life. Services assist individuals with coordinated resources and information to acquire further skills to reach their life goals.

The main site at 92 Charlotte Street is an umbrella organization for information and supports on a variety of social services, delivered by Port Cares staff, or one of the over twenty organizations who provide service to the community from this location.

Port Cares aids with basic needs, information, resources, and referrals through programs that include client services, housing, skills development, employment, Niagara Youth Justice and our EarlyON Child and Family Centres.

The second Port Colborne site at 61 Nickel Street provides food security to the communities of Port Colborne/Wainfleet through a regular hot meal program, food distribution, healthy eating and cooking, educational opportunities and a community garden project. Programs for children and youth are delivered to the Three Bridges and East Village neighbourhoods.

Volunteers have been a very important part of the delivery of many of the services to the community and without a strong volunteer component, Port Cares would not be able to offer many of its services.

Onsite services Include:

Out Reach: Food Bank, Meals Programs, Community Gardens

Housing and Crisis Support: Crisis and Advocacy, Housing Services, Utility Assistance

Employment and Learning: Employment Division, The Learning Centre.

Early Years Service: EarlyON Information, EarlyON Programming, plus additional Children's Programs.

Youth Justice: Youth Justice Committee, Youth justice services, and a community volunteer board.

Government Services: Service Canada, Ontario Works, Vance Badawey M.P Offices, Jeff Burch M.L.A. Offices, Birth certificates-replacements, Family Responsibility Office (FRO), Community Access Centre (CCAC), Ontario Student Assistance Program (OSAP), Work Place Safety & Insurance Board (WSIB), Ontario Health Insurance Program (OHIP), Landlord Tenant Board, Senior Services

Onsite Community Partners: Health and Wellness, Legal, Mental Health from various agencies.



LANGS COMMUNITY HUBS



Langs Main Centre: 1145 Concession Road, Cambridge, ON N3H 4L5, www.langs.org

Langs Main Site / HUB@1145 is a beautiful, bright and modern 68,000 sq. ft. the building that was built in 2011 and expanded in 2018. The facility features a walking track, full-sized gymnasium, multiple meeting and event spaces, a courtyard, 2 green roofs, and a living wall.

In 1978, Langs founders envisioned Langs as a place where partners worked together to bring health and social services under one roof. The HUB model evolved over several years beginning in 2011 when Langs moved into the HUB@1145, what is now known provincially as a 'Community HUB'. Langs' North Dumfries Community Health Centre Satellite Site is also a Community HUB, known as the HUB@2958.

A variety of programs, services, and partners operate out of the Langs:

Community Health Centre Resource Centre
Diabetes Education Program Waterloo Region

25+ Community Partners

Catchment Area / Who can access the HUB?

Community Health Centre: residents of the City of Cambridge

Community Services (EarlyON and Adult Programming):

Diabetes Education Program: The Community Diabetes Program sees patients from across the Waterloo Region at various locations. Langs Indoor Walking Track:

Langs Definition of their community hub:

- Addresses the social determinants of health. Involves the community in governance, setting priorities, program delivery, and evaluation.
- Integrates partnerships that improve access to services, enable a larger impact on health and wellbeing, and maximize infrastructure.
- Builds on community strengths and increases capacity.
- Is flexible and responsive to the changing needs of the community.
- Is self-sustaining.

Langs is a neighbourhood-based organization that began as a community development project over 35 years ago. Today, the organization provides a wide range of social, recreational and health services for all ages including the Langs Community Health Centre.

The new facility located at 1145 Concession Road was designed by Robertson Simmons Architects and built by Melloul-Blamey Construction in 2011. This 58,000 square foot green friendly facility has many unique features including but not limited to:

- Gymnasium
- Walking Track
- Living Wall
- 2 types of Green Roofs
- 6 group rooms of various sizes
- 2 community kitchens
- Green Lounge
- Courtyard

Langs has a proven track record of being a community hub model. The organization is co-located with the William E. Pautler Seniors Centre which operates a seniors' day program funded by the WWLHIN and a variety of health promotion programs for seniors. Langs is also co-located with 20 community partners to provide social, health, recreational, educational and vocational services on-site at our new facility. On-site partners include but are not limited to:

- William E. Pautler Centre
- Alzheimer's Society
- Lutherwood Children's Mental Health Services
- St. Mary's Counselling Services
- Healthy Smiles Program – Waterloo Region Public Health
- Waterloo Region Community Legal Services
- Canadian Mental Health Association
- The Arthritis Society
- General Surgeon
- Two Rheumatologists
- Specialized Geriatrics Team

SPOTLIGHT ON NORTH DUMFRIES COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE HUB (Langs Satellite)

Built on a mutual vision of elected officials, community members, and Langs to create accessible space and services in the rural community, a highly unique and innovative hub emerged in a small community in southwest Ontario. The North Dumfries Community

Complex located in Ayr, Ontario, includes a:

- Banquet hall
- NHL size ice surface
- Walking track
- Seniors and youth spaces
- North Dumfries Community Health Centre
- The exterior includes a splash pad, soccer fields, and community trails

North Dumfries Township received federal and provincial infrastructure funding to build a multi-purpose community recreation complex in 2011. The North Dumfries Community Health Centre (a satellite of Langs) co-located with the township in the community

complex to provide essential primary care services and health promotion programs. The CHC cannot keep up with the response to health promotion programs for youth since there were very few programs for young people outside organized sports. As well the availability of a “blood taking” clinic and OTN services enables residents to access essential specialist appointments in their own community.

This hub has become a focal point for the rural community and is a perfect home to integrate a variety of recreation and health services to address healthy lifestyles and prevent chronic disease. Other health and social service organizations are reaching out to the community at this facility such as midwifery and home support services. The Township will soon be relocating their offices to the complex to create a one-stop service for all.



JANE STREET HUB



Jane Street Hub

Location

1541 Jane Street Toronto
Canada

About:

Located at 1541 Jane St., the Jane St. Hub is a new center that brings together six organizations to offer community services and health care to residents of Weston, Mount Dennis, Trethewey, and the surrounding area. The hub also provides space for community groups to use, including a kitchen and meeting rooms.

Community Space:

Jane Street Hub has five (5) community rooms and a kitchen that resident groups and community agencies can apply to use. A resident group can use the space free of charge, while community agencies pay a small hourly fee.

Partners:

Unison Health and Community Services (Lead Agency)

This agency provides health care, preventative health services, counselling, seniors' case management, and newcomer support.

COSTI:

COSTI provides an Employment Resource Centre, a variety of employment services and counselling, settlement and post-settlement services for newcomers, students, youth and people with disabilities.

Macaulay Child Development Centre:

This organization runs an Early Years Centre to provide children 0-6 and their parents (or caregivers) with parent-child and parent education programs

Midaynta Community Services:

Midaynta provides settlement services and family support for newcomers, especially for the Somali community. [Click here for more information about Midaynta.](#)

Yorktown Child and Family Centre:

This centre offers counselling, youth programs, and parenting programs.

Unison health services implements and run health programs and services at the Jane St Hub. Unison also runs 4 other Hub locations in Toronto offering similar services at each location. In 2015-2016, Unison served over 12,000 primary care clients and nearly 8,000 program participants. We offer core services that include primary health care, counselling, health promotion, early years programs, legal services, harm reduction programs, housing assistance, and adult protective services as well as special programs like Pathways to Educations and Diabetes Education and Prevention.

COMMUNITY CONSULTATIONS



Figure 20 Community Engagement Session

An important aspect of gathering community input is face to face interaction. Although most citizens of Fort Erie would report as being computer literate, there is still a significant portion of the population with no or limited access to a computer, limited computer/language literacy as well as a general distrust of technology. This was made apparent with the number of surveys that were completed via paper-based modalities. Nearly one-third of all respondents preferred a facilitated and/or paper-based method of submission.

Community engagement sessions also allowed for a more robust description of the Hub initiative, why certain questions were being asked on the survey and what would happen after the report was completed. The in-person sessions allowed for the collection of spontaneous input and important narrative data and some quality suggestions emerged that encouraged further agency and community leader interviews.

Public Invitation Community Engagement Sessions Dates and Times:

- Thurs. November 22nd at 6:30 pm Crystal Beach Fire Hall #6
- Sat. December 1st, at 2:30 pm Crystal Ridge Library Community Room
- Thur. December 6th at 6:30 pm Stevensville Memorial Hall
- Friday, January 11, 2019, at 11:00 a.m. St. Michael's Hall, 310 Central Avenue.

Community Consultations with Specific Groups:

- Tues November 27th 5 pm at Beachcombers Pot Luck at Beachcombers Seniors
- Thurs. November 22nd, 11:00 am at The Lighthouse Diner Lunch at Crystal Ridge Church
- Wed. January 9th, 11:00am St. Michaels Community Lunch

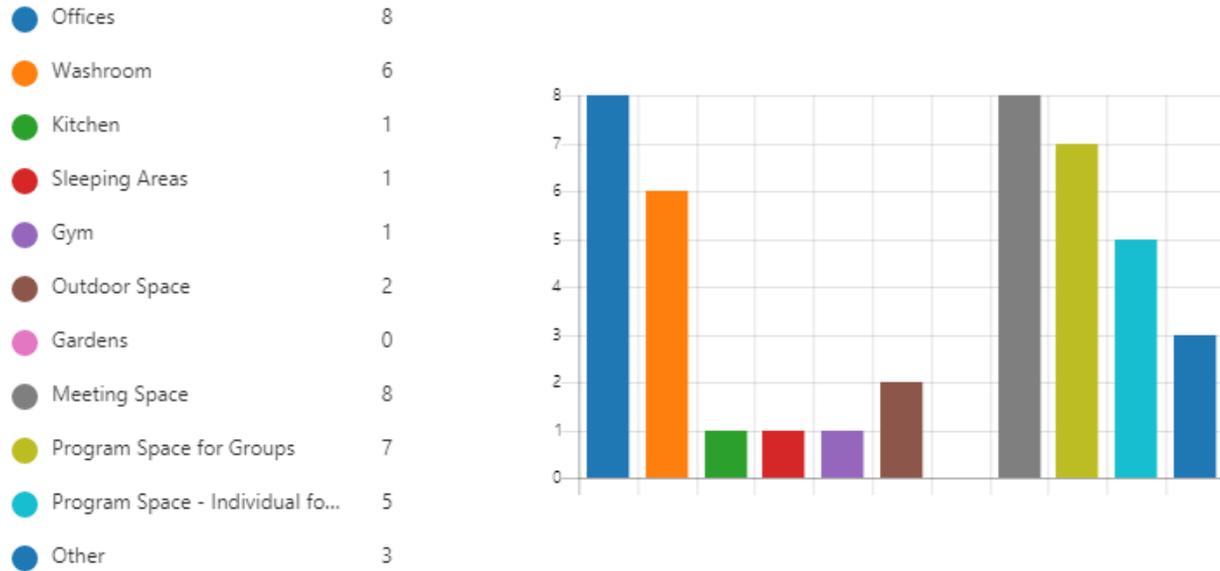
PARTNER INTERVIEWS AND SURVEY

Greater Fort Erie has many organizations that provide services to the community. An email list of 172 organizations was provided to the consultants to contact and provide a quick survey about what they would like to see as part of a community hub. An email was sent out on November 22 to the entire list asking the survey to be completed by December 15th. The organizations that filled out the survey also asked for follow up interviews to provide feed back on how they could participate in a possible future hub. The following themes emerged from the organization's survey and follow up interviews on how they can possibly partner and help support a possible future community hub:

Organizations need more space to provide services. Several providers mentioned that traveling from other areas of Niagara to Fort Erie they do not have a professional space in the area to meet a client. One mental health provider mentioned that they have had to meet a client at a local Tim Hortons for a meeting and this was not a proper professional or private space but had no other options for the west Fort Erie area. This theme emerged several times. The need for private meeting space for clients is an ongoing issue for many providers. Service providers felt that if an available space for a private office approximately 150 square feet and had a place for a conversation with a place to plug in a computer for follow up paperwork would be a benefit for them. This theme emerged from several of the possible partner service providers.

The responses for question 8 in our online agency survey show the need for Office and general service and meeting space:

Question: What type of space would you desire if you were to participate in a Community Hub in Fort Erie? (15 Responses)



Another theme from the agencies was the need for more general service space. Several organizations that provide direct services such as clothing and food distribution are in desperate need for space to meet increased demand for their services. From the survey: *“We have a need to increase our square footage and have amenities such a loading dock and more storage.”* Interviews conducted at the service providers location confirm that several possible partner organizations are at their limits for space and space for direct services and storage/distribution space for community donations in needed.

A third theme emerged for the need for cultural space for a large number of artifacts currently being displayed at the Fort Erie Museum. Approximately 46,000 artifacts from the history of Fort Erie are currently in storage and not publicly displayed. From the Survey:

“Supporting the fourth pillar of a sustainable community - Culture. A sustainable community has a strong identity which is partly a product of its cultural identity. Sharing the attributes that make Fort Erie unique help to create that cultural identity. Interpreting the stories of various sectors within Fort Erie helps to promote understanding and create a shared sense of pride. Fort Erie Museum Services has approximately 46,000 artifacts within the collection that represent the communities, sectors, people, and events within greater Fort Erie; but the Museums themselves have limited physical

space to display and share those stories. Long-time residents who donate artifacts often express frustration that most of the collection is in storage. New residents to Fort Erie visit the Museum to learn about their new town and express frustration that the displays do not provide answers to some of their questions (which is due to lack of space). The Museum's Strategic Plans have advocated for an Eco-Museum approach to delivering services. This entails interpreting the town's heritage in places throughout the town, not just within the Museum walls. This approach increases citizen engagement and helps to address the aforementioned frustrations. Past displays include using space within the Town Hall atrium, storefront windows, business office building atriums, etc. Having display space within the Community Hub would provide another avenue for citizens to learn about the heritage of the people, places, and events within their town -- which would support the Cultural pillar of a sustainable community.”

From our service agency interviews and surveys, we feel the need for general service space and space for cultural activities and museum artifact displays as part of a hub.

SURVEY FINDINGS

The survey was developed based on 10 years of experience in delivering and analyzing surveys for the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Ministry of Training, Colleges, and Universities and the Ministry of Education. Best practices include very clear language, a combination of multiple choice, forced choice and narrative responses, and limiting the questions so that the survey will not take more than ten minutes to complete. Long or confusing surveys lead to high abandonment rates, as do difficulties in navigation. This survey started with nearly 40 questions but was pared down to the essentials in the interest of participation. The average completion time was just over eight minutes and the abandonment rate was 34% from landing page to completion compared to normal averages of 80% abandonment.

Although there are many lessons to be gleaned from the results, the main focus was on;

- Knowing the age, gender, education, income level and residency location of each anonymous respondent
- Understanding where residents felt a Hub should be located
- Understanding what services residents felt should be in a Hub
- Probing the potential for community ownership via user fees or volunteerism
- Understanding the transportation challenges
- Soliciting additional unrestricted feedback to find any missing trends

The Steering Committee and the consultants have made a commitment to the greater Fort Erie community to make the data collected in this survey available for other studies intended to benefit the residents. Each question will be addressed in the following pages.

Survey Questions:

1. What Is Your Age Range? (forced choice)
2. Gender Identification? (forced choice)
3. Education Level? (forced choice)
4. Annual Household Income? (forced choice)
5. Residency Status? (forced choice)
6. Residency Location? (forced choice)
7. Please check the top 2 areas you believe would most benefit from a community hub? (multiple choice)
8. Please check all the items you think are needed in your neighbourhood. (multiple choice)

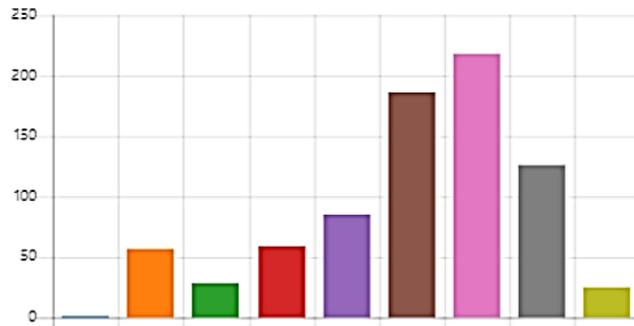
9. Please check the most important item you think is needed at a community hub. (Medical Services)
10. Please check the most important item you think is needed at a community hub. (government services)
11. Please check the most important item you think is needed at a community hub. (recreational services)
12. Any priorities in your neighbourhood not listed here? (qualitative)
13. Would you be willing to pay an annual membership fee for recreational services in your neighbourhood? (yes/no)
14. If yes, what is a reasonable annual fee to have a Community Hub in your neighbourhood? (numeric response)
15. Would you be willing to volunteer at a Community Hub in your community? (yes/no)
16. How many minutes would you be willing to travel to get to a Community Hub that had services that you wanted? (time range)
17. Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share in regard to the planning of a Community Hub in Fort Erie? (qualitative)

RESULTS:

1. What Is Your Age Range?

[More Details](#)

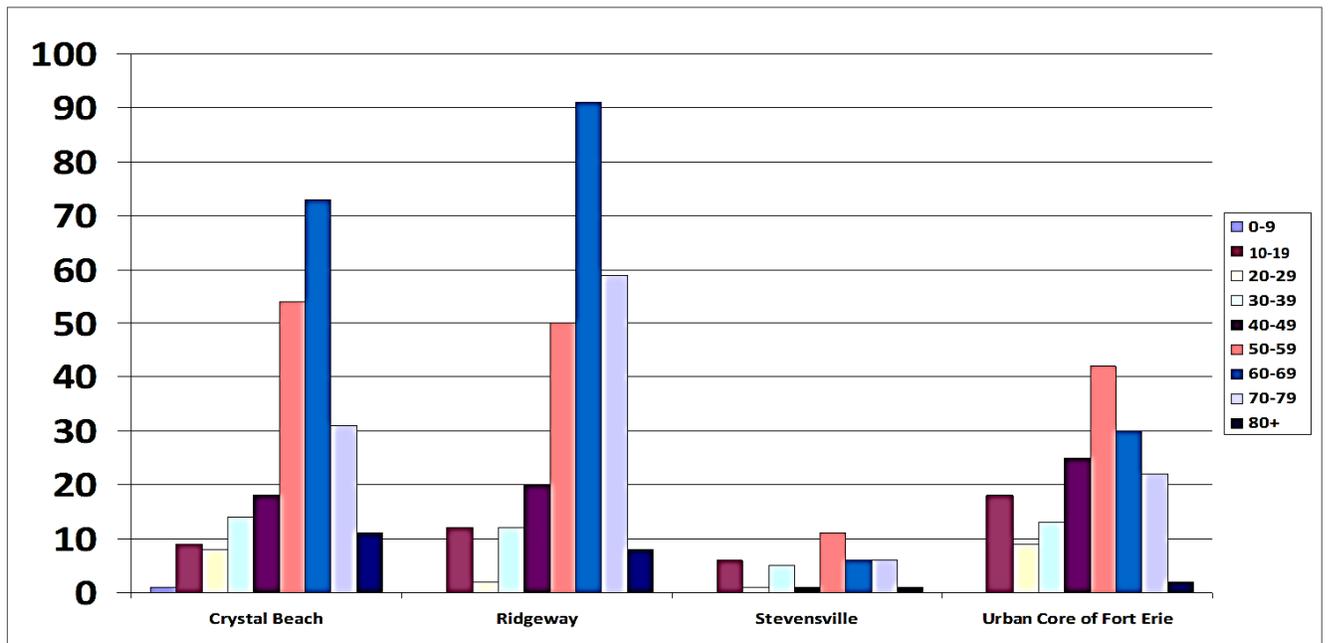
● 0-9	1
● 10-19	57
● 20-29	28
● 30-39	59
● 40-49	85
● 50-59	186
● 60-69	218
● 70-79	126
● 80+	25



The reasons for gauging age responses are obvious. Age will often determine interests, needs, perspectives, and priorities. The responses received are not that far off the age ranges that are listed in the census for Fort Erie. Rural communities tend to have an older demographic and Niagara is known nationally as demographically one of the oldest regions in the country.

There were some local drivers in the responses that inflated the 50+ responses about 7% above census averages. One of the Steering Committee partners is the Beachcombers, and their membership rules require one to be at least 50 years old to join. This group is very active, and they made sure that they reached out to their senior’s community with enthusiasm. It should also be noted that the community of Ridgeway has been quite successful in creating an “Adult Community” with hundreds of new build houses meant to attract those preparing for retirement. There have been no problems with sales as folks from the GTA looking for a more relaxed location to wind down their working career. The variant of approximately 7% should not be seen as invalidating responses considering the overall average age of Niagara.

Age of Respondents vs Neighbourhood



The results confirm that all four of these communities have a significant senior population. Stevensville and Urban Core have a higher proportion of 50-59-year old’s, and it should not be ignored that all four areas reported youth responses. The Urban Core has the highest response from youth, and this is likely since rental housing is more prevalent there. It is also significant that the 80+ population is Ridgeway and Crystal Beach are very engaged.

2. Gender Identification?

[More Details](#)

Male	292
Female	481
Other	5
Prefer not to say	7



SURVEY RESPONSES BY GENDER

37% 
Male

61% 
Female

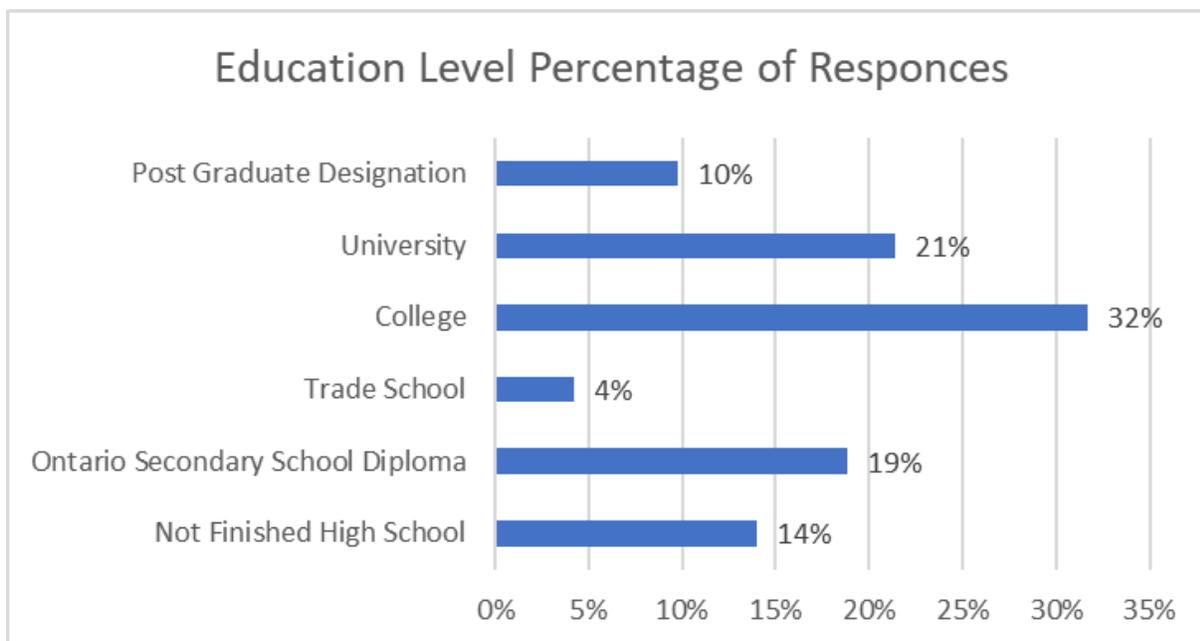
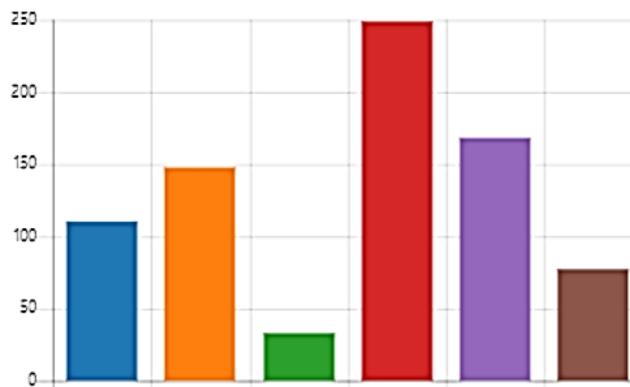
1% 
Other/Prefer not to say

Gender responses show nearly a 2-1 result in favor of those reporting female. Recent studies support this as normal however the reasons for this are still a matter of debate. One hypothesis forward that in older communities, the life expectancy of women exceeds men so this is a natural result. Regardless, the following results should be viewed remembering the gender disparity.

3. Education Level?

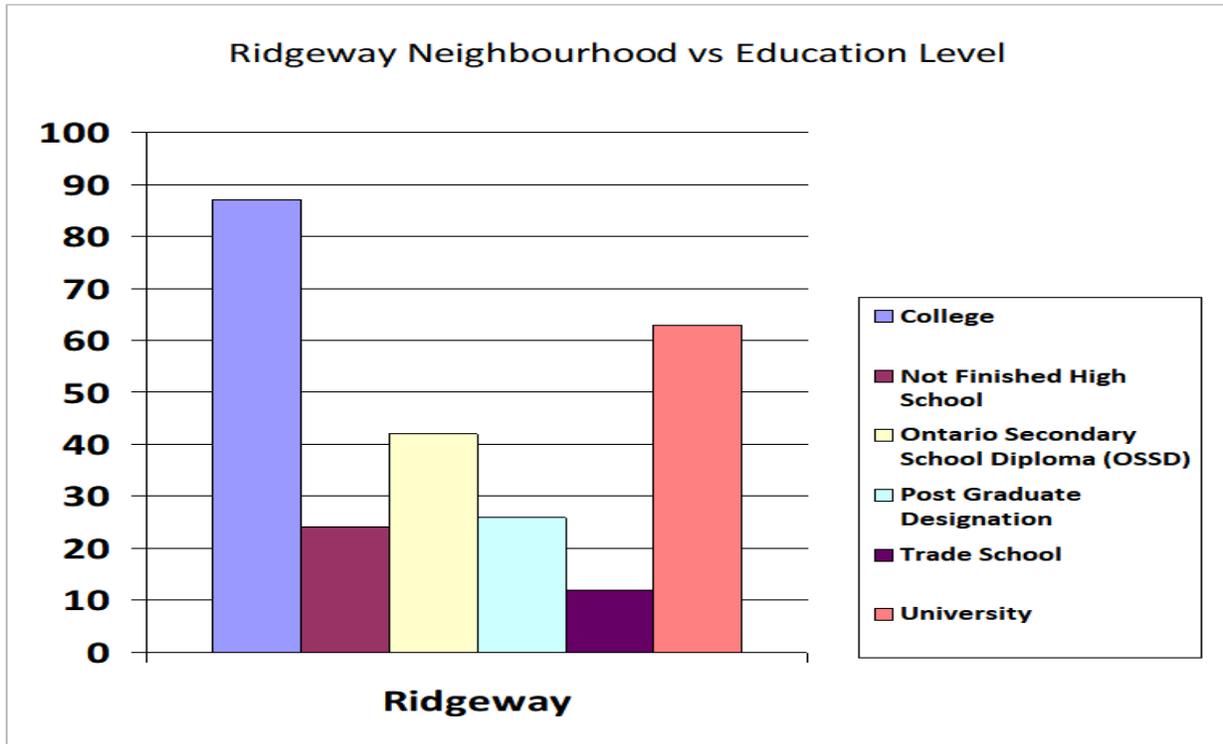
[More Details](#)

● Not Finished High School	110
● Ontario Secondary School Dip...	148
● Trade School	33
● College	249
● University	168
● Post Graduate Designation	77



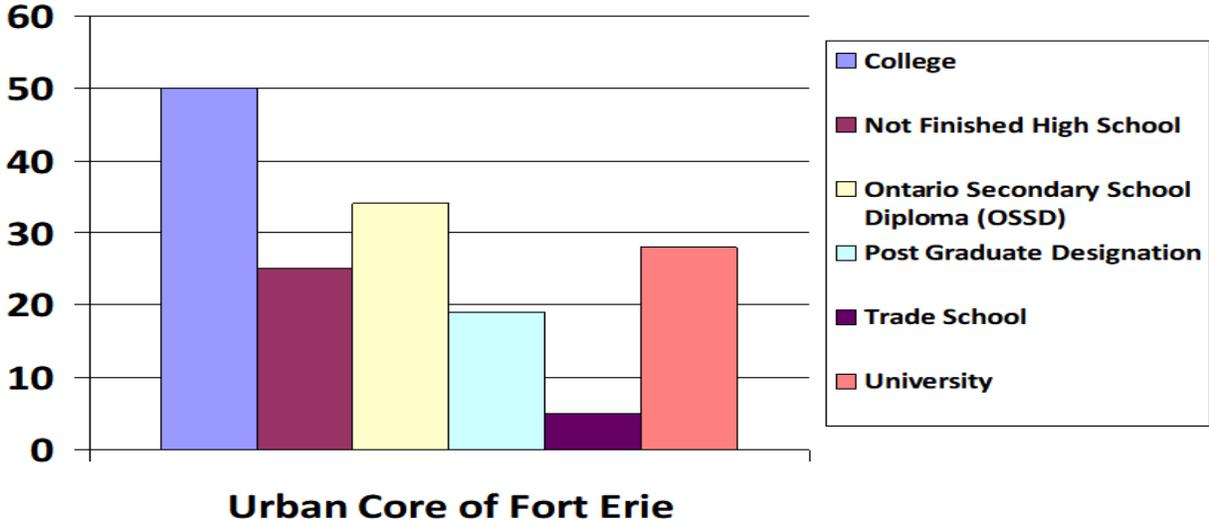
Education level is significant in several ways. First and foremost, it is a driver in social determinants of health, so communities with lower education tend to have more fundamental challenges than those that do not. Education level also impacts perspective. Those with university and post graduate degrees tend to value more esoteric things in the community while college and tradespeople tend to focus on the tangible. Communities reporting a significant proportion of people who have not finished high school is often in need of educational opportunities in their neighbourhood.

Education level by major neighbourhood:



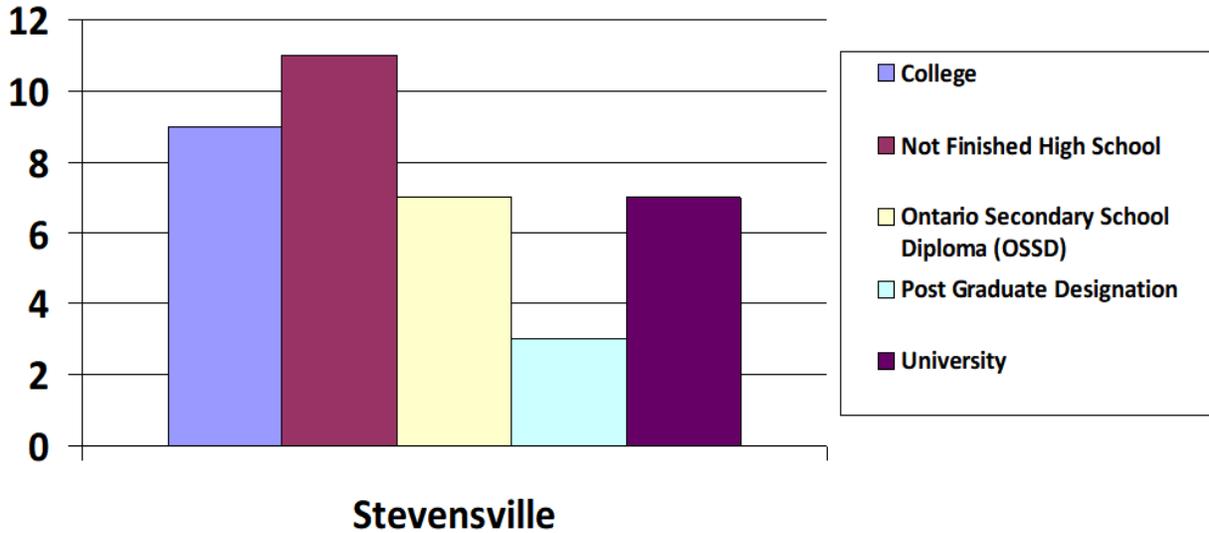
Ridgeway is often assumed to be much more affluent than the other communities and therefore should have a higher proportion of educated residents. The data indicate that the educational outcomes for Ridgeway are not much different than the rest of Fort Erie. Ridgeway does have more university-educated respondents than the other communities, however.

Urban Core vs Education Level

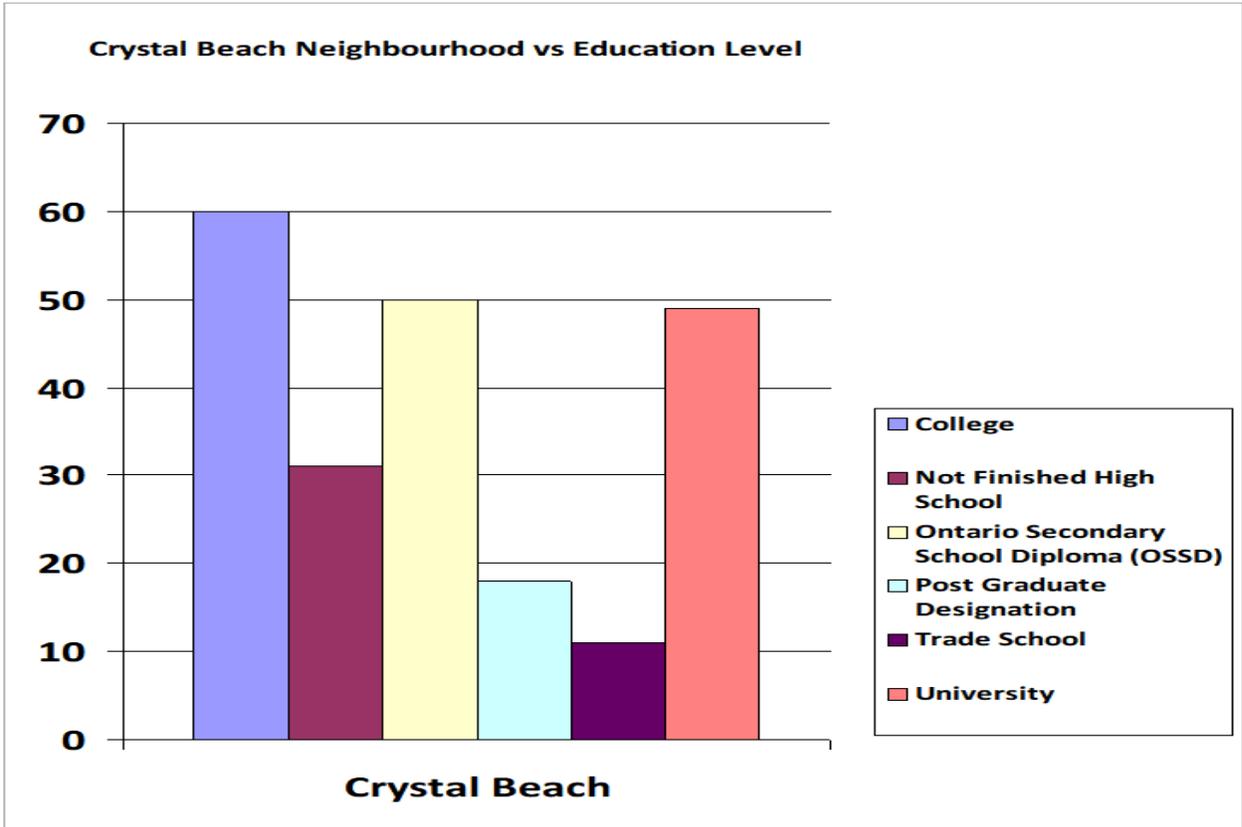


Once again, assumptions about this neighbourhood seem to be unfounded. The Urban Core has more families with lower incomes than the others however a significant proportion report to have college or university education, and the percentage of those not finished high school is not significantly higher than other Fort Erie communities. A drive through the Urban Core supports this conclusion as many subdivisions have houses selling above the Niagara average of \$420,000, and the correlation between education and income is undeniable.

Stevensville Neighbourhood vs Education



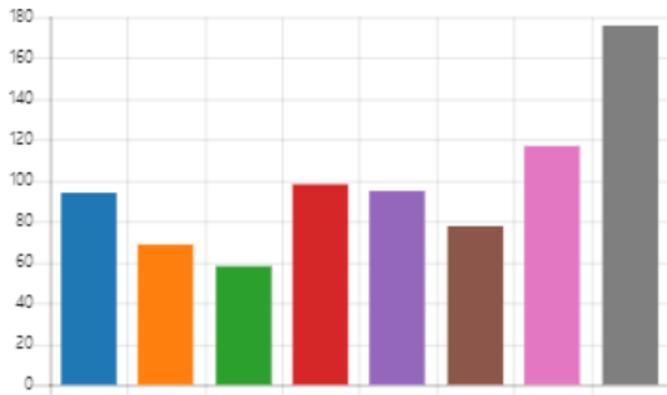
Stevensville is the most unique of the communities' survey regarding education levels. There is a higher percentage of people who have not finished grade 12 than in any other area of Fort Erie. This could be due to the fact the Stevensville economy is very agricultural, and those working the land are of a more senior age bracket. A few decades ago it was much more valued to know the land, know the equipment, know the technology and know the farming economy than it was to have a degree or diploma. This may explain the difference.

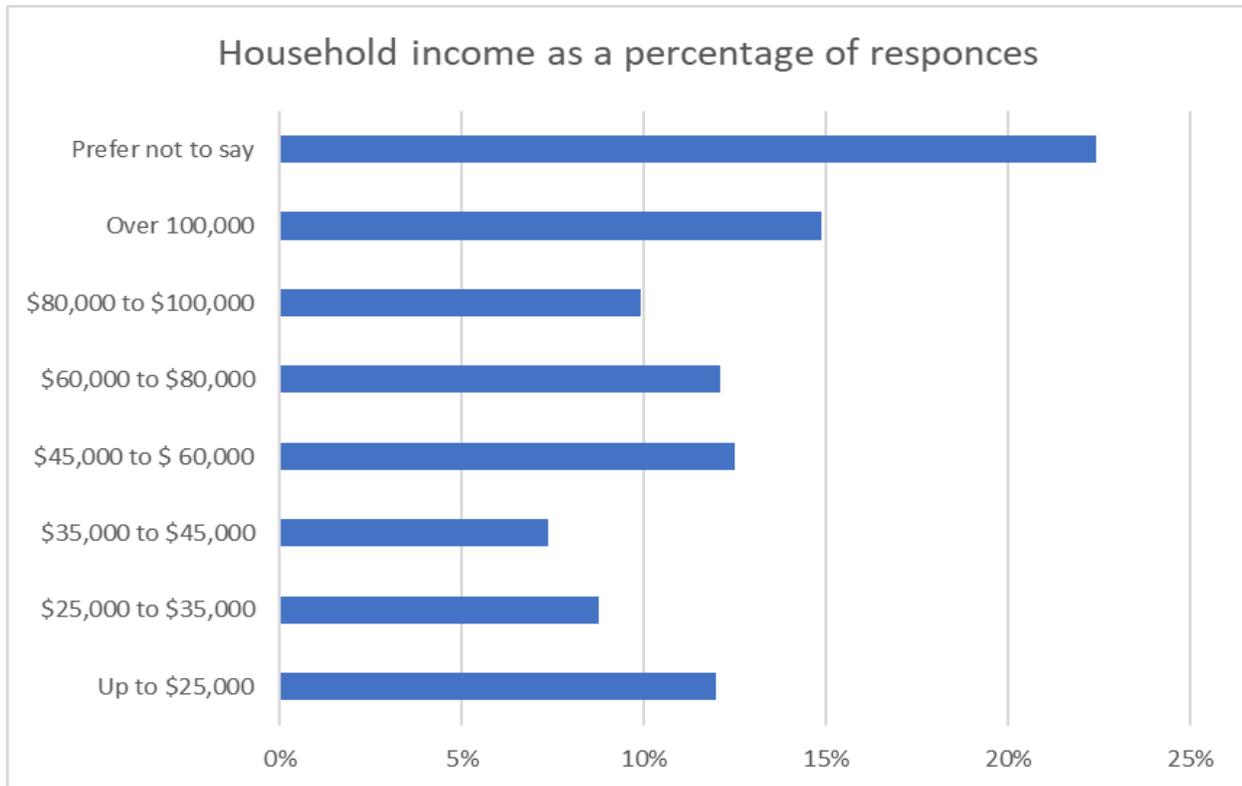


4. Annual Household Income Level?

[More Details](#)

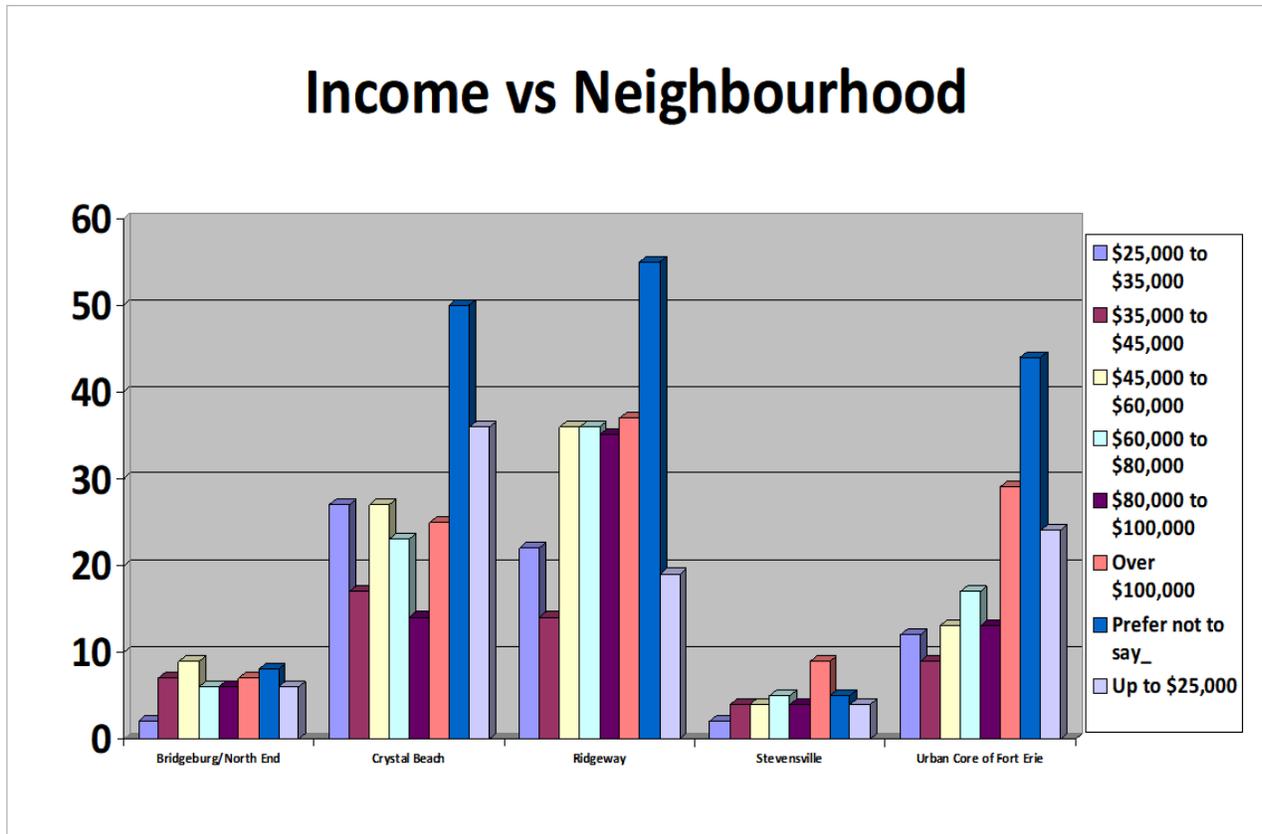
● Up to \$25,000	94
● \$25,000 to \$35,000	69
● \$35,000 to \$45,000	58
● \$45,000 to \$60,000	98
● \$60,000 to \$80,000	95
● \$80,000 to \$100,000	78
● Over \$100,000	117
● Prefer not to say.	176





It was interesting to find that the survey results indicate that there is a fairly even distribution of responses from people from various income levels. A significant proportion of people did report as “Prefer not to say” however this is not uncommon. People prefer not to say for a variety of reasons such as shame for low income, fear of judgment for high income or fear of the survey results becoming linked to individuals instead of being anonymous.

Of those that did report, 21% are below the poverty line if single, and 37% are if they have dependents. Twenty percent of the respondents earn over \$80,000 annually, leaving about 40% of Fort Erie in the lower to middle-income bracket. This makes sense if one looks at some of the economic challenges the Town has had as manufacturing across Ontario left. Gentrified areas have attracted more senior people who hold the balance of wealth and can find good deals on land, housing, and services.



Since income is a determinant of health, it behooves those considering the location of the Hub to consider a social health lens and thus consider income versus neighbourhood. Crystal Beach is an interesting result wherein the majority of people live below the poverty line or just above it, yet there is a significant population of those reporting over \$100,000 annually. Those familiar with the community would not be surprised. There are many significant properties located on or near the beach that are worth well above the housing average and yet the downtown core has abandoned buildings, buildings in various stages of repair and small winterized cottages on small parcels of land.

The Urban Core is next in terms of vulnerability, yet once again we see a significant pocket of folks reporting over \$100,000 annually. This speaks to affordable housing and the beginning of the gentrification of some neighbourhoods. Ridgeway has a significant proportion of residents reporting living under or just above the poverty line which again goes against some populist conclusions. Ridgeway also is home to million-dollar mansions and winterized cottages still heating with wood. They do however have a higher percentage of residents reporting in the middle-class area. Stevensville bucks the trend of income connected to education as those earning \$100,000 and above annually is the number one result. The North End has perhaps the most evenly distributed results.

Based upon these results, one can see that there is diversity even in each of the studied communities. It is also apparent that if one was to choose a location based on lower incomes (and thus more investment required to offset negative consequences), Crystal Beach would be first and Ridgeway second with the Urban Core third.

5. Residency Status?

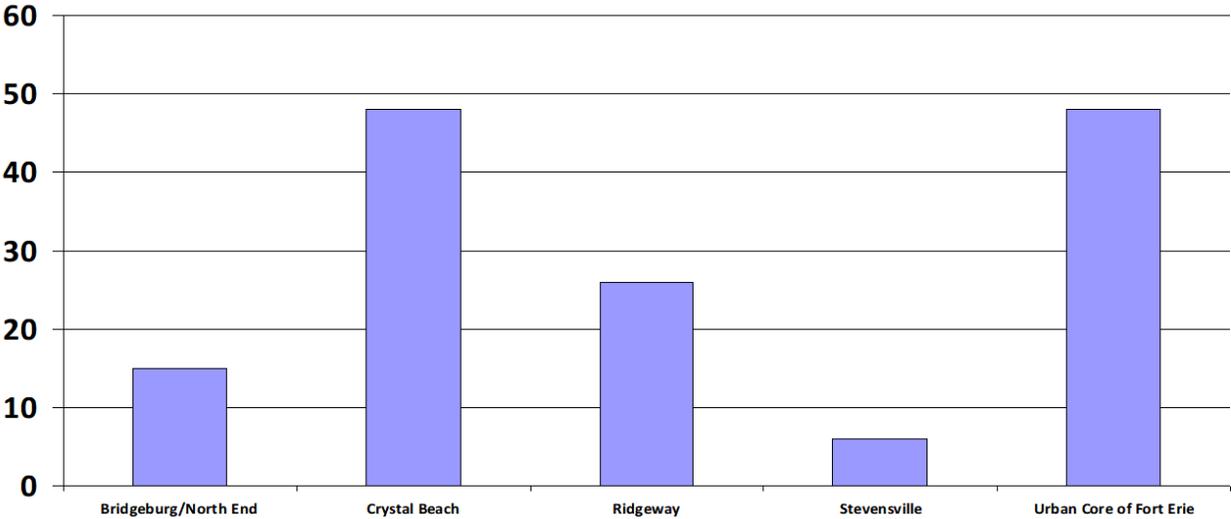
[More Details](#)

● Renter	157
● Home Owner	587
● Seasonal Resident	21
● Other	30



The following chart shows the residency status in the greater Fort Erie area as a 74% homeownership rate 20% rental rate, 4% another rate (living with parents etc.) and 3% seasonal resident rate. As expected, the majority of renters are in Crystal Beach and the Urban Core. This is significant in regard to social determinants of health in that those that are renting are much more precariously housed than homeowners. Housing is also an important issue in Niagara with rental vacancy rates below 1%, and those hoping for subsidized housing being on waiting lists that are over a decade long. Social housing in Fort Erie is even more stressed than the regional averages which have led the Mayor and Council to put this issue high on their agenda for the upcoming term.

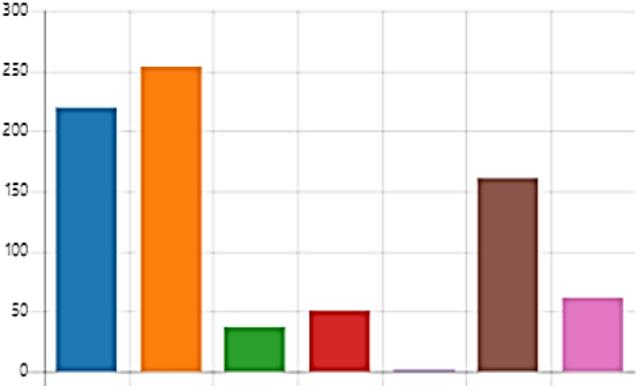
Number of Renters vs Neighbourhood

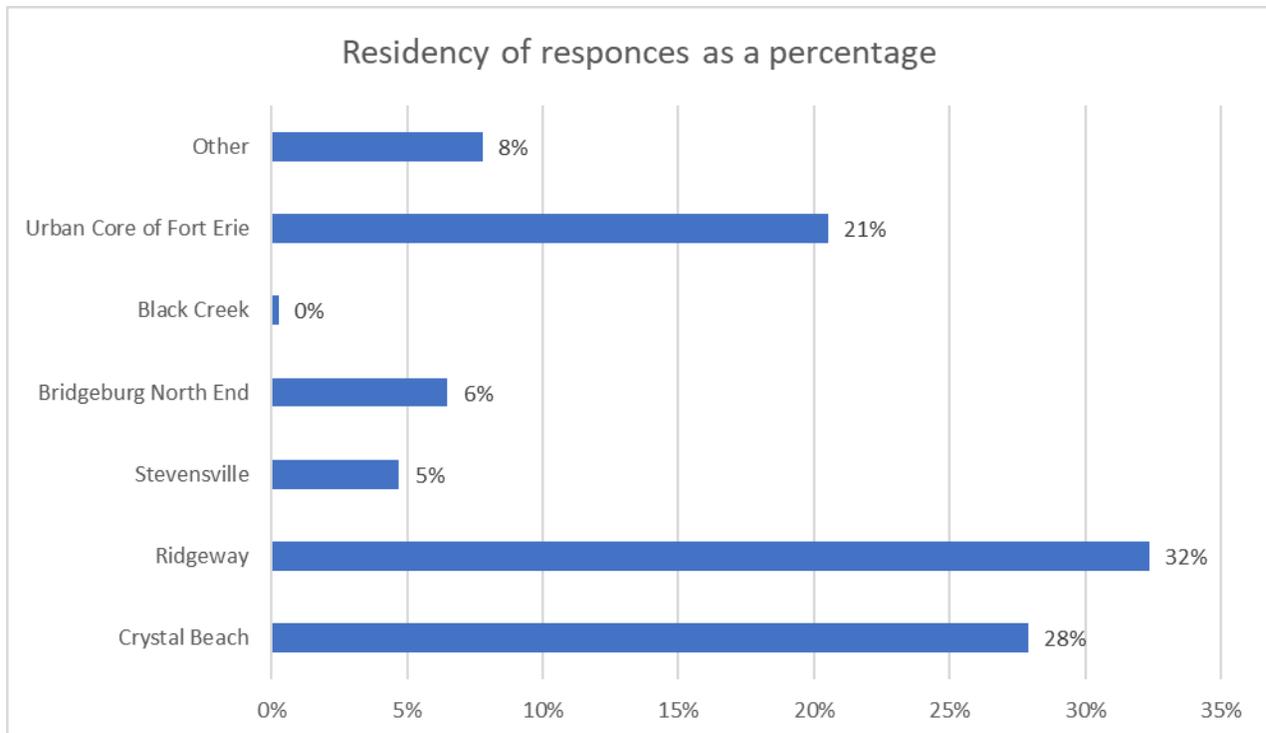


6. Residency Location?

[More Details](#)

Crystal Beach	219
Ridgeway	254
Stevensville	37
Bridgeburg/North End	51
Black Creek	2
Urban Core of Fort Erie	161
Other	61



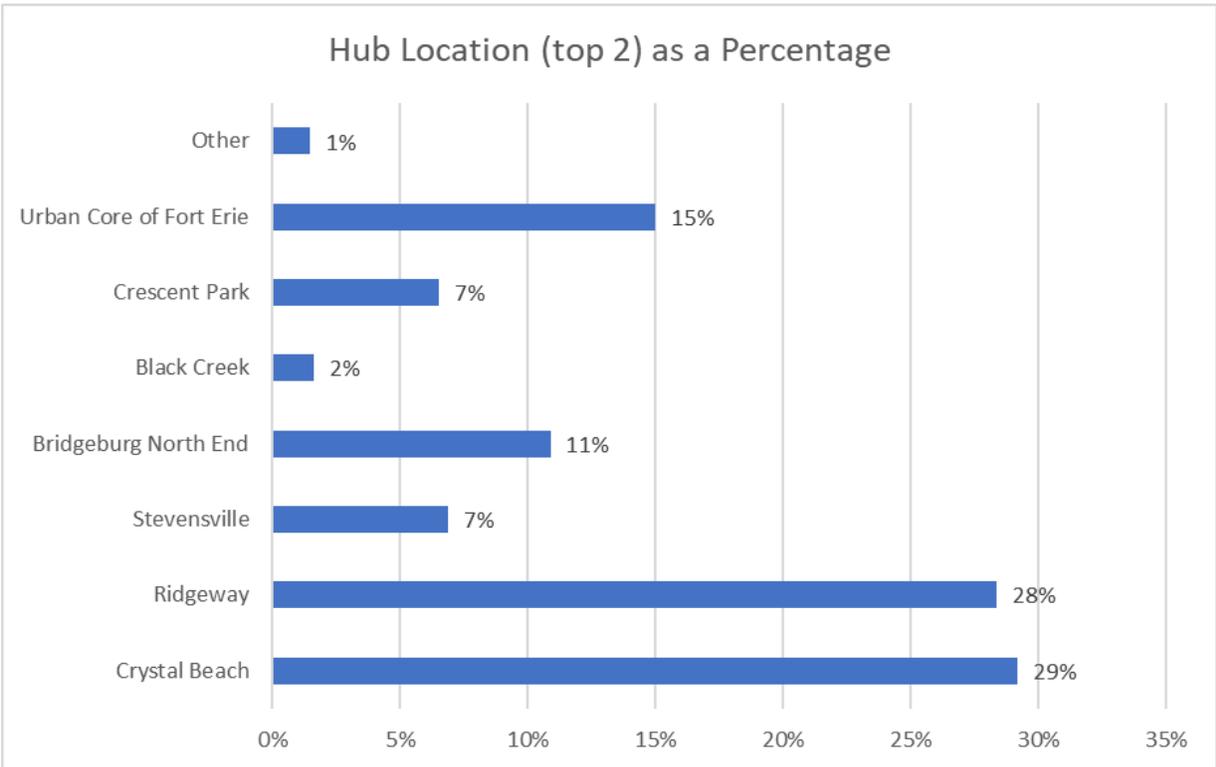
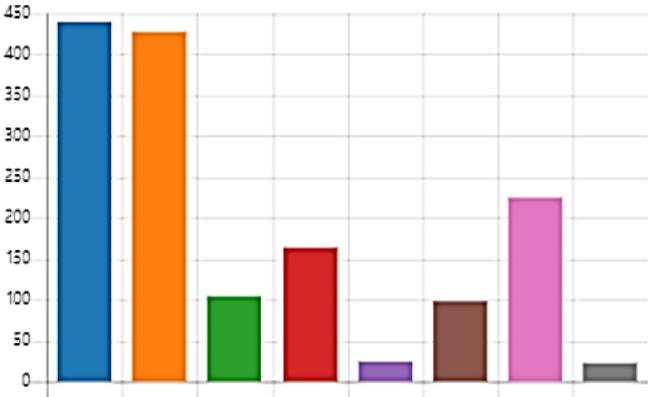


Most of the survey respondents live in either Ridgeway, Crystal Beach or the Urban Core. Although the equal effort was put into being available for each community, it must be recognized that two of the three the Steering Committee agencies are in Ridgeway and Crystal Beach, and their volunteers were tireless in drumming up responses. It should be noted however that without such support, the Urban Core reported almost as much as Crystal Beach. It should also be noted that best practices for community Hub initiatives mention the need for community synergy in order to bring such a project to fruition. Any of these three neighbourhoods appear to have enough interest to support some type of social innovation.

7. Please check the top 2 areas you believe would most benefit from a Community Hub

[More Details](#)

● Crystal Beach	439
● Ridgeway	427
● Stevensville	104
● Bridgeburg/North End	164
● Black Creek	25
● Crescent Park	98
● Urban Core of Fort Erie	226
● Other	22



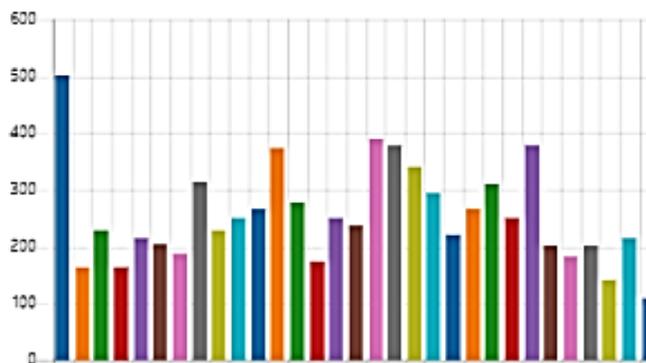
The survey purposefully asked respondents to choose the top TWO neighbourhoods that need a Hub because of the natural human tendency to only have a personal perspective. Therefore, two responses end up as statistically blended and give the reader a perspective that is Fort Erie wide as opposed to just neighbourhood specific. The results confirm the narrative responses that have been heard. Fort Erie West does not have the density of services like other areas of Fort Erie, and it has not had a

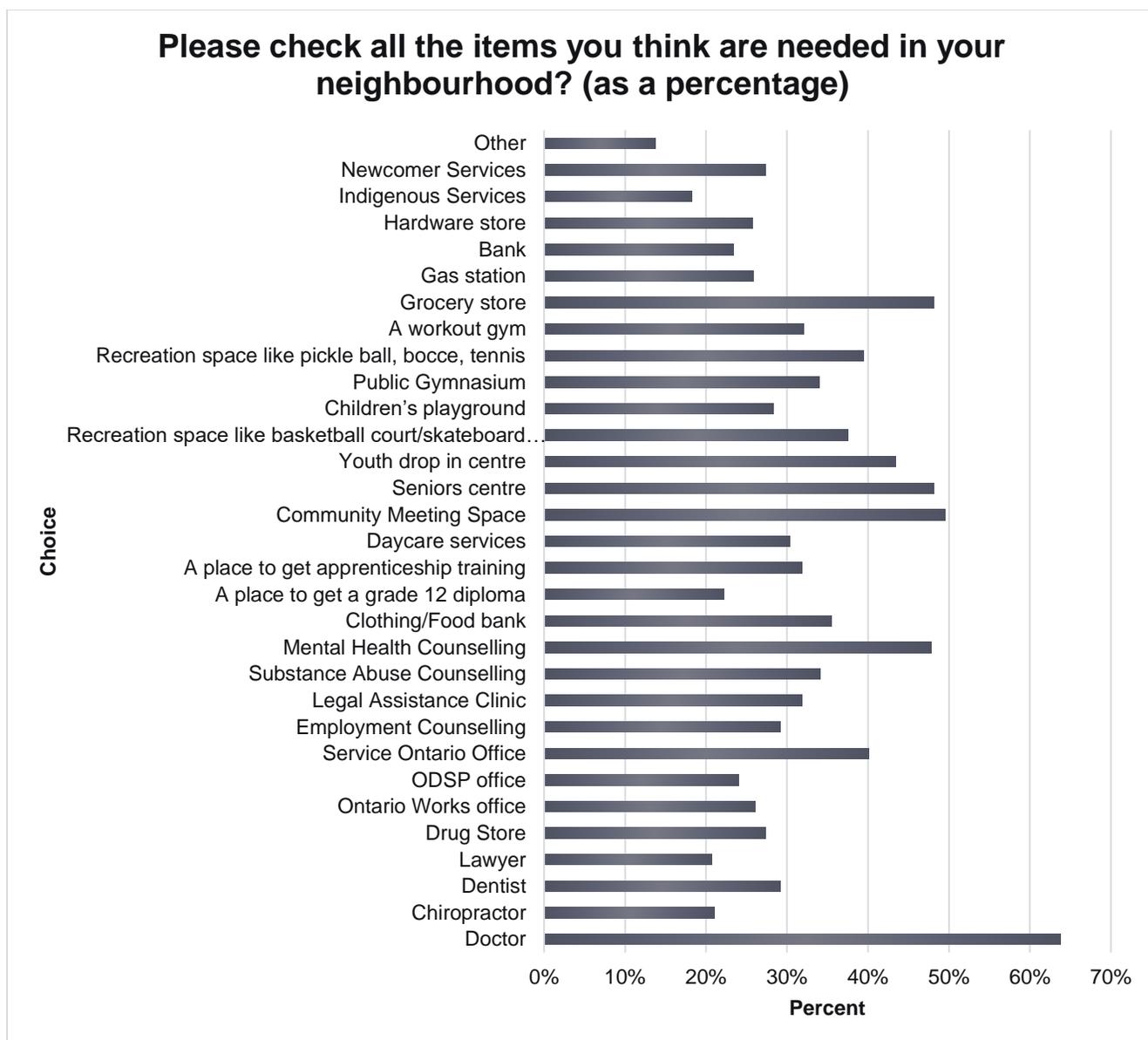
significant municipal social investment in a while. Additionally, narrative responses support the assertion that there are pockets of citizens in Fort Erie West that require more concerted social supports. Thus it is not surprising that the results show that Ridgeway and Crystal Beach are tied for location choice, with the Urban Core being third. If Crescent Park and the North End were rolled into the Urban Core, there would be an argument for locating a Hub in an area accessible to all three communities.

8. Please check all the items you think are needed in your neighbourhood.

More Details

● Doctor	501
● Chiropractor	165
● Dentist	229
● Lawyer	163
● Drug Store	215
● Ontario Works office	205
● ODSP office	189
● Service Ontario Office	315
● Employment Counselling	229
● Legal Assistance Clinic	250
● Substance Abuse Counselling	268
● Mental Health Counselling	375
● Clothing/Food bank	279
● A place to get a grade 12 dipl...	174
● A place to get apprenticeship ...	250
● Daycare services	238
● Community Meeting Space	389
● Seniors centre	378
● Youth drop in centre	341
● Recreation space like basketb...	295
● Children's playground	222
● Public Gymnasium	267
● Recreation space like pickle b...	310
● A workout gym	252
● Grocery store	378
● Gas station	203
● Bank	184
● Hardware store	202
● Indigenous Services	143
● Newcomer Services	215
● Other	108





Question 8 was purposely formatted to allow respondents to choose as many services as they wanted for a Hub in their community. A mix of professional services, social services, recreation services, and commercial services were listed in an attempt to plumb possible service gaps in Fort Erie. The exercise of allowing unlimited choice also psychologically prepares respondents for the follow-up questions which are “forced choice assessment” style, and often provoke frustration if the full expression is not found within the survey. The results provide some interesting thoughts that merit further investigation such as;

- The doctor being the number 1 choice. Recent studies by the Town indicate that there is a need for up to eight more family practitioners in order to have all citizens on a roster, so this response is not a surprise. Health care is the priority

issue for the majority of Ontario residents. What does merit further investigation is understanding if it is a doctor or a nurse practitioner or urgent care or fear of aging that drives this response? Many doctors are now setting up practice with ancillary services that can deal with “medical” needs that may not require a doctor all the time. Regardless, a Hub with medical services would be welcome anywhere in Fort Erie.

- A desire for community meeting space. As referenced in the literature review, Hubs become focal points for a community, so the response to “community meeting space” covers much more than just a board room with a table and chairs. Rural Ontario used to gather at places of worship for spirituality but also community connectivity and support. These institutions are in decline and the cultural diversity of Ontario no longer makes them a comfortable place for those of other spiritual/philosophical persuasions. Schools are rural Ontario became the next community focal point for everyone, with the building being used by many groups and extended family welcomed into the classrooms. Child safety and liability issues have impacted this trend as well as the closing and amalgamation of low enrollment in rural schools. If a community is urban, the new meeting spaces tend to be retail malls however this is not an option for rural Fort Erie. Thus it is significant that 50% of respondents feel a need to connect.
- A seniors centre and a youth drop-in centre were close in ranking. The need for more seniors supports was clear from visits to the Beachcombers and Garrison Place. Both are bursting at the seams and could use more space. What was not evident until the survey is the strong desire for a youth drop-in centre. The YMCA/Leisureplex is located about two kilometres from the Urban Core and quite a distance from west Fort Erie. Thus this demand is likely from communities that are further away from those community assets.
- A grocery store is the fourth highest request. There is definitely a food desert in much of Fort Erie. All the shopping is concentrated along two kilometres of Garrison Road aside from a small grocery store in Ridgeway. Narrative information reveals that those with transportation issues regularly must shop at variety stores which do not stock fresh healthy choices and are expensive. Only the Urban Core has access to competitively priced healthy food. This may indicate opportunities for private/public partnerships at a Hub wherein the private anchor tenant pays retail square footage rent and service agencies to pay a lower social rate.
- Mental Health counselling was requested by 48% of respondents. If you couple this with 34% requesting substance abuse counselling, it becomes clear that the residents of the Town are grappling with many issues and need help. Loneliness and depression are often the drivers for people who seek a doctor, so addressing the mental health concerns of the residents would alleviate much of the burden

on doctors and the overworked health care system. The Province of Ontario has just announced a major increase in funding for mental health initiatives, so it may behoove the Steering Committee to work with mental health professionals to facilitate a significant increase in services locally.

- A Service Ontario office. Narrative clarification of this answer reveals real frustration by 40% of respondents with technology and red tape. Many government services have transitioned to online and automated modalities to reduce delivery costs. “Why can’t I just talk to a real person?” was the general refrain that was heard from interviews. Some respondents wanted services that do not get delivered from Service Ontario however they did not know that. What they did know is that navigating the system is difficult. Interviews with Human Services Providers show that there are actually a lot of services in Fort Erie, however community profile and interagency connectivity are low. Best practices for community hubs show that the most important staff person that should be hired is a receptionist that is actually a community navigator. This staff person is trained to know the services available, the process for accessing services and contact information to initiate services. If done well, this staff person almost single-handedly can make the Hub a real centre for community connectivity.
- Clothing/Foodbank was desired by 36% of respondents. This indicates there is an opportunity for an anchor tenant in the Salvation Army who are currently operating out of a church basement. A loading dock and some storage space built into the Hub would assist this important service in delivering more effectively and widely in Fort Erie, and partnering is possible with agencies like Advancing Crystal Beach who are doing this good work once again in tight spaces provided by supportive churches.
- Indigenous services are requested by 18% of respondents. This is significant because the Census has only 3-4% of people self-reporting as Indigenous in Fort Erie. Those that work with that community like the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre know that number is much higher, and the results confirm that. Fort Erie is located between two large Haudenashone First Nations in the USA and the largest Haudenashone First Nation in Ontario which is Six Nations of the Grand River. Therefore, there is a significant amount of visiting, relocation and residency in nearby Fort Erie by Indigenous families. Any community Hub in Fort Erie needs to recognize this large population and ensure services are available.

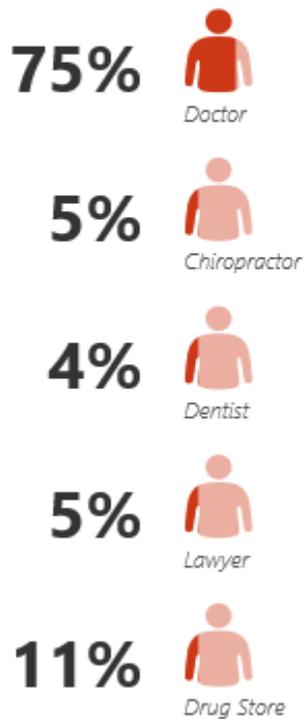
9. Please check the most important item you think is needed at a Community Hub in your neighbourhood

[More Details](#)

● Doctor	591
● Chiropractor	39
● Dentist	33
● Lawyer	37
● Drug Store	85

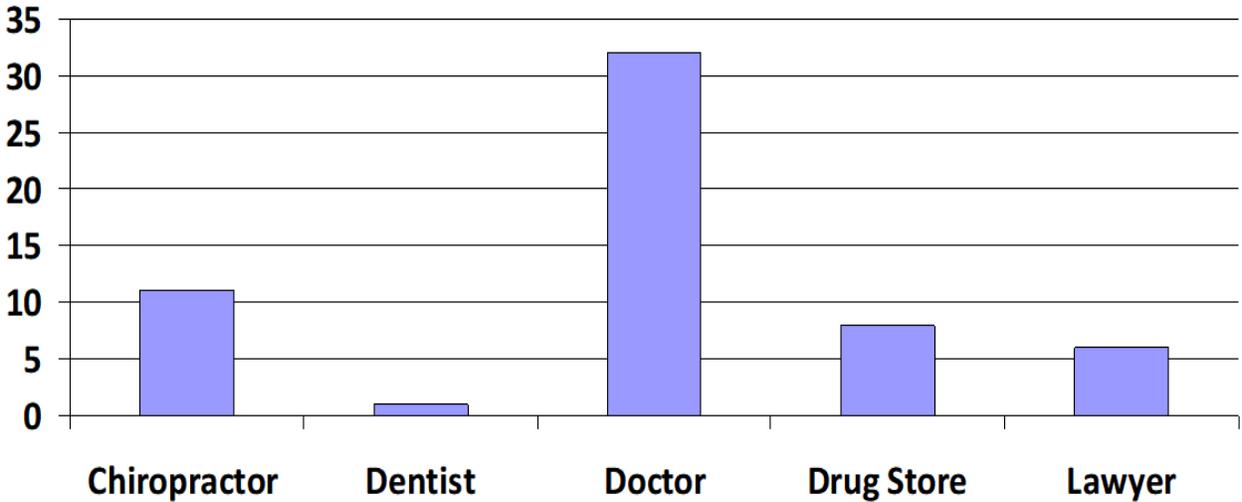


QUESTION 9 AS A %

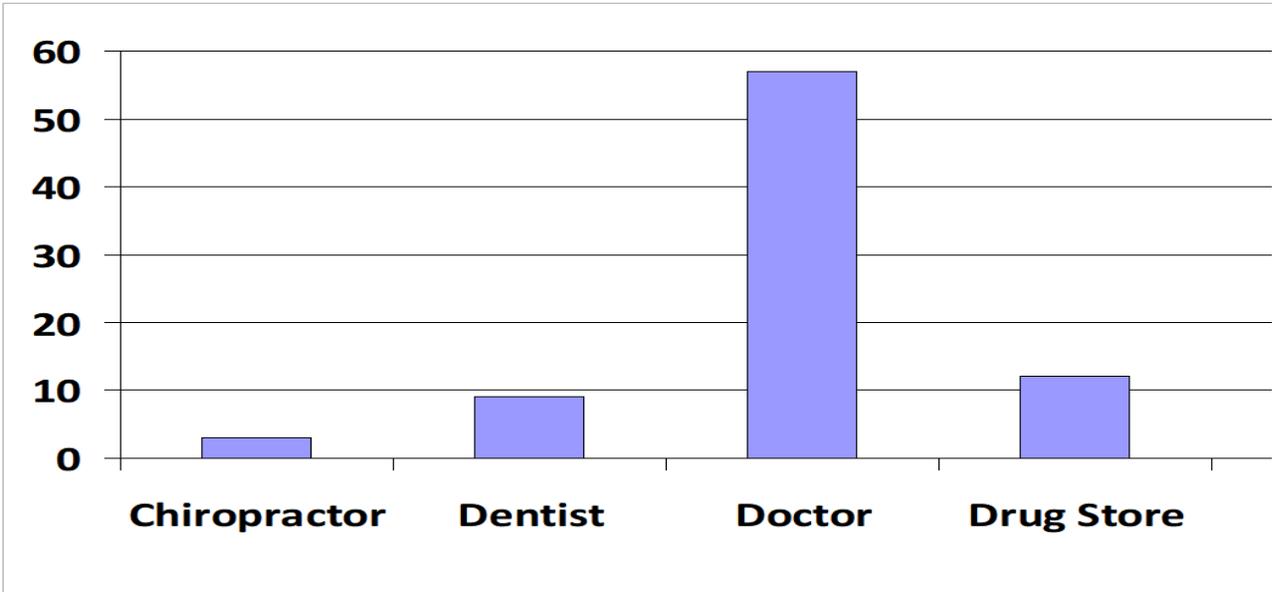


This is the first of the forced choice questions that groups professional services together. The doctor was the runaway favorite and it did not change with age group, education, income, gender or location. The following charts confirm that from all five filters. A drug store was the second highest response for most filters. This may point to the concentration of shopping in the Urban Core however considering there are some independent drug stores in the west that deliver, it may indicate a desire for a meeting place. For example, seniors discount day at the larger drug stores is often a social and recreational outing for older folks with few other networking opportunities. This is a common event at urban retail malls.

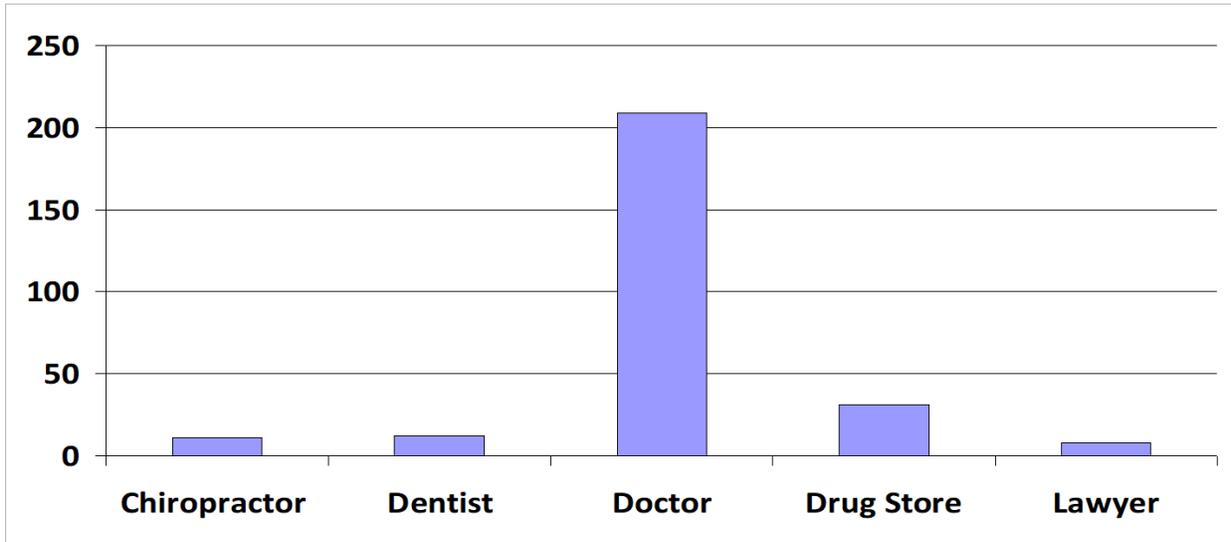
Question 9 Ages 0-19 Preferences



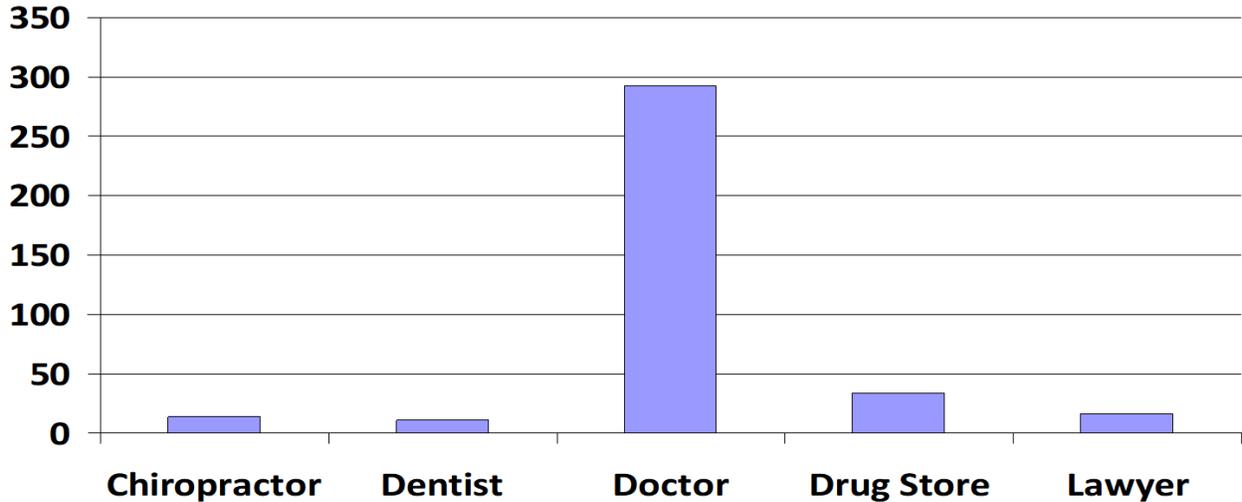
Question 9 Ages 20-39



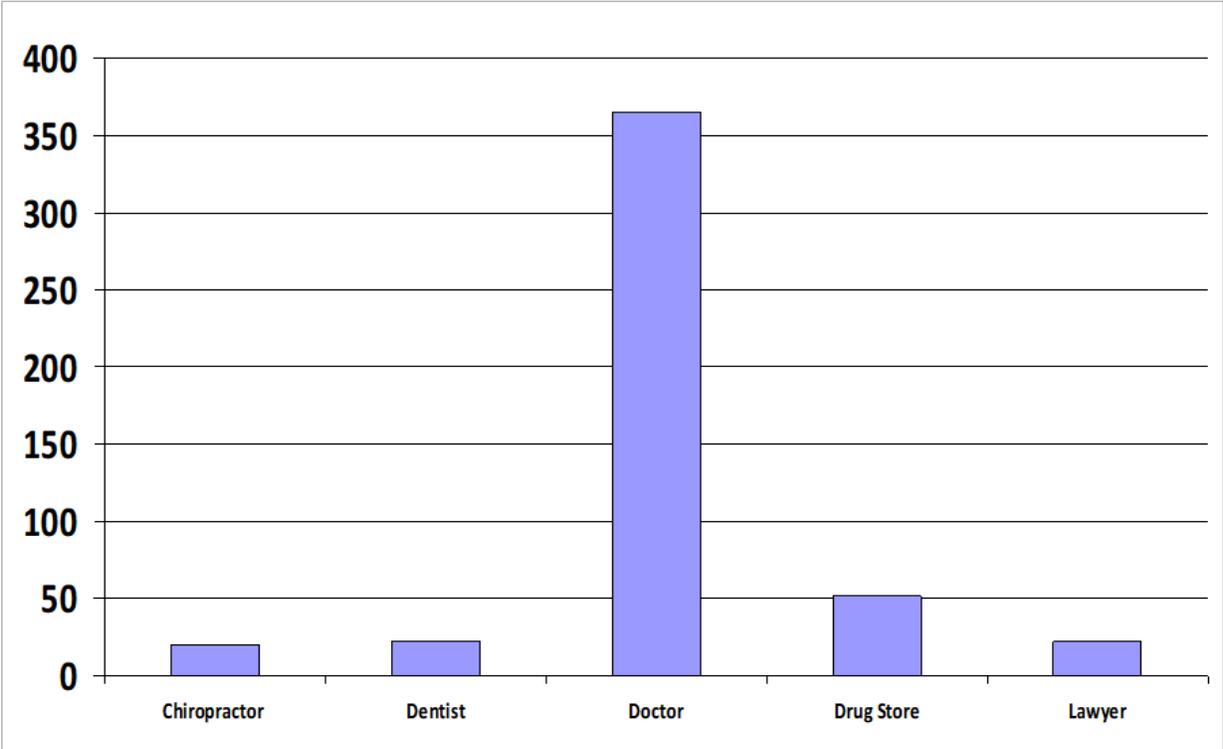
Question 9 Ages 40-59



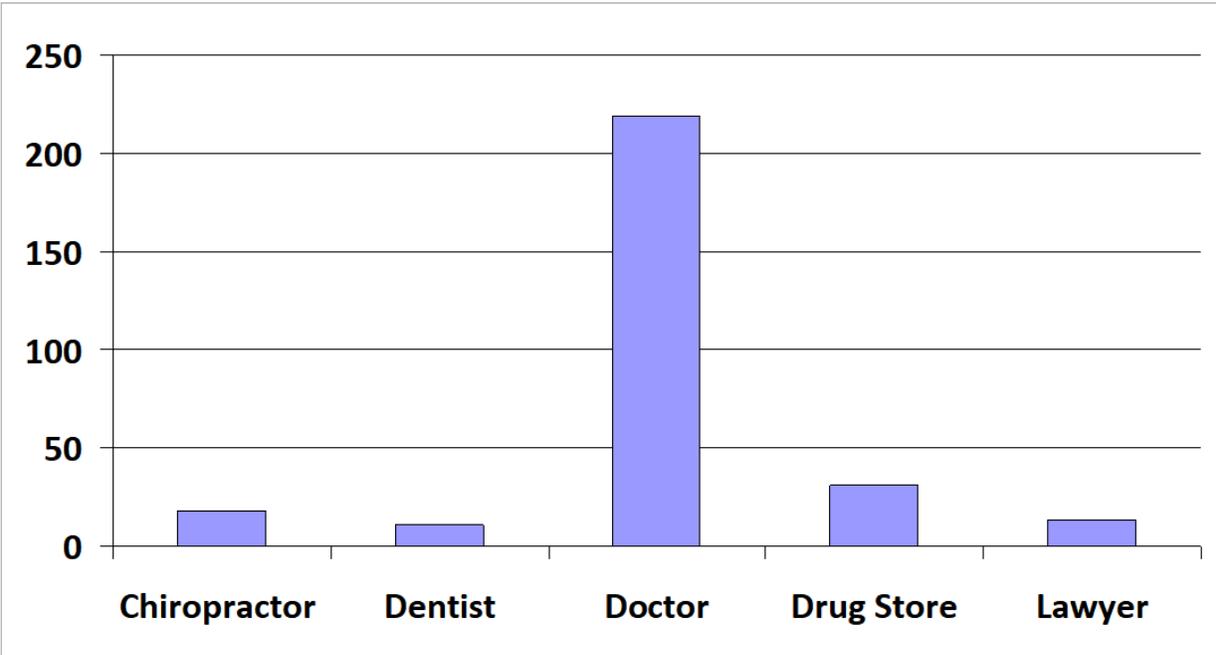
Question 9 Ages 60+ Preferences



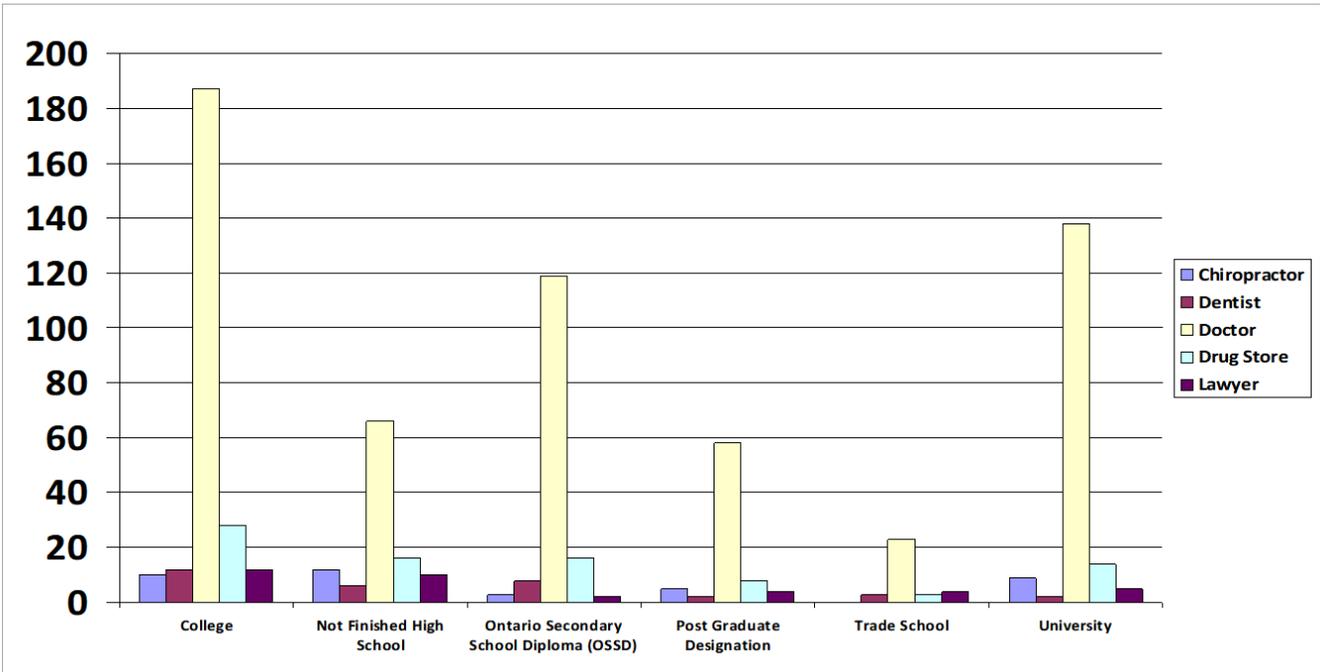
Question 9 Gender Preferences Female



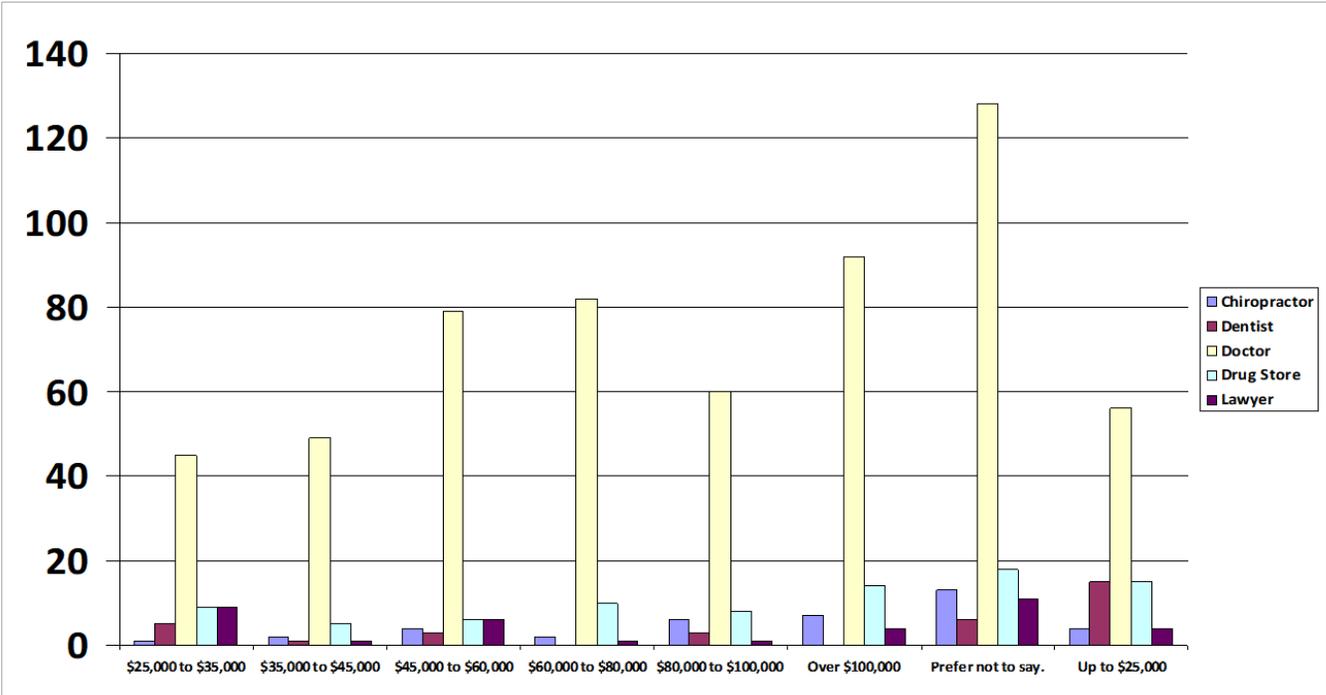
Question 9 Gender Preferences Male



Question 9 Education Preferences



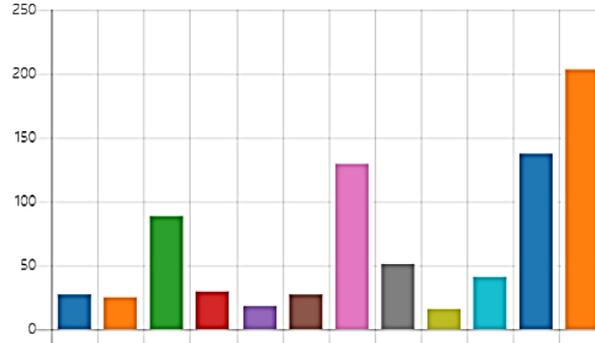
Question 9 Income Preferences



10. Please check the most important item you think is needed at a Community Hub in your neighbourhood

[More Details](#)

● Ontario Works office	27
● ODSP office	25
● Service Ontario Office	89
● Employment Counselling	29
● Legal Assistance Clinic	18
● Substance Abuse Counselling	27
● Mental Health Counselling	130
● Clothing/Food bank	51
● A place to get a grade 12 dipl...	16
● A place to get apprenticeship ...	41
● Geared to income housing	137
● Seniors housing	203

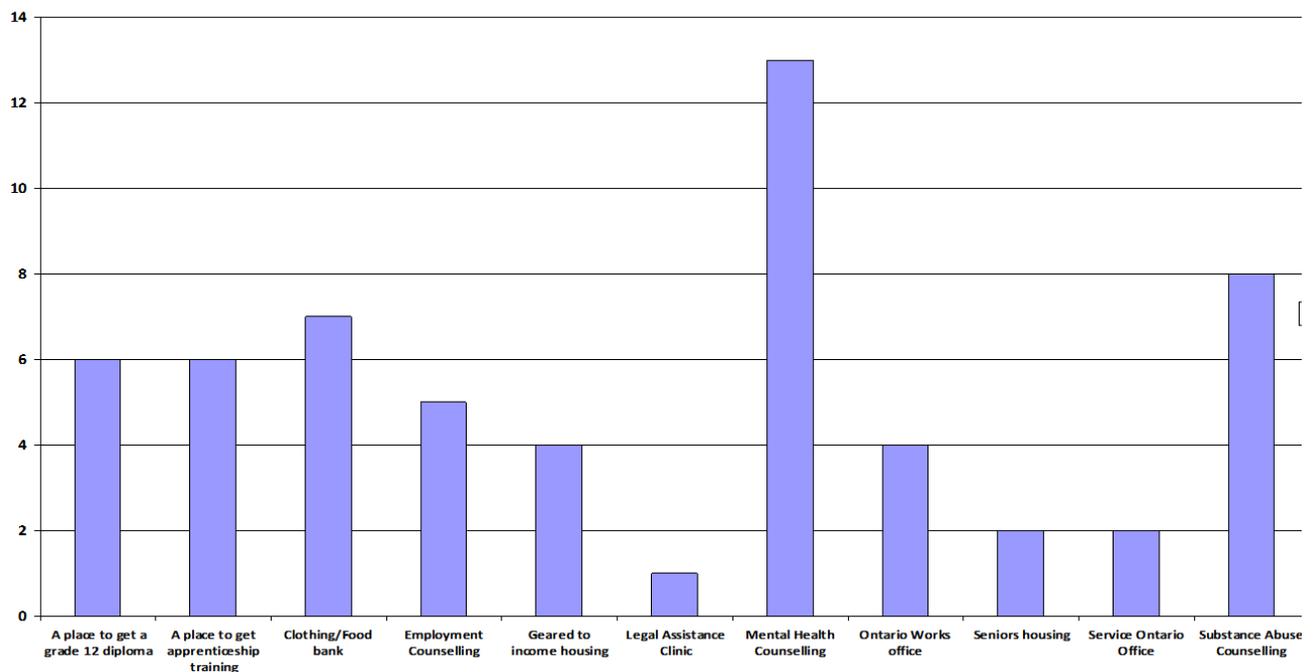


QUESTION 10 AS A %



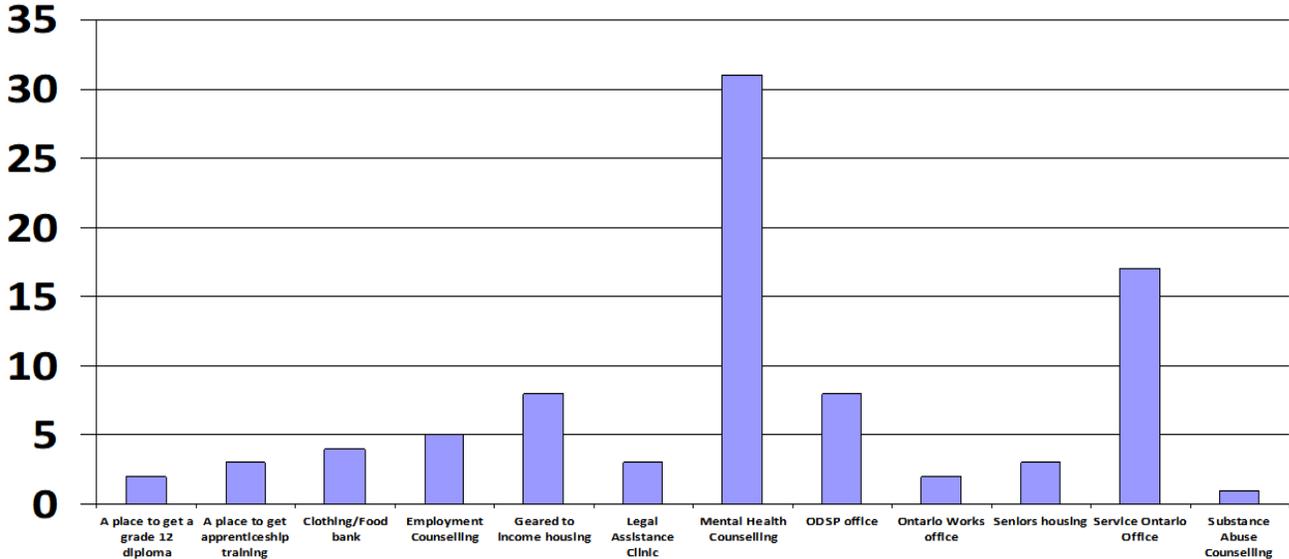
The second forced choice question groups common social service needs together to try to find the priorities. Seniors housing geared to income housing and mental health counselling are the overall highest requests. This speaks to the aforementioned rental crisis in the entire Niagara Region. The Mayor and Council have housing as a priority issue so if the Hub can be part of the solution, it is expected that there should be support in all corners. Requests for mental health counselling are consistently high among all age brackets, from youth to seniors.

Question 10 Preferences Age 0-19



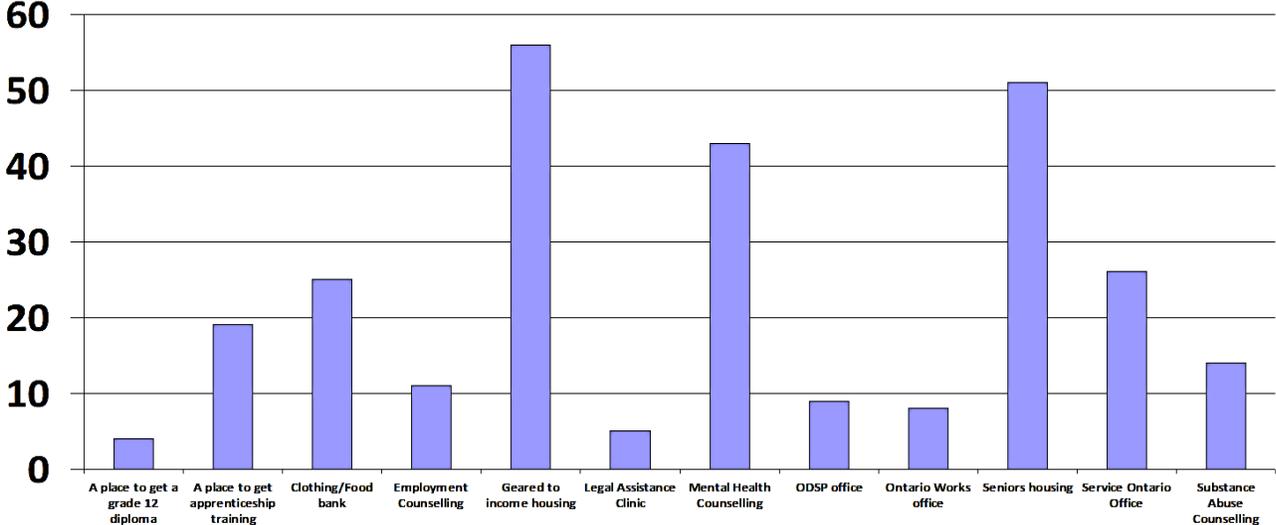
The youth who responded were most concerned about mental health and substance abuse supports. It is not surprising that housing is not a priority for this group who live with parents, relatives or are comfortable couch-surfing. This result should be a warning for all involved in social planning for Fort Erie. Somehow, youth are not connecting to the current supports out there or are unaware of them or are wary of them.

Question 10 Preferences Age 20-39

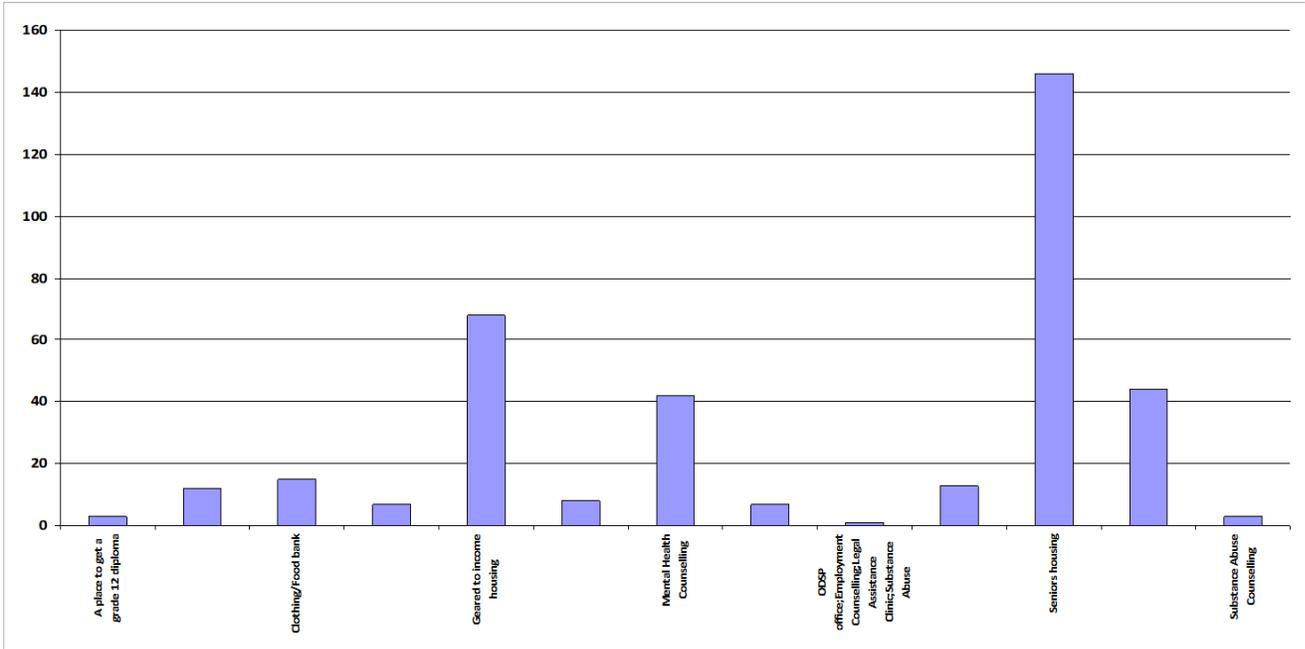


Mental Health counselling tops the priorities of this age group by a wide margin. Government services are next which makes sense for a generation beginning their work and family life. One can see housing stress in this demographic as well.

Question 10 Preferences Age 40-59

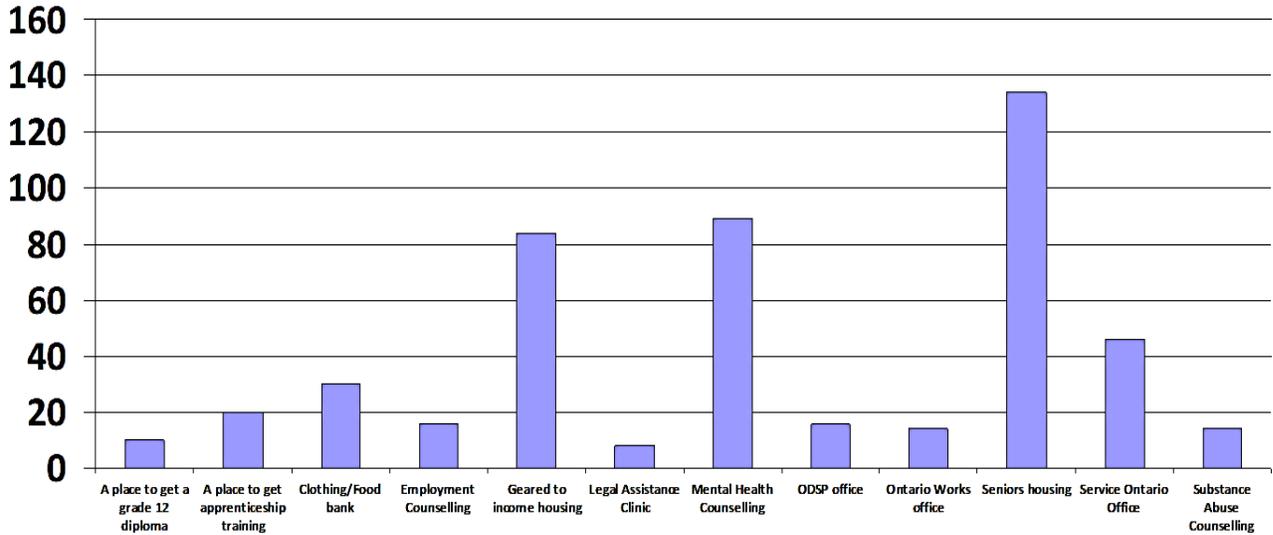


Question 10 Preferences Age 60+

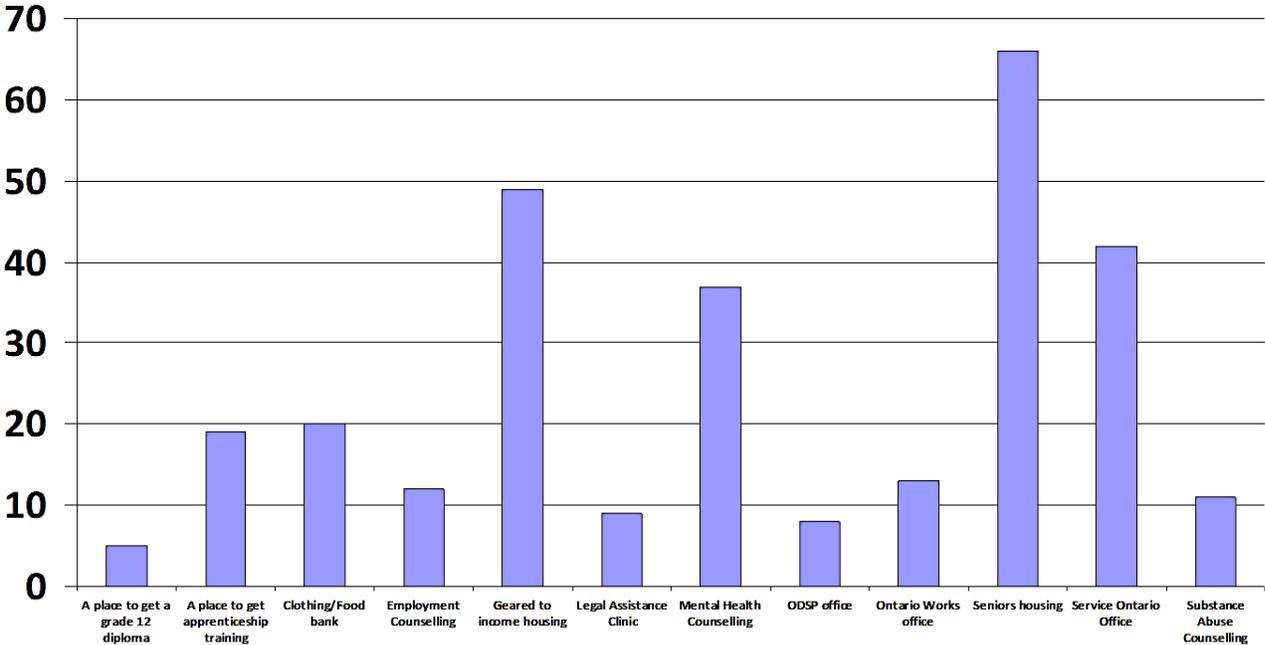


Fort Erie seniors are very concerned about housing and subsidized housing. Mental health counselling also has significant responses.

Question 10 Gender Female

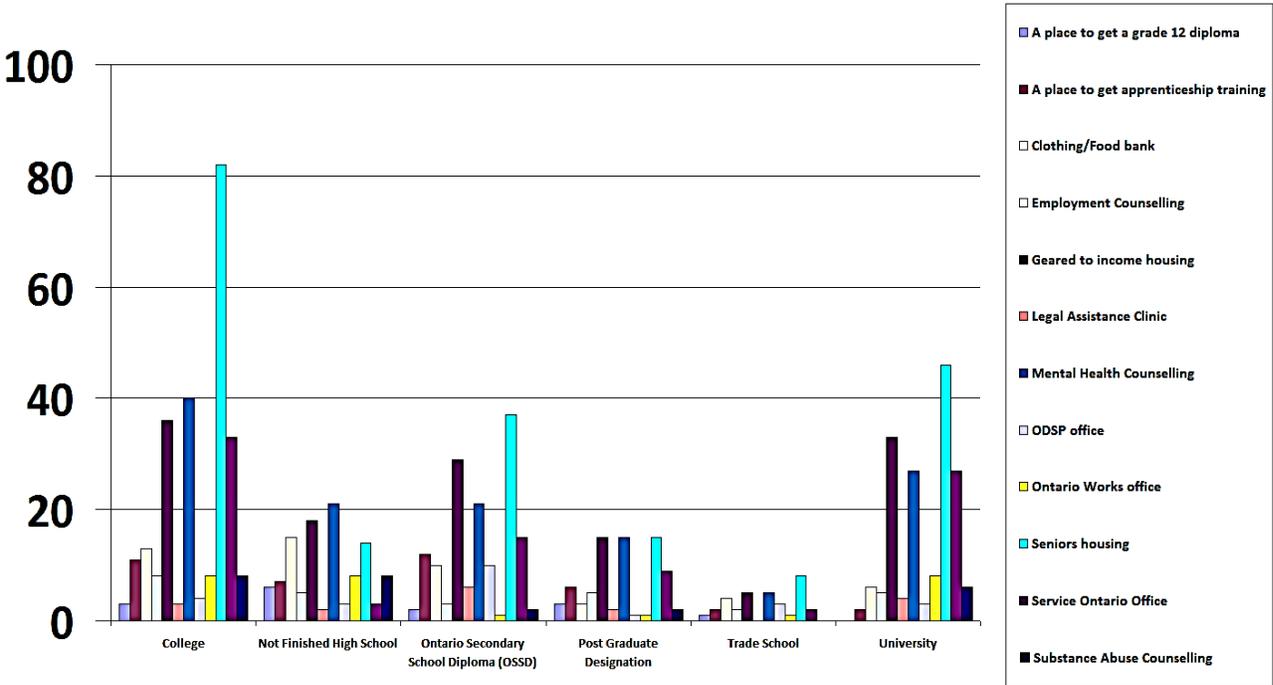


Question 10 Preferences vs Gender Male



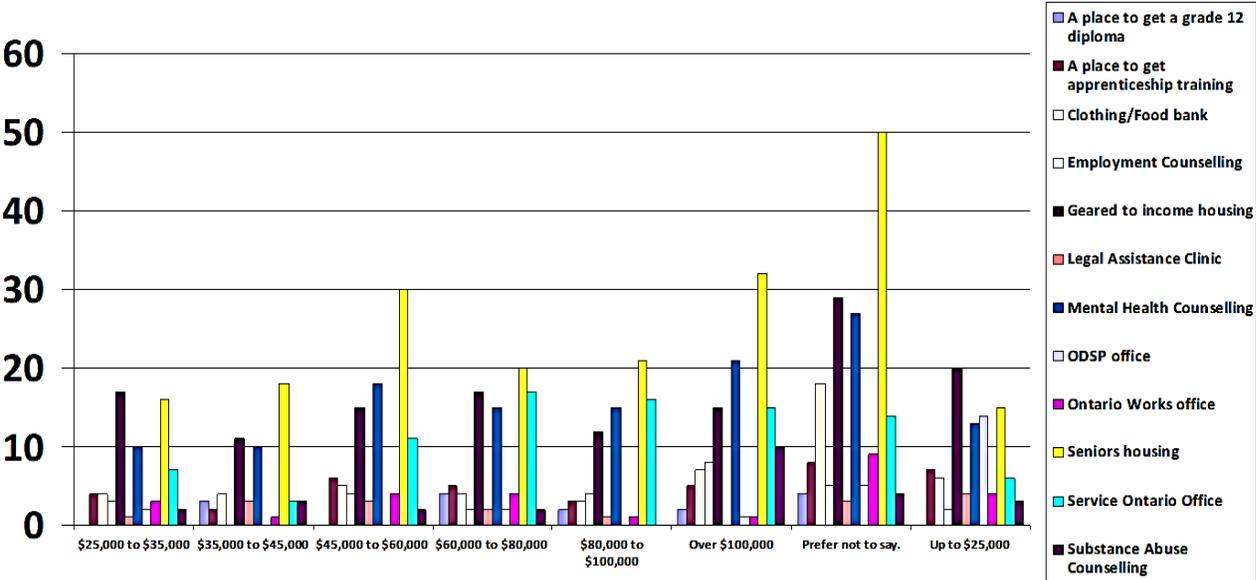
The most significant difference in gender responses is that women are more likely than men to report the need for mental health counselling. Both genders agree on the housing issue. Women also tended to support food/clothing bank more than men. These trends are well supported in research. Men are far less likely to seek any kind of help for physical or mental ailments, and women tend to be more socially conscious while men have a stronger belief in self-reliance.

Question 10 vs Education:



As a reminder of education being a social determinant of health, one can see that mental health counselling is the number one request for those without a high school education, followed by subsidized housing and a food/clothing bank. Seniors housing, subsidized housing and mental health were consistent for the other income levels, and they were also interested in a Service Ontario office (government services).

Question 10 Income:

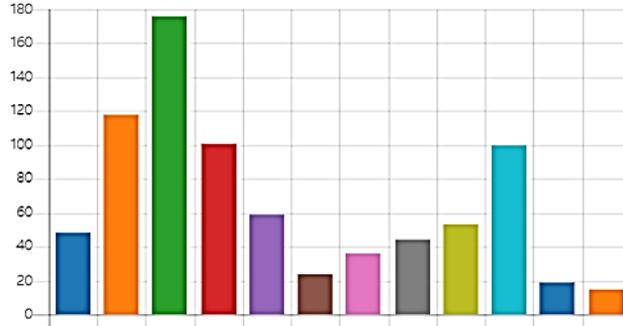


Income is also a social determinant of health and one can see the differences in priorities between the lower and higher income levels. Geared-to-income housing comes before seniors housing although that is second for lower income earners. They also prioritize mental health, ODSP office, and Service Ontario office. As income levels rise, seniors housing is first with a mixture of mental health, geared-to-income, and Service Ontario.

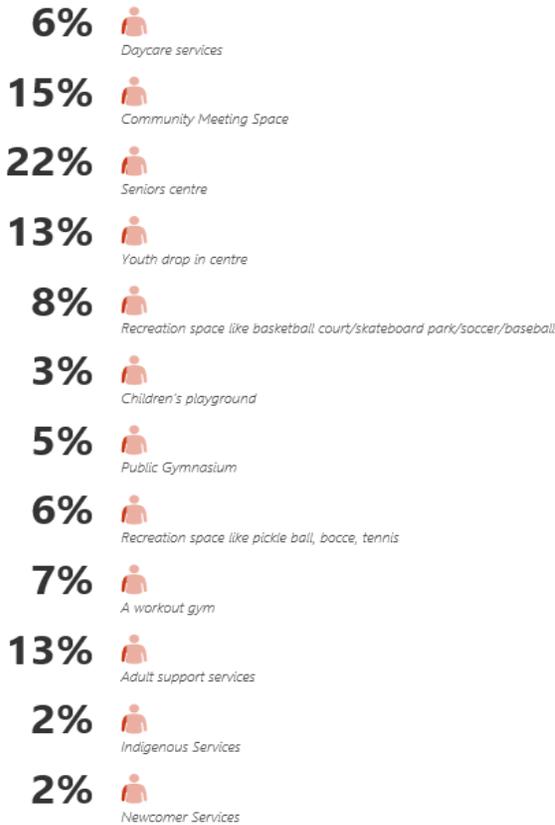
11. Please check the most important item you think is needed at a Community Hub in your neighbourhood

[More Details](#)

● Daycare services	48
● Community Meeting Space	118
● Seniors centre	176
● Youth drop in centre	101
● Recreation space like basketb...	59
● Children's playground	24
● Public Gymnasium	36
● Recreation space like pickle b...	44
● A workout gym	53
● Adult support services	100
● Indigenous Services	19
● Newcomer Services	15

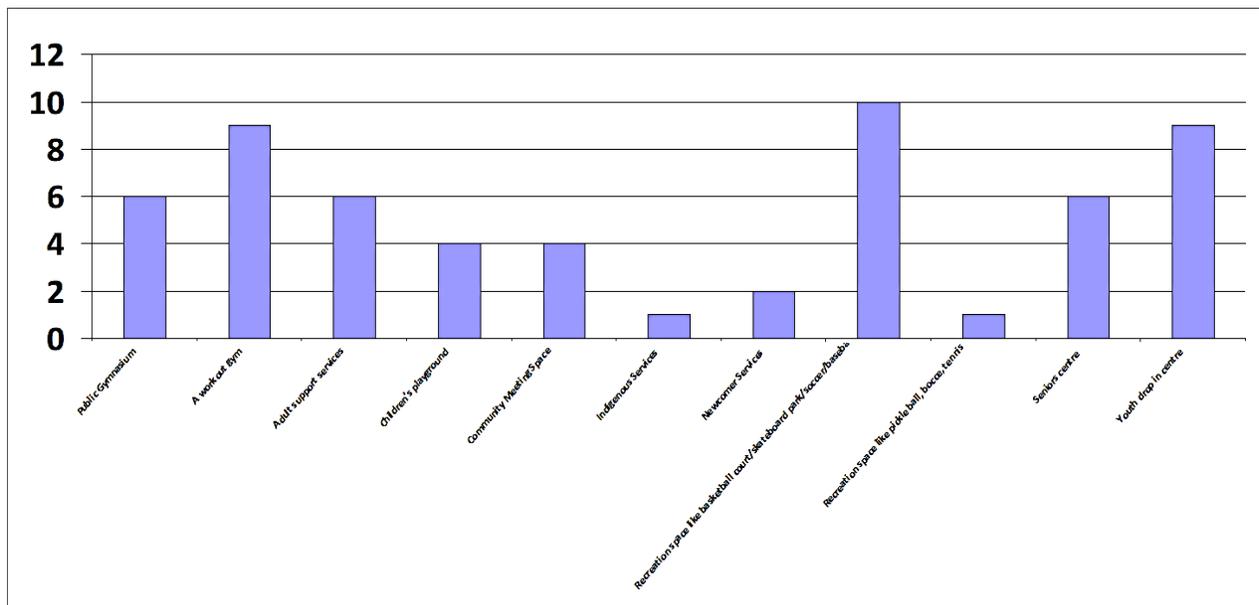


QUESTION 11 AS A %



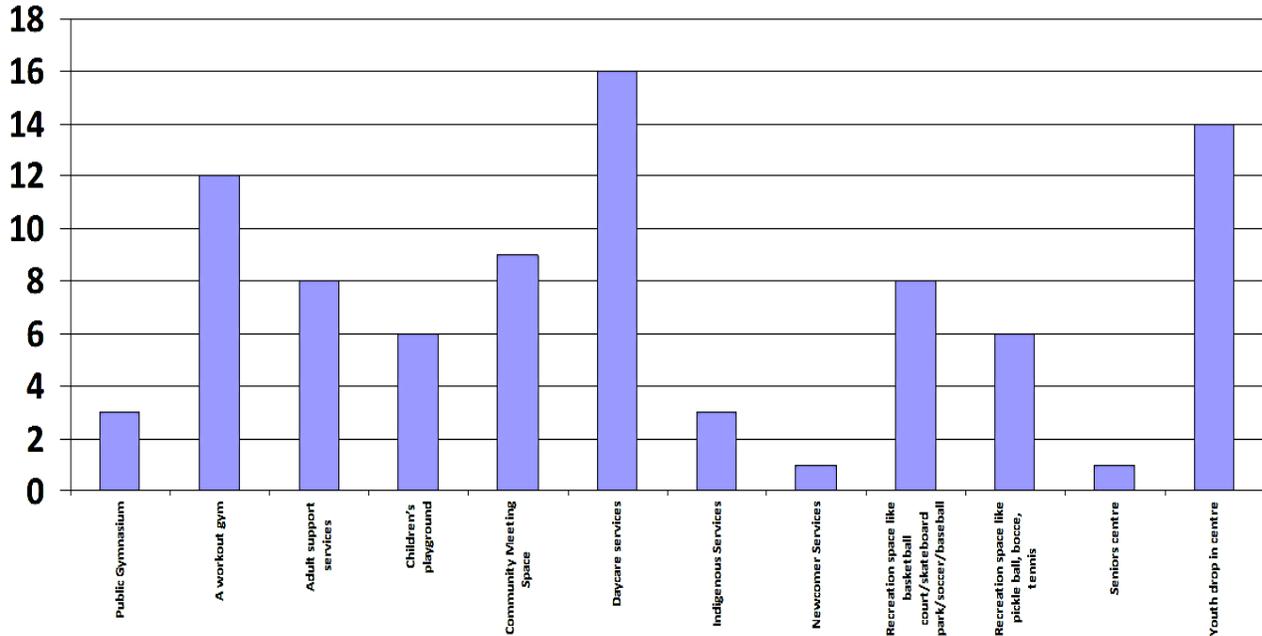
The final forced choice question on the survey groups recreational items together. A seniors' centre, community meeting space, youth drop-in centre and adult support services are the top four choices overall. This seems to be consistent with Question #8. As one filters the answers by age group, the priorities change however the answers are not unexpected.

Question 11 vs Age 0-19



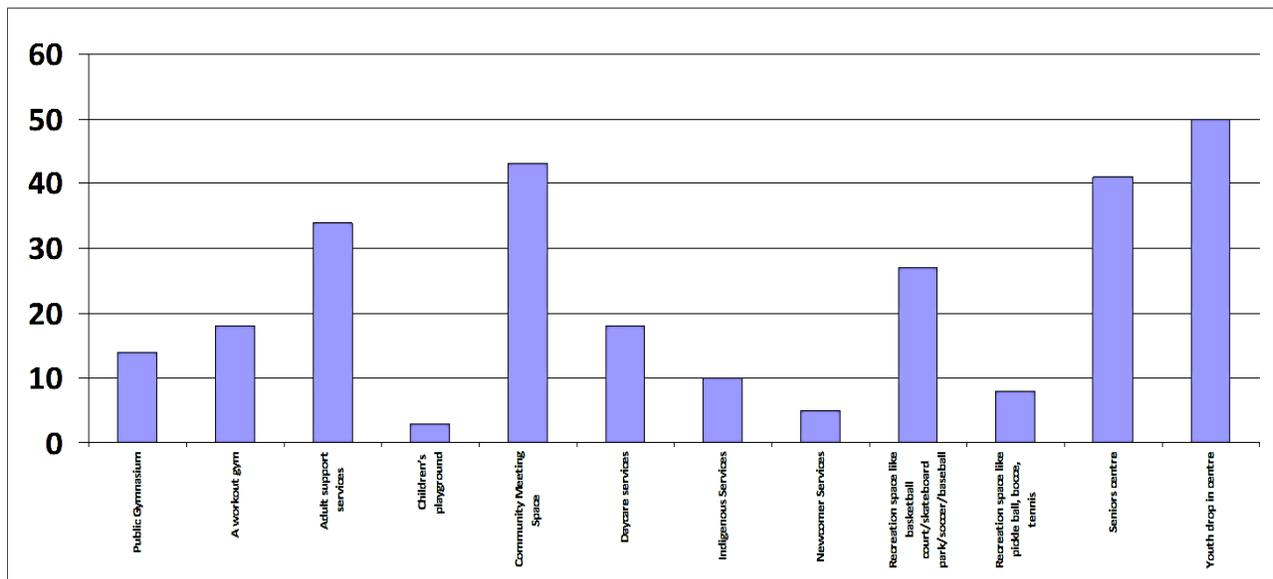
The youth priorities are focussed on outdoor facilities, a drop-in centre and a workout gym. It is interesting to note that the youth also identified adult support services and seniors centre as a priority. It is possible overextended families are asking youth to support their grandparents in various ways whether that be chores or socializing or supporting their continued independent living.

Question 11 vs Age 20-39



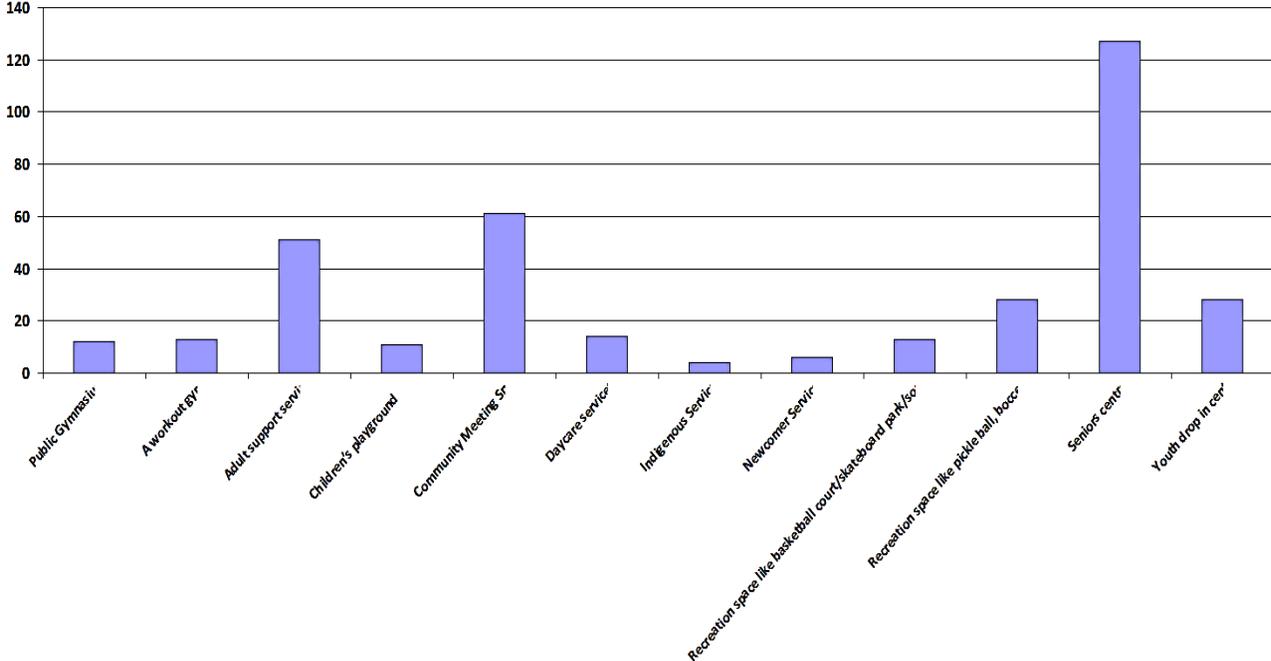
Daycare becomes the number one priority with this age group followed by a youth drop-in centre. It is this age bracket that normally has children at home, so these findings are not a surprise. It does give thought to the possibility of a daycare in the Hub as an anchor tenant.

Question 11 vs Age 40-59



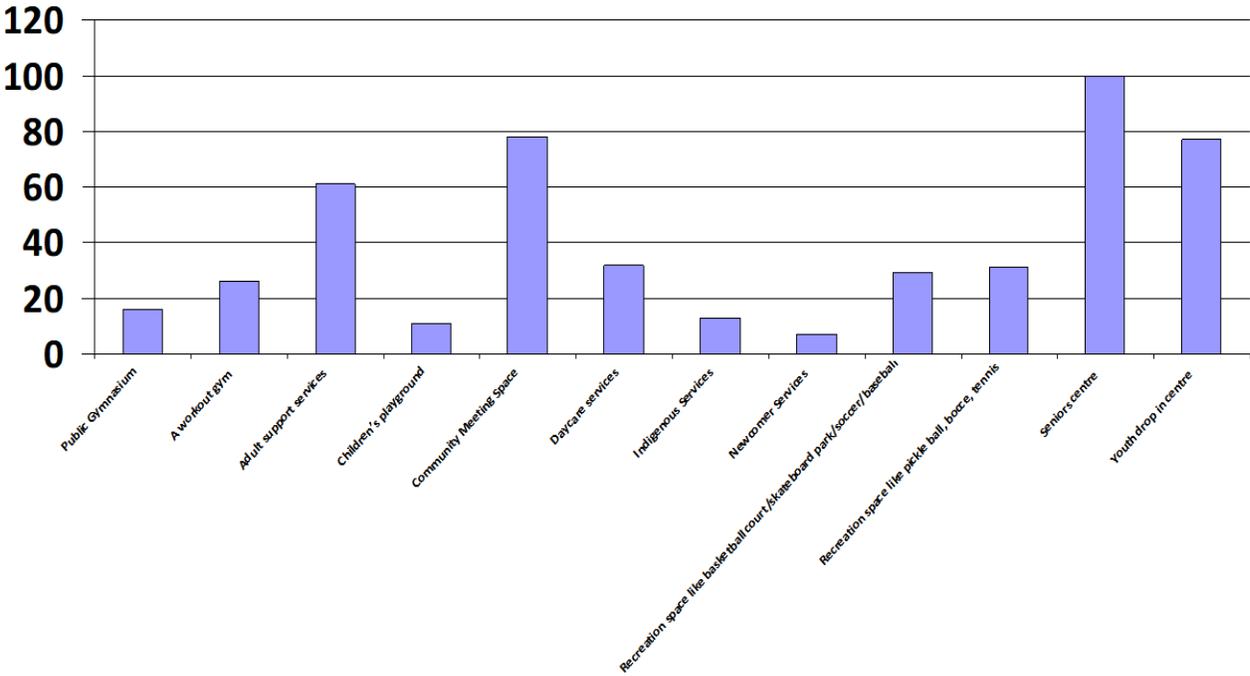
The family theme continues with the 40-59 age bracket prioritizing a youth drop-in centre. After Community Meeting Space, the next two choices are a senior’s centre and adult support services. This is the “Sandwich Generation” that still have children and youth at home to raise however they also have elderly parents that are beginning to need support.

Question 11 vs Age 60+

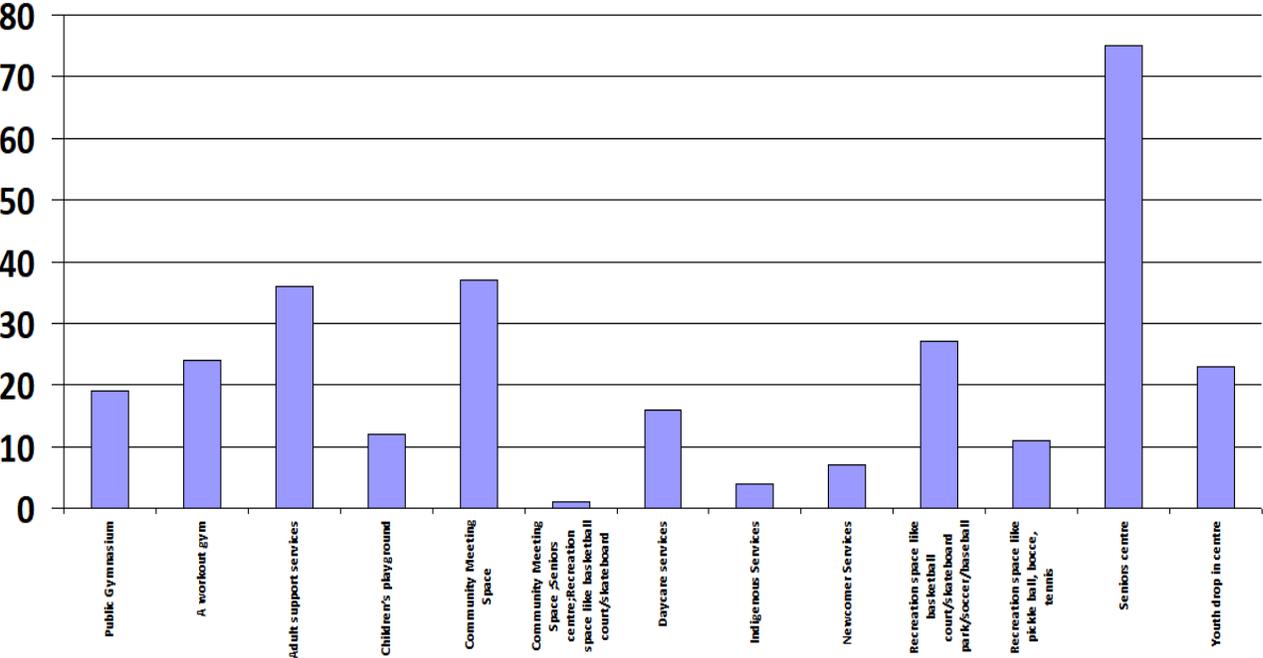


The seniors clearly want a seniors’ centre and community meeting space, followed by adult support services. Some of them did remember their grandchildren and a youth drop-in centre was the fourth choice.

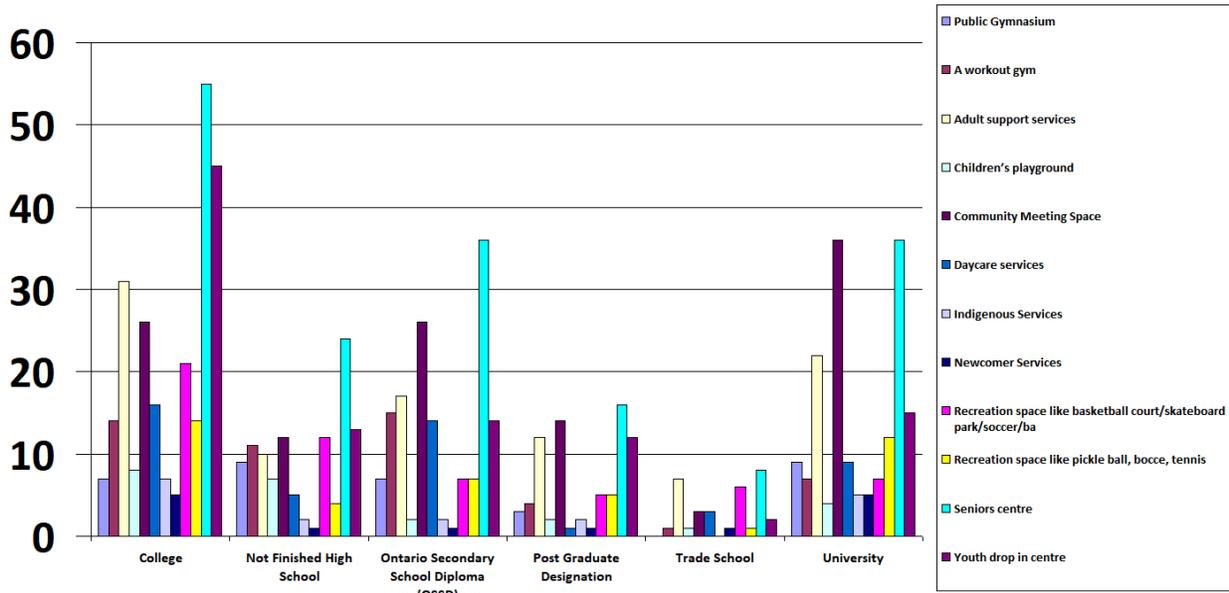
Question 11 Gender Preferences Female



Question 11 Gender Preferences Male

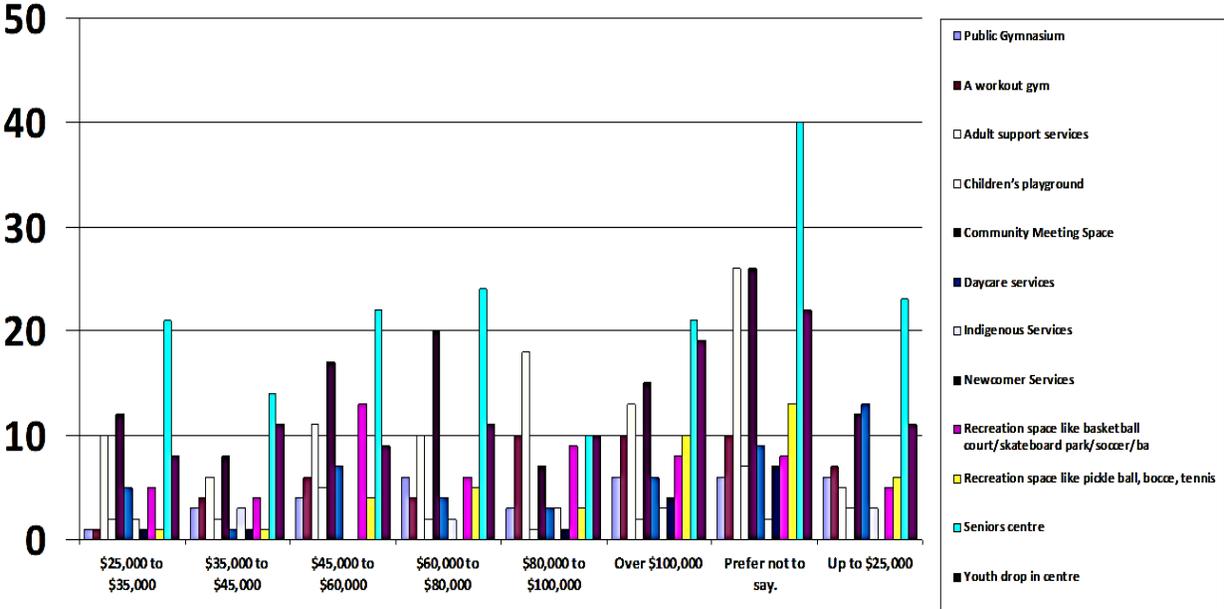


Question 11 vs Education



Education level did not change the responses significantly. The top three priorities for the groups are a Seniors' Centre, Community Meeting Space and a Youth Drop-In Centre.

Question 11 vs Income



Those earning up to \$25,000 did choose Seniors Centre like most of the other income levels however their second choice was daycare. This could indicate the need for subsidized daycare spaces to transition people into work. Community Meeting Space, Adult Support Services and Youth Drop-In Centre were close in ranking among all income levels.

12. Any priorities in your neighbourhood not listed here? (Qualitative Responses)

A complete listing of all the responses can be found in the appendices. Here are some of the common themes found in the responses;

- Have private anchor tenants with things we need like a grocery store, LCBO, bank
- Adult day care and respite
- Cultural space, museum, art, theatre, music
- Coffee house
- Walk-in clinic and associated services
- Internet access and social innovation centre

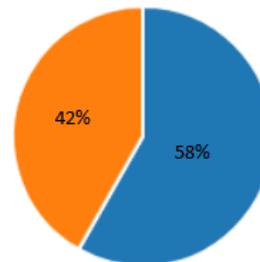
Questions 13, 14 and 15 are meant to gauge community ownership. There really does have to be some significant community synergy in order for a neighbourhood to benefit from a Hub. Ownership can be illustrated in various ways such as user fees, membership fees, and volunteerism. Fees would be problematic if the Hub has a social service or medical theme to it, and less so if it is recreationally based. The results illustrate a willingness on the part of the respondents to assist in some way, which bodes well for this initiative.

Over half of the respondents were willing to pay close to \$100 annually in order to have a Hub in their neighbourhood. User fees can be a more palatable way to offset some of the operating costs because it does not impact those that do not use the Hub as a tax increase would. Taxes in Fort Erie are already a hot button issue, so it behooves the Steering Committee to look at creative ways to sustain the operation. Over two-thirds of the respondents are willing to volunteer at the Hub which is also indicative of community ownership and support. That volunteerism can take the shape of staffing, maintenance and fundraising efforts.

13. Would you be willing to pay an annual membership fee for recreational services in your neighbourhood?

[More Details](#)

● Yes	457
● No	328



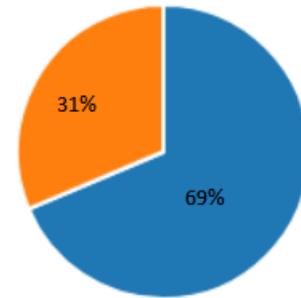
14. If yes, what is a reasonable annual fee to have a Community Hub in your neighbourhood?

Average of 785 responses = \$92.00 per year

15. Would you be willing to volunteer at a Community Hub in your community?

[More Details](#)

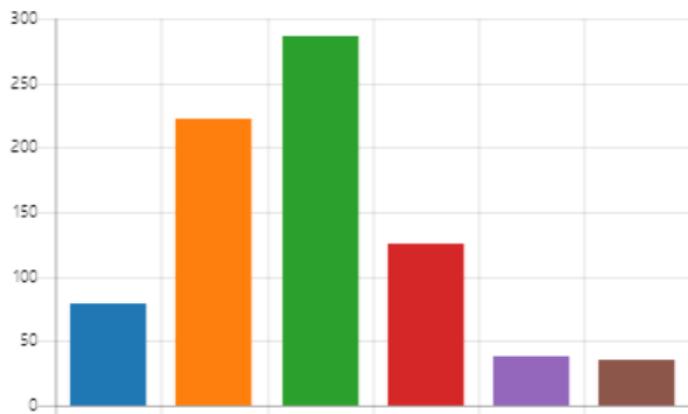
● Yes	539
● No	246



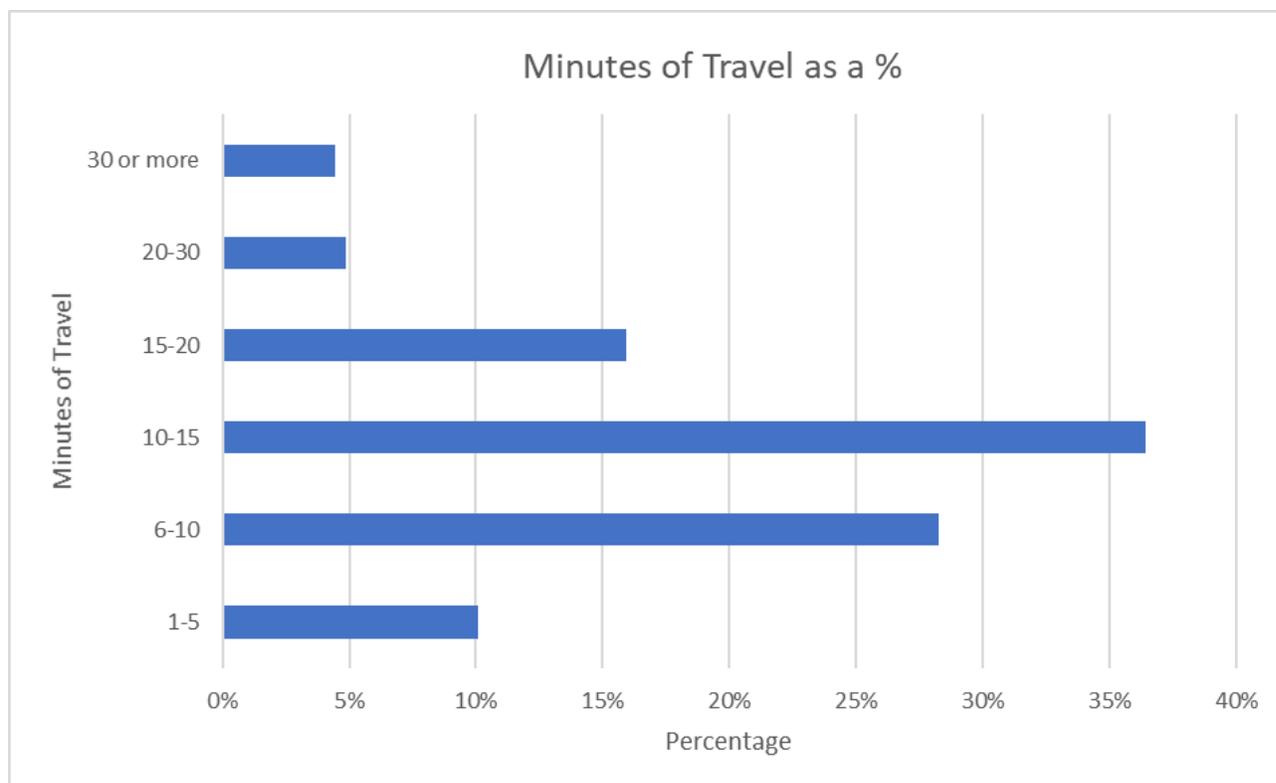
16. How many minutes would you be willing to travel to get to a Community Hub that had services that you wanted?

[More Details](#)

● 1-5	79
● 6-10	222
● 10-15	286
● 15-20	125
● 20-30	38
● 30 or more	35



Transportation is a huge issue in rural communities and Fort Erie is no different. One of the main reasons for a Hub is to address transportation issues in isolated communities. Almost all the shopping, medical and recreational opportunities in Fort Erie are 15 kilometres away from Crystal Beach, and it takes 18 minutes to get there during daylight with no inclement weather. This is out of the reach or comfort zone of over 70% of respondents. This is especially pertinent in the areas of Ridgeway and Crystal Beach. Ridgeway has a higher seniors population, and interviews with this group confirm concerns around driving at night, driving in weather and deteriorating driving skills due to health or cognitive issues. Crystal Beach has a higher proportion of residents on social assistance and they reported transportation challenges due to the high cost of vehicle ownership and maintenance, the high cost of taxi service and very limited public transportation.



17. Do you have any other thoughts you would like to share in regards to the planning of a Community Hub in Fort Erie?

All the responses to this question can be found in the appendix. Any time an open question is asked on a survey, it opens the door to comment on many things including non-related issues. It is important to allow for this however so that respondents can include important thoughts the survey developers missed and to ensure that all respondents feel that they have been heard. The main themes of the comments are as follows:

- Concerns regarding the hub increasing taxes
- A desire for mental health services
- The inclusion of shopping, entertainment
- Grocery store with an embedded drug store, hardware items
- Make the Hub part of Crystal Beach regeneration
- Dissatisfaction with the YMCA to build a better service in the West
- arts, library, literacy, ESL or help with homework, not everyone is into sports and recreational games
- don't forget youth issues
- an incubator for business and social innovation

- use the closed Fort Erie Public School in the north end
- use the RCB closed high school
- make sure there is both organized and drop in activities
- build it near the Crystal Ridge Centre
- Make the Lions Club facility public then there is no need for a Hub
- One stop shop for community information
- Affordable housing
- 24-hour walk in clinic

LOCATION AND DESIGN SUMMARY

Very few people said that there was no need for a Hub in Fort Erie. There were some comments that suggested that if current assets like the YMCA, Leisureplex, Crystal Ridge Centre or Garrison Lodge were made more affordable, accessible, updated or had the desired services that a new Hub might not be necessary. Obviously, if such a scenario was chosen, that would dictate location. This report will look at building on a current community asset as an example in the following section.

Another driver for location is available land and/or land on which a suitable vacant building is located. In many ways, it would make sense for the Hub to be located on Town of Fort Erie property. This would significantly reduce the cost of developing a Hub since land acquisition costs would not be in the total, and the Town would be able to navigate around barriers such as zoning since they would have the in-house expertise of town planners and developers. It may even be that the Hub itself becomes a Town asset that is managed by the Town or managed by a group delegated by the Town. Most Municipalities have divested themselves of surplus properties and are not enthusiastic about becoming landlords, so they have few vacant lands on which to build. Fort Erie is in a similar situation however there are a few properties that could be considered. This report will look at one such scenario.

A common tactic for Hub development in Ontario has been the use of decommissioned schools and other public buildings. Indeed, up until the change in provincial government, communities could apply for the Surplus Property Transition Initiative. This program paid the property owner the carrying costs of the surplus building for up to 18 months while a Hub steering committee came up with a plan to take the building over. There are a few such properties in Fort Erie such as the Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School and the Fort Erie Public School. This report will look at this option as well.

None of the options are meant to be fully cost or risk-assessed. The purpose for their inclusion is to generate discussions regarding options by the Steering Committee, as each option will impact design and location. There are other considerations when it comes to location as well. Perhaps the most obvious is that two of the three Steering Committee organizations operate in Fort Erie West and began their partnership with advocacy for increased services in their neighbourhood. They accessed the expertise of the Fort Erie Native Friendship Centre and a cohort of skilled volunteers which enabled them to be successful in applying for a Trillium Grant and in garnering community excitement. To their credit, this group has agreed to look at all of Fort Erie in this study however it is unlikely that their dedication and synergy would be as vibrant if the location of the Hub were outside of Fort Erie West.

One of the perspectives that can be used to assess where a community asset like a Hub should go is by looking at the Social Determinants of Health of each neighbourhood and choosing a community that is most in need. Many factors have an influence on health. In addition to our individual genetics and lifestyle choices, where we are born, grow, live, work and age also have an important influence on our health. Determinants of health are the broad range of personal, social, economic and environmental factors that determine individual and population health. The main determinants of health include:

1. Income and social status
2. Employment and working conditions
3. Education and literacy
4. Childhood Experiences
5. Physical environments
6. Social supports and coping skills
7. Healthy behaviors
8. Access to health services
9. Biology and genetic endowment
10. Gender
11. Culture

Social determinants of health refer to a specific group of social and economic factors within the broader determinants of health. These relate to an individual's place in society, such as income, education or employment. Experiences of discrimination or historical trauma are also important social determinants of health for certain groups such as Indigenous Peoples.

In terms of income, there are conflicting results. The census data indicates the average income is lowest in the Urban Core at \$51,386 followed by Ridgeway at \$63,131. The survey data shows that Crystal Beach has the lowest income levels followed by the Urban Core. Supporting data seems to back the survey since both Crystal Beach and the Urban Core have the highest number of renters and the greatest disparity in home prices. Those with lower incomes have challenges with nutrition, housing, transportation, education, and recreation. One can quickly see the correlation between income and health. This becomes especially important knowing that Crystal Beach and

the Urban Core also have the highest proportion of youth, and if their developmental needs are not met then they are destined to access health and social supports in their adult life.

Education levels and outcomes are also important to consider when using the social determinants of health lens. Education often drives income levels as well as the understanding of how to care for ourselves and our families. Many times, a Hub will have educational services when locating in areas where academic achievement is challenged. The Early Development Indicator (EDI) scores show that the areas where children are most at risk are Crystal Beach and the Urban Core. Adult educational levels were not significantly different in the Fort Erie neighbourhoods aside from the proportion of those who have not earned their Ontario Secondary School Diploma (OSSD), which is an employment impediment often times. Once again, it is Crystal Beach and the Urban Core where the highest number of residents without an OSSD reside.

Access to health services is critical, and Fort Erie is challenged just like most municipalities across Ontario. Local Health Integration Networks (LHINs) were given the task of administering health care budgets in an age of increasing demand, expense and complexity. Their strategy of centralization to “Centres of Excellence” has also resulted in the closure of community hospitals and ancillary services. Fort Erie is facing this challenge now as their hospital has been downgraded to an urgent care facility and is scheduled to close. The funding formula of OHIP has resulted in doctors evolving their practices in ways that reduce their traditionally impossible workload while increasing revenue. The consequence of these factors is that Fort Erie could use another eight doctors to ensure every resident was on a roster.

This situation is exacerbated in Fort Erie West wherein Ridgeway hosts two dentists, one doctor and an urgent care office only open from 1:30-4 pm on Fridays and Saturdays. Crystal Beach and Stevensville have nothing while the Urban Core and the North End host ALL other medical services. This leaves two distinct populations quite vulnerable. As aforementioned, Crystal Beach has a number of risk indicators regarding social health and these folks must find their way 20-30 minutes down the road for urgent services and that is IF they can get transportation. The other vulnerable population is the high concentration of seniors in Ridgeway and Crystal Beach. A 20-30-minute drive is often out of the question for these folks, and the natural result of aging is that seniors require more medical attention than younger populations. Add to this that there are no seniors retirement homes in the West and you have an argument for some type of attention to this risk.

When survey respondents were asked about their top two choices for a Hub location, Crystal Beach was first with 29% and Ridgeway second with 28%. This blended

response deals with the natural human tendency to be self-serving, so requiring two choices forces folks to consider others. It should be noted that the Urban Core came in third and if you rolled the North End and Crescent Park into the Core, it would amount to 34%. If that was the direction the Steering Committee wanted to go, there is an opportunity at the empty Fort Erie Public School on Central Avenue. Interviews with Service Providers confirm that there would be interest by at least 3 groups in being anchor tenants in this building, and the rest of the structure contains a gymnasium and rooms that might accommodate most of the service requests from the survey. Public perception is an important consideration regarding location because Town politicians need to defend any location decision if indeed the Town is to be involved. It would appear from the survey data that most of the respondents could generally agree that the West end of Fort Erie is in the most need for a Hub with community services.

Design Summary

The final design for a Hub will depend on a variety of factors including budget, location, type of location, Hub vision and theme, Hub partners and scope of Hub impact. That being said, there are some general best practices that have been found for the Steering Committee to consider.

The first thoughts are around bringing the required services to the location which is most often done by a Service Provider who can find itinerant space at the Hub. Therefore, most Hubs have a mixture of private offices for confidential counselling, shared administrative offices, cubicle suites with all furniture on wheels to allow for reconfiguration, a board room, a waiting room, public and staff bathrooms, a printing station, storage space, staff kitchenette, and a waiting room. A very approximate estimate would be around 1500 square feet in order to accomplish this. A number of survey respondents mentioned the need for informal community meeting space. If another 1000 square feet were added, this could most certainly be accomplished. Many suggestions thought that a coffee shop in this area would be a welcoming touch that might be a social enterprise endeavor.

The overwhelming request for a doctor and medical services suggest that it may be prudent to include a few examination rooms that could meet the requirements for specialized equipment, for privacy and for hygiene. This could likely be accomplished with 500 square feet. Some of the doctors interviewed highlighted the need for including ancillary services such as a 1,000 square foot physio room that could also be used as a workout room for the public. More and more doctors are looking health from a holistic angle and want patients to be able to have supervised stretches and exercises instead of always prescribing medication. The survey results did show a demand for a fitness type of gym so a multi-purpose build would be efficient.

A community meeting space was high in the survey responses. Although an enlarged waiting room with coffee kiosk would facilitate the drop-in atmosphere requested, it would not due for larger community functions. Places like the Beachcombers regularly have 300 members out for dinners and dances, and it is hoped that they may consider being an anchor tenant. A hall and industrial kitchen that could accommodate 500 people is one proposed solution. The hall could be built to have dividers so that two or three functions could happen simultaneously. The hall, of course, would be available to all community groups, and it could generate revenue when not in use via rentals for weddings, retirements and community dances. In order to make this hall even more multi-purpose, it is suggested that a stage is included for theatre groups, musicians and other performers, all-candidate meetings and other such functions. A very approximate estimate for space is around 3,000 square feet. Consultation with the local fire department regarding occupancy limits for all rooms in the Hub will be essential and may alter the space requirements.

A gymnasium that can accommodate youth, adult and seniors recreation also would satisfy the requests of the community. Currently, the small gym operated by the Lions Club at the Crystal Ridge Centre is permanently set up for floor hockey, so a resident of Crystal Beach and Ridgeway have no gymnasium unless they can travel to and can afford a membership at the YMCA which is 20-30 minutes away if you drive. Some of the designs today are quite multipurpose with walking/jogging tracks and the ability to section the gym in order to have two different activities going on concurrently. A modest approximation of size would be 5,000 square feet.

Another innovative use of space that is very popular in other municipalities is an innovation centre. Many of today's' businesses are operated by owners who only require a laptop, internet connection, printer and a good cup of coffee. Places like WeWork in Toronto and other big cities provide space for entrepreneurs to work someplace other than their kitchen table but with all the amenities of home. The added bonus of this set up is that business people socialize in these spaces and new businesses are born out of the creative conversations and linkages. A large number of residents who have moved to Crystal Beach and Ridgeway from Toronto are often involved in this kind of self-employment and would surely pay a membership fee for access. Membership fees are based on the services you desire, so you can also rent a Board room for important meetings or a secure office for delicate negotiations. A space like this would require no more than 1,000 square feet.

There were a number of suggestions regarding what the space around the Hub should look like. Safety issues like adequate parking, alarm posts, and sufficient outside lighting are the new standards for ensuring citizens do not face a traumatic situation. Some comments identified that it may be nice to use the park space (if available) for outdoor gathering rather than the conventional playground. Keeping trees, making

lighted pathways, having benches and picnic tables and gazebos would create a space where residents could relax and chat in safety while getting fresh air.

Considering these general suggestions, the report has looked at options based on the following requirements:

- 2,500 ft for itinerant services, waiting room/drop in a room with a coffee kiosk
- 1,500 ft for medical exam rooms and physio/workout room
- 3,000 ft hall and industrial kitchen
- 5,000 ft gymnasium
- 1,000 ft innovation centre
- 4,000 ft hallways, bathrooms, storage, loading dock
- Total of 17,000 square feet

The report is also using information from developers and contractors with experience in both new build and renovation of older buildings to average the cost of build/renovation at approximately \$200 per square foot. This is keeping in mind that the request for the build does not have a need for architectural artistry or flair. Thus, the approximate cost of a Hub with the aforementioned spaces would be \$3.4 million dollars.

EXAMPLES

RIDGEWAY HIGH SCHOOL



Figure 21 Ridgeway Crystal Beach High School

The Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School (RCBHS) has garnered a lot of interest from those who would like a Hub in the West end of Fort Erie. This interest should be informed by a few community dynamics. After churches, schools became the focal point of many rural communities until child safety and liability made it such that they were basically inaccessible. Crystal Beach and Ridgeway had their elementary schools close recently (with one new build in Ridgeway) and the schools were quickly sold off before those advocating for a Hub had a chance to develop an action plan. Not only were these two communities grieving for the loss of decades of memories and connectivity, but they also had their hopes dashed as developers moved in.

Therefore, it should be of no surprise that RCBHS is of interest. The school was built in 1927, so there are nearly 100 years of memories and connection in that building. There were major additions done in 1959, 1966, 1993 and 1995. The school sits on 15.6 acres of prime real estate in a neighbourhood of affluent and middle-class homes and is within walking distance (800 metres) of the main strip in Ridgeway. The school is only one to two kilometres (depending on where you live) from Crystal Beach and had a wonderful track and field area known as Pride Field that has deteriorated since the school closing.

RCBHS has 80,800 square feet of space which include two gymnasiums, a theatre, a cafeteria, a large library space, specialized space for recording arts, for wood shop and for visual arts. There are three floors of classrooms, some of which were science labs and have taps and sinks and other lab facilities. The school is really five buildings that have been connected together over time and thus there are five different roof levels and some creative pathways to get from section to section. The front façade was recently designated a historically significant structure. The plans for the school are included in the appendix.

Closed schools are often looked at for use as a community Hub however caution is advised and any serious consideration MUST include a full inspection by people qualified to assess industrial heating and cooling systems, the presence of asbestos, the integrity of electrical and plumbing systems and the integrity of the roof and foundation. Modern institutions are now being built with a 30-year life span expected, and demolition plans that facilitate a new build thereafter. The reason for this is because technology changes so much that in 30 years, the systems supporting the institution are simply not worth keeping. Windows that are not broken are no longer efficient at keeping the heat in, and insulation efforts have deteriorated significantly. Anyone considering purchasing a building this old must know that there will be ongoing upgrades required.

The District School Board of Niagara, who owns the school have shared that their five-year renewal plan for the roofing, mechanical, electrical and accessibility upgrades required would total approximately three million dollars. This means that the new owners must be prepared to spend at least \$600,000 annually for the next five years to keep the building fit on top of operating costs. The last operating costs that were shared regarding this location come from the 2011/2012 and do not include the salary for custodians. The basic utilities for this large institution were \$200,000 and that was seven years ago. Therefore, a new owner should be prepared to spend \$850,000 annually plus the cost of custodial services for 80,000 square feet and the maintenance on an industrial heating and cooling system. A safe estimate would be one million dollars annually for the first five years of operation as the necessary budget.

A walk-through of the facility brings both inspiration and anxiety. One can easily see theatre and dance groups performing and learning, Service Providers turning classrooms into offices and counselling space, youth and elder recreation in the gym, a social enterprise in the library and community gathering space with a kitchen all under one historic roof. One also will notice significant leakage from the roofing in various areas, antiquated technology, one gym that is completely unusable, confirmed asbestos presence and no accessibility for those with disabilities nor for the average senior or toddler. There is actually more like 40,000 square feet of usable space when one removes the mechanical rooms, hallways, bathrooms and showers, the lower

gymnasium and storage space. The new owner will still have to heat 80,000 ft regardless of usefulness.

This information behooves the question “How will we pay for the one-million-dollar annual operating costs?” Forward-thinking agencies like the John Howard Society Niagara have used social innovation in order to address space requirements. An example is one of their properties in Welland where they charge non-profit partner agencies a reduced rate per square foot. Some other Hubs have utilized this method as well and the average seems to be about \$12 per square foot. For-profit businesses get charged a more market-driven rate. If you can imagine that 40,000 square feet was actually needed in Ridgeway/Crystal Beach and you charged \$12 per square foot, the income generated would be \$480,000. This is only half of the projected annual income requirements to operate this building and that is assuming full tenancy with no vacancy periods.

All the developers we spoke to who have experience with school redevelopments have suggested alternatives. They all suggest the demolition of the school, which is complicated by the historic designation of the front façade. That is not to say that keeping the facade for a new building is impossible. It can be kept as part of a Hub new build or as part of something else like seniors’ apartments. Even with demolition, regulations regarding the disposal of asbestos will impact this idea. Costs are roughly estimated to be around \$300,000 as a school this size will have many tons of asbestos inside it. Indeed, the walkthrough revealed that even some of the older floor tiles will contain asbestos so there is no avoiding this environmental issue. The demolition of the school, removal of the rubble and maintenance of the front façade for future use is roughly estimated to be \$400,000. This means that a scenario in which the school is demolished, and a new build Hub is attached would cost approximately \$4.1 million dollars.

The benefits of such a scenario are numerous. The community gets to “keep” its’ memories of RCBHS via the façade and enjoy a state-of-the-art Hub at that location. A new build will not require a huge operating budget when it comes to utilities nor have upgrade requirements nor need a huge custodial and mechanical staff. A variant of this scenario is one in which the façade becomes part of a housing project. Housing was noted as one of the top priority issues in the survey and at the municipality. Once again, the nostalgic connection to the school could be kept, people could be housed, and a new Hub could be built adjacent to the housing that would also SUPPORT those that are accessing the housing.

A major reason for considering the RCBHS as a site is obviously the land on which it sits. The Town of Fort Erie will have the first opportunity to purchase the site when it becomes available, so their vision and support of a project on this site becomes even

more critical than before. If the Town does not purchase the site, it is likely that a developer would be able to outbid a community group for ownership and this option would disappear. If the Town is like most municipalities, they will not be anxious to become landlords over 15.6 acres of land and a vacant high school that is a target for vandalism and thus a liability. It may interest the Town however if there is a mutual vision between the Town, the Hub Steering Committee and a trusted developer.

Since the position of the Hub Steering Committee is basically known as well as the knowledge that a community Hub has been an idea that has support from Town Council, it is helpful to now understand the perspective of developers with experience in projects of this scope. The following are a few of the comments and ideas shared by developers during interviews regarding the RCBHS as a project;

- Success and horror stories were shared to illustrate how a Town can make or unmake a project including expediting permits or stalling permits for projects not supported.
- It is imperative that the plan be discussed from start to finish with the Town so there are no surprise impediments, and that senior Town staff communicate their support of the project to subordinate levels to remove the conflict.
- Some of the developers were willing to discuss the idea of building a mix of small single homes, townhouses and social housing on the remaining land after purchasing it from the Town (if the Town did indeed buy it).
- General projections were that approximately 70 units could be built even after the Hub was built and seniors housing was built where the school was.
- The taxes generated from the build of 70 units would more than cover the operating costs of the Hub forever. Therefore, if the Town decided to keep the Hub as an asset, they could be assured that after construction costs there would be no further investment required aside from normal maintenance on a new build.
- Developers are unsure of how social housing works. It would be beneficial to have a discussion with the Region of Niagara in regard to housing subsidies so that developers could have some comfort around a partnership of this sort
- Developers are required to give 5% of the land they purchase as parkland. Some other municipalities have interpreted the legislation such that the donation of the parkland would also be the site that the Hub is built upon. This means that there are no land costs involved in the Hub build if such a scenario could be supported.

The option of the RCBHS has a number of scenarios that may work, and it would result in a Hub location that is supported by the research. This is a complicated option that

requires relationship building between the school board, the Town, the Hub Steering committee and a trusted developer.

Link to walk through photos –

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/1XAhdATQb7vEPPrR38>

CRYSTAL RIDGE CENTRE



Figure 22 Crystal ridge Community Centre

Building on a pre-existing community asset is a method that has been successfully used in other municipalities. The Town of Fort Erie has two main recreational assets being the Leisureplex and the Crystal Ridge Community Centre. Since the Leisureplex is newer and sits next to the YMCA, it makes sense to consider the Crystal Ridge Community Centre (CRCC) instead because it is in a location that does not have as many services. The plans for the Crystal Ridge Centre are appended to this report. It is a 28,000 square foot ice rink arena built in 1974. The building had additions in 1998 and 2001 and major renovations in 1995 and 2005.

There are an additional 17,000 square feet attached to the CRCC courtesy of the Lions Club who use the space as their clubhouse, operate a ball hockey league in the gymnasium, and rent out the kitchen/banquet and hall space for weddings, community and service provider use. The hall holds 225 guests with a large dance floor or 500

guest's theatre-style. The meeting rooms can hold up to 70 people and are rented out for \$100. A small library sits beside the complex on a shared parking lot. Equally significant is the fact that this facility sits on 23 acres of Town land.

“Crystal Ridge Park is located in Crystal Beach and is classified as one of four Community Parks within Fort Erie. It serves the neighbourhoods of Crystal Beach, Ridgeway, and Thunder Bay. The park was originally opened to the public in the 1960s, is approximately 9.6 hectares in size, and contains Fort Erie's only municipal football field, an informal baseball diamond, a pavilion, a playground, a splash pad and over 3 hectares of wooded area complete with recreation trails. With several outdated park amenities, this Park is need of renovation to ensure it meets the current needs of the community. In 2016, the Town commissioned the preparation of a Park Master Plan, which was prepared by Dillon Consulting. Through an extensive public consultation process, the Crystal Ridge Park Master Plan was developed and approved by Council in 2017.” The updated Park Master Plan can be found in the appendix showing the many planned upgrades that will accommodate much of the desired services mentioned in the survey.

There are two options for the Town to consider if they felt that adding a Hub on to the CRCC was a good idea. The first would be to decommission the arena and renovate this space for a gymnasium and add on the other rooms out the back of the building. This idea would not negatively impact parking space or much of the green outdoor space and would capitalize on the park and library amenities already existing. The second idea would keep the arena and attach the Hub to the rear of the ice rink which would impact the green space more than the original idea but still not meaningfully.

The argument for decommissioning the arena is mainly financial. Older ice facilities like the CRCC rink are very expensive to maintain. The older equipment fails and parts can be difficult to obtain. The older equipment is also not as efficient as the systems used at the Leisureplex, so costs add up in that department as well. The CRCC rink generates about \$150,000 annually from user fees however the total cost of operations including amortization results in the Town subsidizing this asset to the tune of \$425,000. Hockey and skating are cultural touchstones in rural Ontario which may make decommissioning this community facility difficult even with a financial argument. More urban municipalities have been able to accomplish this due to the rising popularity of soccer and basketball, and the high costs of playing organized hockey which has deterred new Canadians from participation.

Another challenge with this scenario is the condition of the CRCC building. This is not to say that the Town has not maintained this asset however it is inevitable that structures built in the 1970s will need attention. For example, the Crystal Ridge Facility Assessment from 2017 recommends that if funds are available, over \$100,000 should

be invested in the building and equipment including the roof, the ceiling tiles, the gas water heater, and the rink dehumidifier. In time, some of the masonry and structural work will need attention as well. The upper meeting room needs a complete renovation. Those with home renovation experience can relate to the issues one faces when renovating an older home which is that adding the new addition requires immediate and often unexpected repairs to the older structure. This option would need the input of qualified structural and mechanical engineers and approval by Town staff and Council.

Link to walkthrough photos - <https://photos.app.goo.gl/9njrUCkVrRvVnTvb8>

NEW BUILD

The new build scenario is perhaps the least complicated of the three. As previously mentioned, an approximate cost of \$200 per square foot is being used on the advice of developers, so a 17,000 ft facility will cost about \$3.4 million. This does not include the cost of the land. A new build will have the most modern and efficient materials and systems making it economical to operate, and the layout will be built to suit the specifications of those supporting the Hub which avoids all renovation and accommodation issues. The new build also allows the Hub to be placed in the community the Steering Committee decides it should be in.

Considering the information discussed in the above Location section, the land for the new build should be in or very close to Crystal Beach. This can present a difficulty in that many of the lots in Crystal Beach are small and there is not a lot of vacant land in the residential areas. There are some commercial spaces that have derelict buildings that could be torn down and there is some commercial space on the border of Ridgeway and Crystal Beach on Gorham Road. There are approximately 3 acres of private land that potentially could be purchased on Rebstock Road and Ridge Road South, and this land is directly beside the Crystal Ridge Community Centre, which would create some terrific synergies and efficiencies.

There is an opportunity to use the Town of Fort Erie land if they are in support of the project and the most logical space is directly behind the library beside the Crystal Ridge Community Centre. Once again, this location would build upon the wonderful outdoor amenities available, the Library service, the Lions Club services and the CRCC itself. Citizens are already used to going to that location for services, there is ample parking and there is a wonderful wooded lot with trails that would add to the experience. This scenario would remove the cost of land acquisition from the Hub initiative, and if the

Town intends to own the Hub as an asset it makes sense to fully utilize existing Townlands.

FUNDING

List of possible funding partners:

FEDERAL FUNDING:

Public Health Agency of Canada:

As part of the Public Health Agency of Canada's (PHAC) commitment to provide the public with access to information about its policies, programs, services and initiatives, grant and contribution (G&C).

The 'solicitation process' is the most common approach used by PHAC to provide G&C funding to recipients who will undertake projects that contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the program and respect the priorities of PHAC. There are three types of solicitation:

Open

An open solicitation is a process whereby an 'Invitation to Submit Applications' (ISA) identifies a wide audience: universities, non-governmental organizations, community groups, and/or provincial governments. In this case, the funding program will launch an ISA on its Web page and any other means of communication to reach as many applicants as possible. See Funding Opportunities for open, active solicitations.

Targeted

A targeted solicitation is a process whereby an ISA identifies a specific type of applicant, discipline, or geographic area such as 'universities only' or 'Aboriginal groups only'. In this case, the funding program will communicate directly with the potential applicant(s).

Directed

A directed solicitation is a process whereby an ISA identifies a specific type of applicant from a specialized field such as 'medical doctors in the North who treat Aboriginal patients'. In this case, the program will communicate directly with the potential applicant(s).

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/funding-opportunities.html>

Canadian Institutes of Health Research

The Project Grant program is designed to capture ideas with the greatest potential to advance health-related fundamental or applied knowledge, health research, health care, health systems, and/or health outcomes. It supports projects with: a specific purpose; and, a defined endpoint. The best ideas may stem from new, incremental, innovative, and/or high-risk lines of inquiry; or, knowledge translation approaches. Project grants are designed to support researchers at any career stage to build and conduct health-related research and knowledge translation projects across CIHR's mandate. An individual cannot submit more than two Project Grant applications per competition as a Nominated Principal Applicant. If a Nominated Principal Applicant submits more than two applications, CIHR will automatically remove the last application submitted based on time-stamp of submission

<http://www.cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/49051.html>

PROVINCIAL FUNDING:

Community Health & Social Services Hubs:

Since 2011, IO (Infrastructure Ontario) has partnered with Community Health and Social Services Hubs to help provide access to affordable financing for capital investments.

Eligibility

Non-profit organizations in Ontario that own or operate or are planning to own or operate a Community Health and Social Services Hub, may apply for an IO Loan for capital investments. To qualify, the project must include at least one of each of the following two types of organizations:

Community Health Organizations, such as:

Community health centre, Aboriginal health access centre, Mental health and substance abuse centre

Supportive housing, A board of health for a health unit, Social Service Organization/Agency funded by:

Ministry of Community and Social Services, Ministry of Citizenship and Immigration, Ministry of Child and Youth Services

<http://www.infrastructureontario.ca/Community-Health-and-Social-Services-Hubs/>

Community Health Capital Planning

In 2017, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care released a revised Community Health Capital Programs (CHCP) policy. This replaces policy documents previously released in 2015. They provide a unified approach for the review, approval and funding of community health care infrastructure capital projects in Ontario by the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care ('the ministry').

The CHCP policy outlines the following:

Eligibility criteria for community Health Service Providers (HSPs), including a process for expanding eligibility to additional community HSPs and operational models of service for co-located and integrated proposals;

Capital cost share and space standards; and Unified project management and funding framework.

The types of community sector Health Service Providers (HSPs) and organizations who provide direct service related Programming and were specifically-named in the prior policy continue to be eligible under the CHCP policy for dedicated Capital Funding. These include:

Community Health Centres (CHCs);

Aboriginal Health Access Centres (AHACs);

Community-Based Mental Health and Addictions (MH&As) Agencies (including on-site residential treatment);

Public Health Units (PHUs);

Family Health Teams (FHTs);

Nurse Practitioner-Led Clinics (NPLCs); and

Midwifery Practice Groups (MPGs).

http://www.centraalhinc.on.ca/~media/sites/central/Secondary%20Navigation/For%20HSPs/Policies%20Directives%20and%20Resources/Community/Education%20and%20Training/Module%201_CHCP%20Overview_AccessibleVersion.pdf?la=en

The Ontario Trillium Foundation: Capital Grants

The Ontario Trillium Foundation (OTF) is an agency of the Government of Ontario, and one of Canada's largest granting foundations. With a budget of over \$136 million, OTF awards grants to some 1,000 projects every year to build healthy and vibrant Ontario communities.

The OTF has adopted an Investment Strategy that includes six different action areas as well as four granting streams.

Capital grants are grants broaden access, improve community spaces and promote energy efficiency.

<https://otf.ca/what-we-fund/investment-streams/capital-grants>

NIAGARA REGIONAL FUNDING

Niagara Prosperity Initiative

The Niagara Prosperity Initiative was established by the Niagara Region in 2008 and provides an annual investment of \$1.5 million to support poverty reduction and prevention activities.

Goals of the Niagara Prosperity Initiative:

To guide and direct investments on identified initiatives to alleviate poverty in neighbourhoods across Niagara

To advocate for change that will reduce and prevent poverty in the community

To develop and enhance collaborative relationships between stakeholders

To engage people living in poverty in meaningful ways to ensure that investments reflect the need

How Does It Work?

The Niagara Prosperity Initiative uses a research-based approach to address the root causes of poverty, allocating resources where they will have the greatest effect.

While some projects are designed to meet the immediate needs of individuals living in poverty, the Niagara Prosperity Initiative is also focused on longer-term strategies which

require stronger partnerships and improved coordination and planning across the public, private and voluntary (not for profit) sectors and among stakeholders.

<https://www.niagararegion.ca/social-services/niagara-prosperity-initiative/background.aspx>

Niagara Regional Community Housing Funding:

Community Funding Information

What is Community Funding?

Community Funding encourages tenants to take an active role in improving the quality of life within their NRH community by providing funds for community-led special projects or activities.

Who Can Apply for Community Funding?

Tenant Associations, tenant groups and Community Program Coordinators (CPCs) can apply for the community.

What Will Be Considered for Funding?

The following may be considered:

Does the plan have the support of the community?

Is there a need in the community? (ex. will it improve the quality of life in the community or provide a new service or program?)

Has the group received funding in the past? (groups that have not received funding will be given higher priority)

How will the tenants support the activity? (ex. will tenants contribute to the event or activity through fundraising or volunteer hours?)

Is the activity enjoyable/accessible to most of the tenants?

Is the amount of funding requested reasonable?

If the funds are for the purchase of an item, will the tenants be able to maintain it? Is the item being purchased necessary for a program or does it enhance the program or service?

Does the tenant group have a history of successful projects?

Please note that if the request requires more funds that are available, the CPCs will speak with the group to find a solution.

What Are Some Examples of Projects That May Qualify for Community Funding?

Starting a tenant association, Meeting supplies, Speakers to attend meetings for educational purposes, equipment for recreational and social activities, Fundraising supplies

What Are Some Examples of Projects That Do Not Qualify for Community Funding?

Capital items (such as furniture that does not contribute to or enhance a program)

Social only (ex. casino trips, dinner at a restaurant)

<http://www.nrh.ca/tenants/community-funding-application.shtml>

PRIVATE FOUNDATIONS:

Niagara Community Foundation:

Vision

Realizing community dreams through philanthropy

Mission

The Niagara Community Foundation improves the quality of life in Niagara through philanthropy.

Guiding Principles

Enable, collaborate and transform: Enable community improvement by providing funds and community knowledge. Bring organizations together to form partnerships based on the respective strengths of each organization to focus on key community issues.

Demonstrate philanthropic leadership: Demonstrate expertise and best practice in philanthropic leadership.

Put Niagara first: Communicate and support the Niagara story. Build community leadership. Seek and develop individuals who will bring leadership to the community.

Be trustworthy, transparent and accountable: Engage in practices that are open, accessible, fair, objective, flexible, timely, accountable and measurable and built on a foundation of respect, trust, integrity, and honesty.

Ensure sound governance and management: Ensure that the Niagara Community Foundation governance and management is sound, relevant and realizes its full fiduciary responsibility. This includes maintaining accreditation with Imagine Canada.

Grants:

The Niagara Community Foundation granting programs strive to nurture and build on our community's strengths and assets. Communities are strengthened by initiatives which increase the capacity of organizations and individuals to respond to challenges and opportunities, develop local leadership, promote self-reliance, emphasize prevention and mobilize civic participation and resources. We will strive to continually improve our skills as grantmakers, making a visible and lasting difference in our communities through a granting program that is balanced, flexible, creative and responsive.

Charities applying for grants will need to have 8 out of 13 of the following governance practices in place to be eligible to apply for a grant from the Foundation. The checklist is included in the grant application. If a minimum of 8 practices is not in place, a charity is allowed to apply once, and the charity is directed to appropriate resources and support to address gaps. The items marked with an asterisk * are compulsory items.

Charities are not permitted subsequent applications until minimums have been met or a plan is in place to achieve them.

*Does the board approve an annual budget?

Does the board review actuals to budget at least twice a year?

*Does the board meet a minimum of 3 times annually?

Are board policies reviewed at least every 4 years?

*Is there a policy that clearly outlines the roles and responsibilities of board and officers?

Are there fixed terms for board members?

Has a strategic plan been developed over the last 4 years?

Does the board annually review progress on achieving strategic plan goals and adjust the plan to reflect progress and new opportunities?

*Is ED/CEO performance reviewed annually?

Is a board evaluation undertaken annually?

Is there an interim succession plan in place or being developed in the unexpected changeover in organization leadership?

Is there a conflict of interest policy?

Is there a reserve policy?

David S. Howes Fund Grants Program

The David S. Howes Grants Program provides grants to eligible organizations providing services in Niagara. Grants from this Fund will support post-secondary, facilities, research, health-care services, education, and humanitarian issues.

Mini-Grants Program

The Mini-Grants Program provides \$500 grants to eligible organizations for projects that address the Foundation's granting priorities. This program provides a time-sensitive, streamlined and responsive process for smaller projects. This grant is not suitable for projects that have a budget exceeding \$2000.

Grant Making Priorities

Addressing the issues/indicators in the Living in Niagara Report 2017, or,

Assisting with the development and implementation of tools and resources that would contribute to an organization's success; including professional and organizational development and training.

Community Grants Program

Our Community Grants Program focuses on finding ways to help individuals, families, organizations, and communities prosper. While Niagara is facing many challenges, we also have an opportunity to seek new and sustainable ways of addressing community issues and creating a more collaborative approach to meeting the challenges facing organizations and our community.

Grant Making Priorities

Addressing the issues/indicators in the Living in Niagara Report 2017, or,

Assisting with the development and implementation of tools and resources that would

Strategic Initiatives Grants Program

The Niagara Community Foundation is interested in receiving Letters of Intent requesting support from the Foundation towards projects having a broad community impact which address the Foundation's grantmaking priorities. The Foundation may consider a multi-year commitment for these projects.

Grant Making Priorities:

Build community leadership, Foster cooperative, collaborative and innovative approaches to community issues, address an identifiable community need, Have an impact across the region

Leverage other funds, Show evidence of sustainability (if appropriate to the project).

<http://niagaracommunityfoundation.org/grants>

The Niagara Community Foundation offers a number of ways to support our community's well-being. We have a variety of funds available for our donors to consider. Many of them are open funds where gifts may be made by any interested contributor at any time thereby allowing even modest contributions to be joined with others' gifts for maximum charitable benefit.

The Niagara Fund is comprised of donations, large and small, from a variety of sources, individuals, corporations, and foundations. A donation to this fund gives the Foundation the greatest flexibility. The earnings on this fund enable our Board of Directors to respond to current community needs through the provision of grants to charities throughout the Niagara Region or in a local community. Donors can establish a named fund within the Niagara Fund with a gift of \$5,000 that can be donated at one time or over a five year period.

<http://niagaracommunityfoundation.org/funds/overview-funds>

Fort Erie Fund

The Fort Erie Fund was launched in 2010 with a gift from Community Living – Fort Erie. The goal of the Fund is to build a pool of capital to support charitable organizations providing programs and services to Fort Erie. Families can open named funds within the Fort Erie Fund as a way of saying thank you to the community – a way for them to leave a legacy. Since the launch, the Little Green Family Fund has been created.

Foundation board members Scott Maskell and Dave Shaw and former board member Sandy Annunziata are taking the lead on working with the community to build the Fort Erie Fund.

Fort Erie charities that have received grants from the foundation include: Adult Literacy Council of Greater Fort Erie, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Fort Erie, Community Living – Fort Erie, Fort Erie Native Cultural Centre, Fort Erie Public Library, Head Injury Association of Fort Erie, NCDSB - Our Lady of Victory Catholic Elementary School, Non-Profit Fort Erie Mobile Service, Salvation Army - Fort Erie, South Niagara Life Ministries, Women's Addiction Recovery Mediation Charities from Fort Erie that have opened their own endowment fund within the Foundation include: Adult Literacy Council of Greater Fort Erie, Bert Miller Nature Club of Fort Erie, Fort Erie Conservation Club, Friends of Fort Erie's Creeks.

<http://niagaracommunityfoundation.org/funds/community-funds/fort-erie-fund>

RECOMMENDATIONS

This report was ordered by the Greater Fort Erie Community Hub Task Force (the Steering Committee) to investigate the feasibility of a Community Hub as a method to address perceived gaps in services, especially in by not restricted to the West end of Fort Erie. The report is informed by an extensive literature review, a Human Service Agency survey, Service Provider interviews, a robust citizen survey, four community engagement sessions, interviews with experienced developers, town staff, business owners, municipal, provincial and federal staff as well as the public school board and several medical practitioners.

The report is not intended to make decisions as this is the purview of the Steering Committee. The report is not intended to fully cost out an action plan as the Steering Committee is still in the process of developing a vision and a concept. The report is intended to inform further action by the Steering Committee and thus makes the following conclusions and recommendations for consideration;

- The Steering Committee and the Town can conclude that there is a demonstrated need for more services in the Town of Fort Erie.
- Continued effort and goodwill should be exchanged between the Steering Committee and the Town. The involvement and support of the Town will be critical if the Hub is to be a large venture as is currently being discussed. The involvement of the Steering Committee as a partner with the Town will ensure that the initiative has more than enough volunteerism, enthusiasm and citizen buy-in to bring the project to fruition.
- A Hub model is the most efficient method to get needed programs and services to the community because there is no single issue that might be addressed by a full-time service provider/professional presence in Fort Erie. There is evidence supporting the need for a variety of services and supports.
- It is feasible to create a Hub in Fort Erie. There is enough evidence of demand, community goodwill, financially accessible options, and partnering opportunities.
- The Steering Committee informed by conversations with the Town should decide on a governance model. The scenarios in this report suggest that the most efficient model would be that the Hub is a Town-owned asset that is managed by an incorporated non-profit Board of Directors however there are several alternatives discussed in this report. The governance model will drive future grant applications, fundraising efforts, concept development, and partnerships.
- The Steering Committee would be well served to liaise with groups such as the John Howard Society Niagara who have proven expertise with social innovation

- The Hub should be located in Crystal Beach or very near to it in Ridgeway. This is based on the social determinants of health evidence, transportation logistics, demographic evidence, survey results and the fact that this area has far fewer health and social support services than other areas of the Town. Choosing this location will also address similar needs in Ridgeway. The North End does demonstrate need in regards to social determinants of health however they do not face a sparsity of services nor transportation challenges of the same magnitude.
- The Steering Committee needs to decide on the concept soon. Most importantly, do they think that they need to address the housing issues mentioned in the study and the survey or not? The answer to this question will drive location.
- If housing is seen as part of the Hub mandate, the location should be at the Ridgeway-Crystal Beach High School as there is suitable land for up to 70 units of single 1050 square foot homes and townhouses
- If housing is not part of the Hub mandate, the location should be behind the library at the Crystal Ridge Community Centre since this is Townland adjacent to an amazing outdoor park, library, banquet hall and skating rink
- The Steering Committee and the Town should begin building a relationship with trusted developers well before the project is set to begin but after governance and concept have been decided. If the RCBHS is chosen, a developer with experience renovating high schools is critical as this is a specialized skill set
- The Hub should include a design to allow for the integration of medical services. Bridges Community Centre would be a natural tenant and perhaps an anchor tenant. The design should incorporate the ability to house ancillary health services and a multi-purpose workout gym
- The Hub should become the new meeting place for seniors and have Beachcombers as an anchor tenant
- The Hub should house social initiatives such as food/clothing bank and Advancing Crystal Beach and/or the Salvation Army could be anchor tenants. There should be a mix of private offices and cubicles for itinerant services
- There is an overwhelming demand for mental health/addictions services by all age groups and demographics in this geographic area. There must be a concerted effort to get both publicly funded and private counselling at the Hub
- The high demand for government services can be satisfied with a properly trained and informed reception staff. The reception area should also be a drop-in area that has a coffee kiosk. This would fulfill the huge demand for unstructured meeting space

- Youth programming should not be overlooked. Perhaps the YMCA or Boys and Girls Club would rent space and provide child and youth activities. A multi-purpose sectional gymnasium would allow for recreational opportunities for the entire community including youth
- The Hub should include a social innovation area for entrepreneurs needing occasional office space. There should be a Board room for both these folks or any other community group that needs an official meeting space
- The Hub should be part of Fort Erie's ongoing efforts at reconciliation with the Indigenous community. The waiting room/informal/drop-in room should have maps, information, and displays that show the true history of the South Coast of Niagara. The Fort Erie museum could be an important partner in this effort as long as displays are educating our community that Indigenous people still maintain rights to the land and are a vibrant group today. Policy and procedures should be developed to ensure Indigenous people can feel at home in this Hub. Perhaps the name of the Hub might include some efforts to this end as well.

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APPENDICES

NIAGARA REGION EDI 2011 - [LINK](#)

CITIZENS SURVEY RAW DATA - [Link](#)

CRYSTAL BEACH RIDGEWAY SCHOOL SITE PLANS

Current photo album of school exterior and interior: January 21, 2019 – Link below

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/1XAhdaTQb7vEPPrR38>

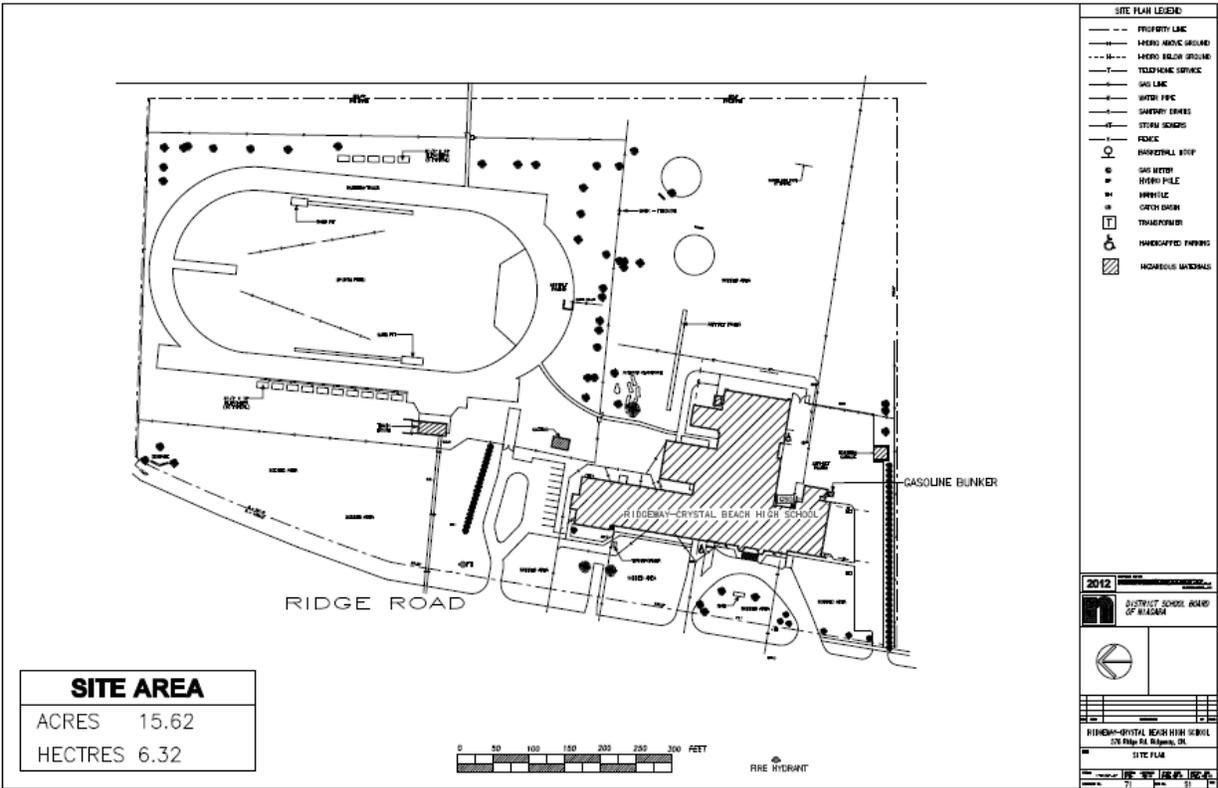


Figure 23 Ridgeway-Crystal Beach School General Site Plan

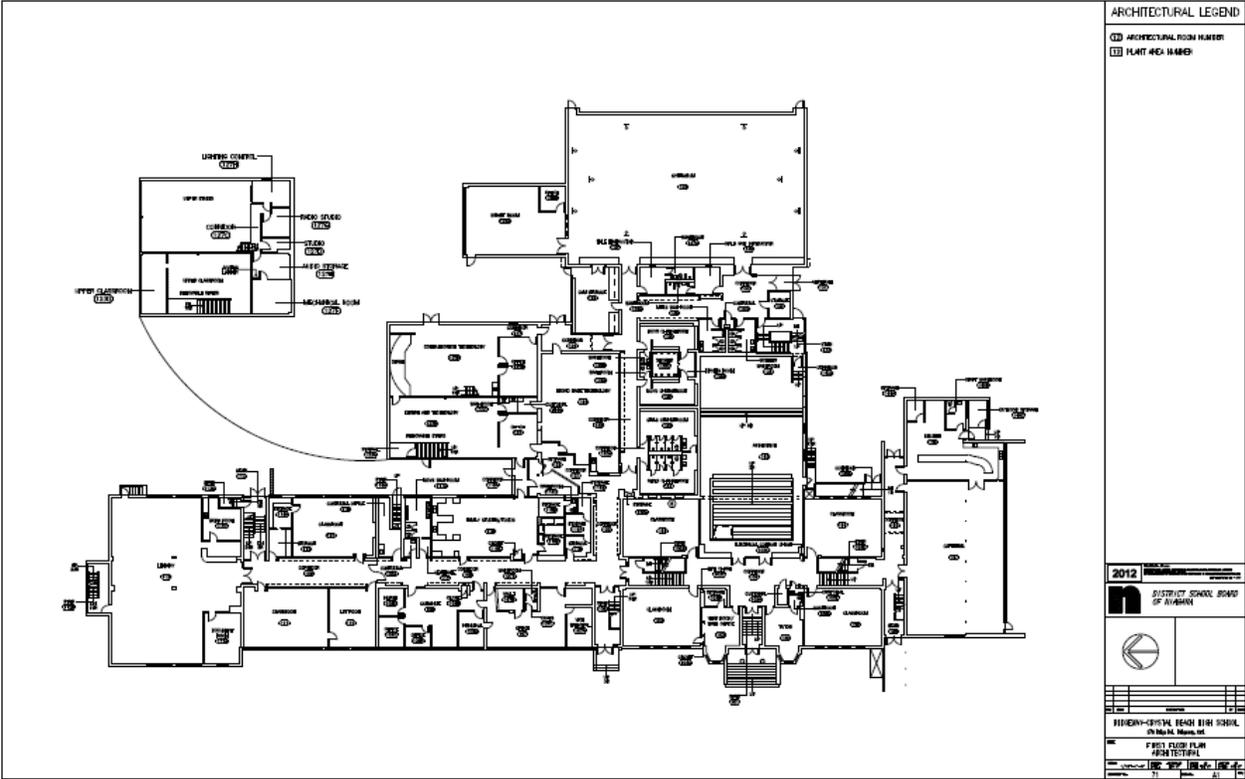


Figure 24 1st Floor Site Plan

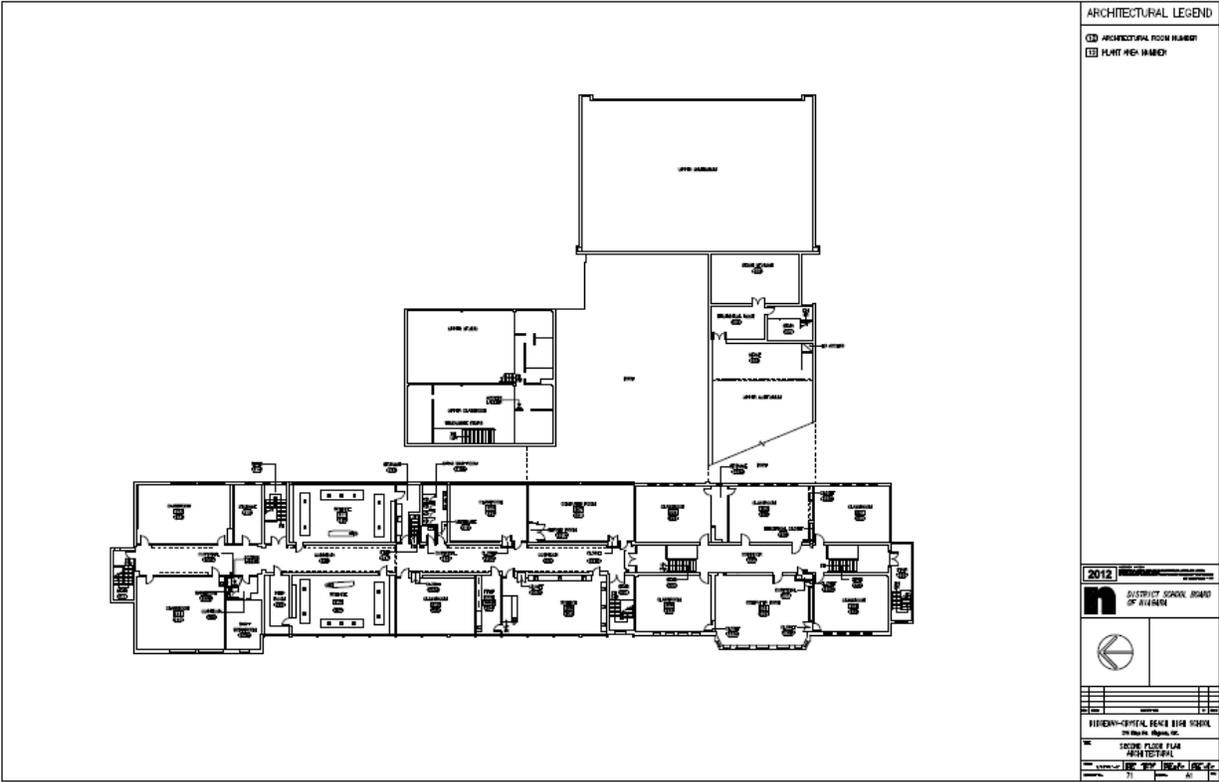


Figure 25 2nd Floor Site Plan

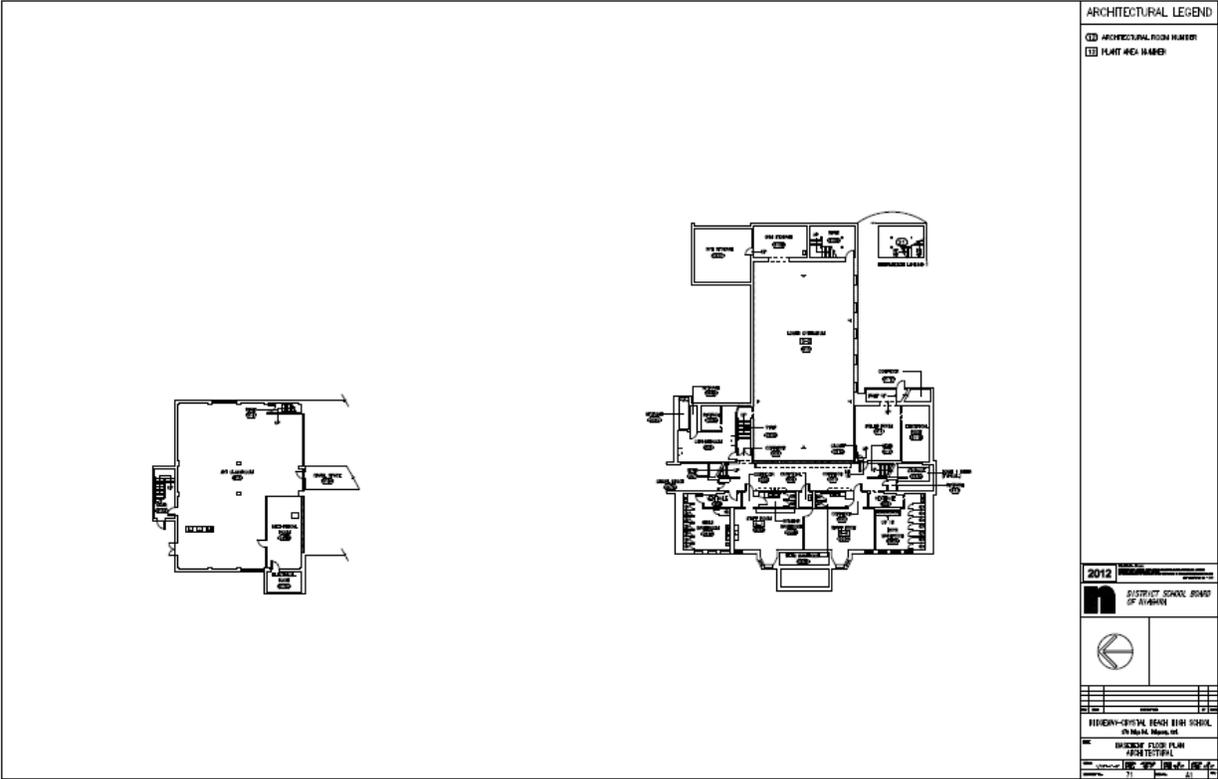


Figure 26 Basement Site Plan

CRYSTAL RIDGE CENTRE ENGINEERING:

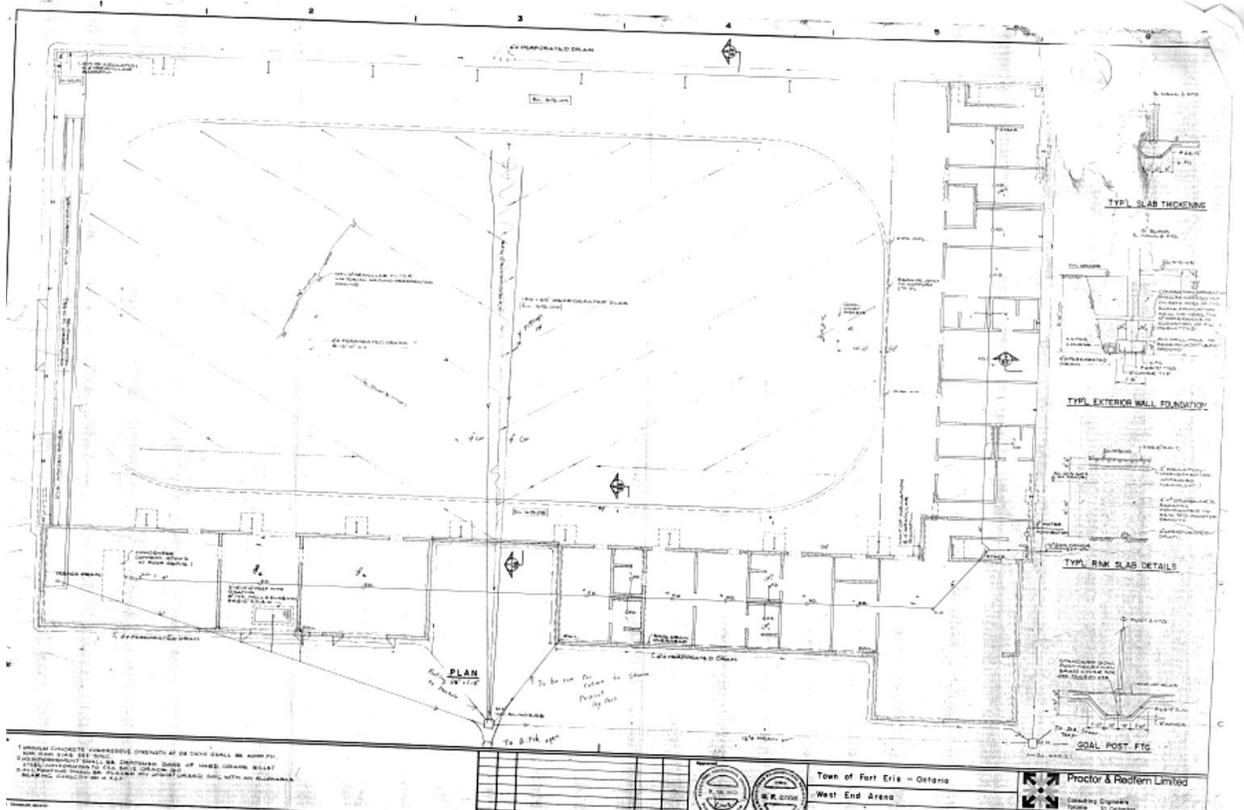


Figure 27 Crystal Ridge Centre Engineering Plans

Crystal Ridge Centre Photo Album January 21, 2019 -Link

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/9njrUCkVrRvVnTvb8>

Crystal Ridge Centre Engineering Plan

<https://mcleanconsultinggroup-my.sharepoint.com/:b:/p/mitch/EWA1b67q1uhAvzHxBq0FoWIBjzoDnHH1qZfPFsAnfidISA?e=uWqUoh>



Engineering_418.p
df

CRYSTAL RIDGE CENTRE MASTER PLAN



UPDATED PARK MASTER PLAN - 2017
SCALE 1:750

CRYSTAL RIDGE PARK IMPROVEMENTS
TOWN OF FORT ERIE



Crystal Ridge Centre Facilities Assessment – Link

https://mcleanconsultinggroup-my.sharepoint.com/:x/p/mitch/EfaPWhKftO5DpmcHzRYy_FABzoRAQ0fJ9Fn-nuyPF-xwQA?e=IIHtcU



Crystal Ridge Arena
- Facility Assessment

Crystal Ridge Centre Operation Costs – Link

<https://mcleanconsultinggroup-my.sharepoint.com/:x/p/mitch/EZpGAfDPdOhKtIXKoyuSOYIBts1hHyAhg6Nbbneu3sRZoA?e=DKJl25>



Crystal Ridge Arena
- Operating Costs.xl

QUESTION 12: ANY PRIORITIES IN YOUR NEIGHBOURHOOD NOT LISTED HERE?

as part of food bank... could offer training /cooking of healthy meals if had community kitchen or offer a class to cook large qty meals to freeze/ sell at cost
1. information centre - spot to access all the service 2. Transportation Services
A clearer local bus schedule
A coffee house with outside patio seating for social gathering
A farmers' market would be beneficial in either the Bridge burg or Peace Bridge Area.
a good bakery and deli that is economical
A good grocery store
A good grocery store and a permanent liquor store
a good high school, get rid of gfess and bring back fess and Ridgeway high
A place that teens can hang out that are in the evenings, not necessarily sports or fitness related, something that encourages other things - music, art, gaming and whatever kids who do not have somewhere to go Friday and Saturday night. They need a neutral
a place to work out that doesn't cost an arm and leg
A store
A walk-in clinic
A walk-in doctor's clinic
Accessibility including in government services building. And services for physical disabilities
Access to beaches
Access to the internet
Accessibility
Adult recreational sports
affordable housing
affordable housing
Affordable housing (not just geared to income, but affordable rent for those who live in the middle-income range, who do not qualify for gov't supports)
Affordable senior housing apt geared to income.
age in place housing
An updated YMCA, like Niagara Falls, would address most needs in this community. all the services are here but spread out and unwelcoming so far.
Anti Bullying Programs
Any facilities or services that will make child care affordable.
Art Classes and Music Lessons
Art therapy workshops
Artists' Meeting Space in West End

Assisted Living facility for elderly
ATV snowmobile dirt bike trails place for motorized recreational vehicles to legally ride. true multi-use trails to include all possible trail users.
Bank with ATM machine
barrier free housing is a better description than senior housing, segregation is not a good thing for a neighbourhood
Beach Maintenance
better access to public beaches, safer streets, and wider streets, no sidewalks but multi-use path instead
Bring back services that have been taken away to other outside locations" school boards, hospitals, and test sites etc.
build a help centre for people that think there are more than two genders
Children need a safe space to play and a pool
Children's playground
Civic activities
clear communication of services, qualification of accessibility and a simple easy means to find information on the services
Clothing
community centre which has organized recreation and drop-in programs for all ages
community garden
Community gardens that are led by knowledgeable people or organizations.
community information center and electronic bulletin board/town Cryer & community cheerleader
Community kitchen
computer access
Computer Training/Internet Cafe
continuing care retirement community which offers various levels of affordable senior housing .. i.e independent living, assisted living, memory care, long term care
coop
Crystal Beach has is an ever-increasing area for retirees, and yet has a downtown that has been derelict for far too long This area should be prioritized, and requires at least 3-4 "anchor tenants" - such as an LCBO, a Grocery store, bank or credit union
Crystal Beach Museum
Cultural space ... art gallery, museum display space
curbs and sidewalks
daily soup kitchen, life skills training for people who have strokes, developmentally disabled, others
Definitely shopping and the lack thereof! Clothing in particular!

doctor
Doctor - We need to drive to Niagara Falls for our doctor
Doesn't require a vehicle to access, (i.e. full sidewalk, fully-accessible for mobility devices, transit access)
Dog park
dog park
Dog park
Dog Park
Driver Testing
Easier transportation, legal help, mental health and addictions
education around drug prevention and life skills training
Family Doctors
Financial and life skills counselling
Food Basics
Free counselling for public
Full medical centre.
FULL-TIME DOCTORS AVAILABLE 7 DAYS A WEEK, PHYSIOTHERAPY, SPINAL DECOMPRESSION, MASSAGE, CHIROPRACTOR ETC. & FITNESS POOL
Game Room
Gas station
Good
Groceries
Grocery store
Grocery store
Grocery Store
Group of health specialists
Health Care - urgent care to replace DMH services if it doesn't stay open as 24 hours Urgent Care
Health care facility, ie Doc. Nurse Practitioner, psychologist, counselor
help for seniors - transportation, support
Hope any plan will get Jarvis Street cleaned up and turned into a shopping, entertainment and dining area.
Hospital
Housing
Housing for Seniors
Housing for troubled teens
Housing housing housing

I don't believe the role of a municipal government is to provide these services. There are other agencies or levels of government mandated to deal with this. This survey is biased in that it assumes that Hub's will exist. Focus on municipal services, tax
improved communications to news and activities in FE - newspapers are often delivered late - the info is old or stale or dates passed
Increase access to health care
indoor children play area
Indoor pool
indoor tennis
Infrastructure Committee (roads and drainage)
Job training
lab test, diabetic clinic pet inoculation and vet
Laundromat
LCBO
LGBTQ centre
Local Policing
Maker space for youths and adults
medical clinic
Medical Clinic
medical clinic
More assisted living accommodation
more garbage containers at the boat ramp park in CB through the winter for dog stool and poop and general garbage. Currently, everything is going in the recycle bins. It's disgusting.
More grocery store choices and gas stations
More senior housing & services
More senior services easily accessible.
N/A
NA
natural areas
near centennial library
Nothing
Number 9 has nothing I agree with.....
permanent LCBO to save driving time to Fort Erie or Port Colborne; several Doctors who care about seniors
pickleball
PLACE FOR THE YOUNG TO DANCE. A PLACE FOR THE OLDER TO DANCE A DANCE HALL like there used to be
Please get the hospital built.
police representation, walk in office to see our local councillors ,

POOL, CHIROPRACTOR, MASSAGE, NUTRITIONIST, PHYSIOTHERAPY, DANCING,
Pot Holes
programs for youth and adults with disabilities
put in a Splash pad for Mom and the Kids like Ridgeway did concerts on the weekends help make Jarvis St the place to be.
Rental accommodation
Rental apartments/housing for people of all ages
Respite care
rides that are reasonable and not waiting long
Ridgeway is doing fine compared to other areas of Fort Erie
Ridgeway or Crystal Beach could use a retirement home.
Road maintenance
Scrap all affordable housing initiatives in Fort Erie and let the market dictate prices. We are on the cusp of greatness, especially in Ridgeway, Crystal Beach and Stevensville. Former worthless properties now attracting wealth and prosperity.
Seasonal attractions such as outdoor restaurants in upgraded beaches
Senior Housing
Seniors Activities Programs
senior's apartments are needed
Seniors Centre
Seniors Daycare Service and young adult drop-in center
Services for victims of child abuse and prevention
Sexual Assault Crisis Centre
The sidewalk on Main Street to Tim's/Garden Center
sidewalks and reasonable transportation wait times and fees
Skatepark
social events for younger adults
Social opportunities to gather to discuss current topics, movies, share cooking & meals, create crafts/projects, etc.
Something for kids to do and maybe something for adults.
somewhere to dance and socialize
Soup Kitchen or shelter
Specific doctors. Pediatrician, O.B/Gyno
speed bumps on derby road
Speed control and road management. Stop closing road allowances!
speed control on derby road
Sports Centre

squash courts
Super Market
swimming pool
Tax Services
There is nothing to link people in our neighbourhood. Schools have closed and Jarvis St is dead. We need a community hub that is a positive space for neighbors to meet and have activities that they can do together. We need a sense of community spirit.
there r 2 genders
These questions are skewed, and the multiple choice answers should have a window for comments. The scope and possible mission statement should be at the top so as to put responses in proper context.
Transportation service (i.e) bus, taxi, Uber
transportation services, hairdressers & spa services, clothing store and laundry/cleaner, housekeeping - small repair - personal services
Trash removal public spaces (beaches)
U.S./Cdn. money changing especially for our American visitors/residents. Accounting/tax advice. Travel/touring advice. Insurance agency.
Urgent Care Clinic
Use the beautiful riverfront to advantage.
Volunteers to drive seniors to the Dr
walk in clinic is a must!!!!
Walk-in medical clinic
We have lots of programs and things to do for children, teens, young adults as they are active and like to do crafts, sports, bars. We desperately need something for the very elderly, the not so active. My elderly mother lives with me and there is not m
We in Ridgeway need more shopping. Value mart just rips us off.
we just don't have much out here.
we need a free basketball court, and recreational center
we need a parking ram near the Beach.
We need a rec centre that has services in it. A great model of one would be the community centre in St. Albert Alberta. It has indoor soccer and basketball spaces and arena, meeting rooms, a indoor children's playground as well as a bunch of essential service
winter months indoor free pool for swimming
With the new Gilmore lodge location, it would be essential to have Lab, Doctor, and supporting services in that area, to service the seniors, and to draw into it, others for medical, social and rehab services
Women's and Men's Shelters
You can combine a youth, daycare and seniors centre all In one designated building and include a workout training also within the space

You have not asked if I think we can afford a community hub and I do not think we can. Our population is too small and scattered. We have a community center in Ridgeway that is dominated by the Lions if it was public I think we could save a a lot of mon
The youth centre, activities and game centre or park
Youth Group

QUESTION 17: DO YOU HAVE ANY OTHER THOUGHTS YOU WOULD LIKE TO SHARE REGARDING THE PLANNING OF A COMMUNITY HUB IN FORT ERIE?

I see no mention of any of the arts, library, literacy, ESL or help with homework, not everyone is into sports and recreational games.
If you put in a place for parents to bring children in crap weather other than the JOKE of the YMCA that no honest working person can afford, then I would, otherwise no. We also need food basic, Sobey's is overpriced and No Frills is a dump
As We are only in Crystal Beach in the summer, and I will be 81 years old, I would like to volunteer a minimum amount of time. I think permanent residences are the best suited. When we were younger, it was a relief to know that a doctor and a dentist wa
No it was good
The vacant school -corner of Wintemute and Central -would be a perfect hub. it has rooms around the perimeter for shops and offices and a large central core, a gym with stage and two large rooms for seniors and day care. The Town provided money to build
*****Where ever the hub is, there needs to be a resource contact which means one person or two people who can direct people to the different service in the Fort Erie Community.**** I'm not even certain that a hub in the sense of a building is what is imp
a central location for several service groups or assistance groups would be a great convenience.
A centre like the McBain centre in Niagara falls would address many of the needs of Fort Erie. The Y here is outdated and small for the number of residents currently. Fort Erie has many services on paper but most are not accessed because they are not know
A community hub should include medical help, banking facilities, recreational facilities, food outlets etc to become interesting to the community. Right now, Crystal Beach has very few of these things. A beach does not a community make. We must go beyond
A community hub should not be a place hidden away but rather right in the heart of a CBD to create traffic for local businesses.

A community hub should not be located In a residential areas! Fort Erie high school has been relocated out of a residential area therefore we don't need to replace it with a hub of any sort! Recreational facilities to me, is far more acceptable.
A good location might be where the new Gilmore Lodge will be built. Gear the annual fee to income.
A lot of the services and facilities suggested here exist scattered throughout Fort Erie. The lack of a walk in clinic and 24 hour drug store in Ridgeway is appalling given the number of seniors who live here. We also need a physio therapy clinic and a s
A need for employment, not related to retail. Possible resource for manufacturing jobs and development centre
a place to socialize, have a coffee, chat, etc.
A place where old and young alike can go and get answers to their concerns and get action needed. A place for local meetings important to the community. Close medical services for all here.
a review of services throughout FE needs to be done as many services already exist - youth centres have been tried in the past and not properly run.
Access to medical service should be the priority.
Admittance to the public beach @Crystal/Bay Beach should require a nominal charge [\$2.00-5.00] per person [non-residents of Fort Erie with some type of identification system for property owners to would allow beach access. Fees collected should be used
affordable and safe housing for seniors
affordable housing
Again, this survey does not ask the fundamental question do we need a community hub. Simply make the Community Center run by the Lions a truly public facility and we are good and we do not need to spend millions of dollars.
An admirable initiative. I suggest avoiding making it a hub exclusively or primarily directed at underprivileged people. Preferable to focus on helping young people to lay a foundation for a strong future.
enough surveys -we need action.
any fees should be according to income, so everyone is able to take advantage of the service
Any improvement would be very beneficial
Anything geared to children spalsh pads, parks, swings, a closer drug store and grocery store, a gym to workout with child care, seniors centre, public pool, docts and dentists etc.
Anything greater than a 15 drive makes no sense. As you can get to any other city in the region within that time. Having medical services located in quarters to daycare and recreational facilities will help promote health in visitors. As well as charging
Arts and Theatre, Book Clubs

Awesome Idea
because of excessive population growth in crystal beach and ridgeway new and more ammenities are encouraged.
Bernard Beach single garbage barrel is not enough to handle the increased use. Loosen restrictions on building and business permits and taxes to invite more construction and business activity. Fort Erie is rife in staleness due to red tape and permit time
Best Of Luck
better relations between home builders and permit department
Confused as to need. Seems services will all be redundant to existing services or is the expectation that any service selected be forced to move into such a facility? Who will pay for the expense to build and operate? Who is the landlord? I did not wan
consider pay as you go for some activities after hours use of the new high school on Garrison language classes i.e. Spanish or ESL or cooking classes computer skills or meditation
Consider the hubs we already have, Extend and improve them --- down Town Ridgeway and Jarvis St. Creating a hub within a half mile of Downtown Ridgway would suck the life out of it. As it did with Jarvis St. when a planner and a rash council decided.
Create employment opportunities at the hub as opposed to all volunteers
Crystal beach is in dire need of senior and geared to income housing and a doctor as well as another grocery store like no frills
Crystal Beach needs services that would otherwise be sought out in Ridgeway such as grocery store. Also a safe route for non-drivers to get to Ridgeway without having to risk lives crossing at Far Rd and Gorham rd. A community centre including a gym.
desperate need for affordable seniors housing
Do not purchase land. Use property of the Town of Fort Erie.
Dr. And local blood lab would be nice, many have to depend on others to take them to the other end of town.
Financial assistance for a membership for those who need it.
First and foremost we need a doctor in town plus activities for young people so they don't roam the streets at 1am.
Focus on social services. Do not create a space that weakens other organizations and businesses that are trying to survive. There are already many senior organizations, arts organizations and sports groups that act as a hub. Do not take the Walmart approach
Food and Beverage capability for meetings and myriad community events and social (welfare) food services
Fort Erie is the most racist place I've lived - we need to have some sort of cultural awareness in this community. I get called things like N*gger, blackie, and other derogatory terms DAILY...I would not have moved here if I knew it was this bad.
from a engineer. ft Erie has a huge problem as does the whole of Canada. we are lacking politicians with big visions who understand that this country needs a major industrial job strategy. our current politicos at federal /provincial /regional are inept i

GET RID OF GFESS
get rid of gfess it sucks, bring ridgeway back it was awesome or maybe build a new school on the property of ridgeway high school. also change the gender option on this quiz to just male or female because that's the only genders there are silly
Give unemployed people the chance to earn money by getting rid of/beautifying old dilapidated buildings in the area and working on an aggressive anti-litter campaign.
Great idea!! Would love to see a community hub come to crystal beach
Great step in revitalizing our community. Thanks!
have hot young employees;)
Have the Friendship trail more appealing, more accessible to food and drinks
Health care availability should take the highest priority, mental health should be included in this.
help with car pooling
Help with transportation
helping each other always with love
Housing and larger senior centre
How to focus on youth development as well as support for residents? How to create community spaces that are inclusive to all community members?
I answered the first items in some of your questions because there is no "ONE" service, etc. needed in any centre. Financial amount charged would depend on services offered. Somehow you missed that this is a west end driven project paid for with west end
I believe Fort Erie needs a North End community Hub
I believe that there should be free social services to support vulnerable people combined with private sector services for the wealthier residents.
I believe the community hub should be place in the west end because of the HUGE deficiency in services in the west end.
I believe we need a hub in the west end of Fort Erie. Regardless of location, public transportation needs to be prioritized in the planning process.
I do not want any other government services. It is a duplication of existing services and people that are low income already do not work and have all the time in a day to visit these services and get free bus fare. Stop the abuse of our taxes. Your sur
I don't think it's feasible to have all the services in each spot but there should be some way to access those supports virtually or expand the access to some regional services by having certain days or weeks scheduled. Also, better access to Service Cana
I feel I pay enough property taxes and I don't feel a need for dentists, or health clinics. What we need is a hospital in the southern area for the aging population and retirees coming to this area! We don't need another clinic!

<p>I found this survey a bit confusing...question 10 didn't include anything I thought was needed. Also, how would you attach a monetary value to a membership without knowing what service you are paying to access? Also, what exactly is a community hub - what</p>
<p>I guess it goes without saying that the Hub should be EASILY accessible by public transit, ie not at the end of a long loop from the various communities that make up the Town? We need various sizes of meeting rooms, from 50 or more people to just break o</p>
<p>I have no problem with a hub being developed but don't feel it is something the town should be spending tax dollars on. This sounds like something for private investors with maybe a regional or provincial grant.</p>
<p>I live in RBTL. We have a privately funded community solution which we all volunteer to support activities in. Our need is therefore less than many of the other areas mentioned. PLEASE NOTE: Why not target something where you attract visitors?</p>
<p>I think Crystal Beach really needs a central gathering place/community centre to provide a focal point for the residents there</p>
<p>I think in crystal beach more involvement of the US residents can be considered to improve the community dynamics. With this service focus initiative, you need to make sure there is public transportation accessible and established prior to determine where</p>
<p>I think it should be for all ages, however with the view that activities should be able to co-exist.</p>
<p>I think its a great idea.... and that the individuals who chose no casino and less jobsshould pay for any facility shortcomings after grant totals are assessed.</p>
<p>I think there should be a community hub at the Crystal Ridge centre as it is between Ridgeway and Crystal Beach and already has recreational and library services located in this location. In Crystal Beach specifically I would like to see more local service</p>
<p>I think there should be an office that has information available for what programs are available to help, health issues such as Alzheimer's for the caregivers or autism, help that is available for Seniors such as transportation, staying in homes etc., help</p>
<p>I think we need a community hub that services all the communities in Fort Erie i.e. LGBTQ, Senior, marginalized, homeless, new immigrants, youth and people of colour. It will be the only way it will be a success. It must be inclusive from the outset!</p>
<p>I think we need more after school options for kids. Especially those with low income families.</p>
<p>I would hope that like community centres in other areas ... a community hub recreation area would have organized classes, drop-in activities, work out rooms with machines/ weights, large gyms for multiple recreation opportunities that the community mem</p>
<p>I would like to see more things in Crystal Beach. More and More people are moving here to retire. So maybe a grocery store and more things available for seniors. A lot of things are only available in Fort Erie we need many things in Crystal beach. Also</p>
<p>I would like to see social needs for interaction/community (drop in/coffee hours, book/movie/music/current issue discussions, cooking/meal sharing, craft projects, prep for community events, etc.) to be addressed as equally as practical needs (doctor, den</p>

I would like to see something that encompasses all age groups.
I would love a space where there is coordination of services, volunteer opportunities and a way to adapt to the needs of the community as they change. Our population is quite transient and it is difficult to feel attached to the community when it is in co
I would love to have aspects of it be useful for teens, whether that be counselling or an activity space.
I would love to see Our Jarvis Street Bridgeburg be a place we could be proud of and have our American neighbours come to that area and stay shop dine and spend time and money. What a beautiful spot it could be for all. . Coffee shops, Spa, deli, nice l
I would not really travel to a community hub in fort erie, as I live in the ridgeway/crystal beach area. May there needs to be one on each end of town.
I'll come to a focus group. Thank you
I'd like to see a early years centre in the hub or something to do with the little ones to play after work. There's no place to go especially in the winter to burn of energy.
If the hub is planned to be located in Fort Erie, transportation services should be available for the people in the outlying communities to get to access the center
if you build it they will come
Im not sure
I'm unclear what you mean by a community hub? Commercially we need to have more available to a community this size (Fort Erie). It would benefit a bigger cross section of the community to have better shopping and recreational facilities locally. Our co
In bad need of a college campus for the youth
In question 16 it asks how minutes you are willing to travel, but it doesn't indicate the form transportation, I have selected 10 to 15 mins with the assumption you meant the amount of time it would take to walk.
in urban centre of Fort Erie
Isn't the church doing this now for the community?
It is a fabulous idea and I would be willing to volunteer now in the organization phase. The old Ridgeway-Crystal Beach high school would make an outstanding location as many of the issues raised here can be found in that building.
It is difficult to get people from the communities to work with one another as they do not see themselves as part of the bigger picture. That may be the biggest hurdle to jump...
It needs to include Crystal Beach. We pay the same taxes but we get Ridgeway and the Beach access mashed together. Eg: library, ice rink. We desperately need doctors and our area has need of a place to go for drug dependency.
It should be placed in a location near other community services or shops, has full sidewalk and barrier-free access and doesn't require users to arrive by car (i.e. a transit stop nearby)
It should have activities for all age groups especially the young, senior housing also.
It will be great to have the municipality support this project from our tax payer money.
It would be a crying shame if the primary school in Crystal Beach isn't converted to a community hub!

<p>It would be great to have all necessary services available at one location - not only seniors but for the youth as well - where there is a community centre for them to take part in activities it would maybe lessen the need for drug use.</p>
<p>It would be great to have more services in Ridgeway, Crystal Beach. However, the real need is in urban Fort Erie/Bridgeburg. Improving that area makes the whole area better for everyone.</p>
<p>It would be nice to have a way of sharing transportation as there is limited public transit in this area, especially for seniors and people with limited resources.</p>
<p>Just expand the Leisureplex & YMCA. Why waste funding on additional new bricks and mortar development when it already exists? As for a membership fee; Property Tax in Fort Erie is top quartile provincially. We already pay for it.</p>
<p>Keep getting residents input</p>
<p>KEEP THE RUNNING TRACK AND GYMNASIUM AND VARIOUS CLASSROOMS INTACT SO THEY CAN BE USED FOR SENIOR SPORT ACTIVITIES SUCH AS BIKING, WALKING, CROSS COUNTRY SKIING ETC. CLASSROOMS COULD BE USED FOR VARIOUS MEETING ROOMS, MEDICAL, DENTAL, COUNSELLING ETC. IT</p>
<p>KEEP THE RUNNING TRACK AND GYMNASIUM AND VARIOUS CLASSROOMS INTACT SO THEY CAN BE USED FOR SENIOR SPORT ACTIVITIES SUCH AS BIKING, WALKING, CROSS COUNTRY SKIING ETC. CLASSROOMS COULD BE USED FOR VARIOUS MEETING ROOMS, MEDICAL, DENTAL, COUNSELLING ETC. IT</p>
<p>Lack of affordable housing and restrictions on certain development is needed on people who dont' care about the community and don't care about preserving what makes Crystal Beach great- small town feel, quaint, etc etc. beautiful nature which makes it a t</p>
<p>large grocery store is badly needed</p>
<p>let's make Cystal Beach a great place to live</p>
<p>Lets try not to build this under the fog of political correctness but rather under the clear sky of need!!</p>
<p>Look after the people over 75 or 80. They have the least social activities to take advantage of in Fort Erie. We don't need money spent on kids and the 20-50 year olds as they are either in school or working and there is enough recreational activities f</p>
<p>Lots of seniors moving here and with the amount of property races we are paying we should at least have services. Not much at all in ridgeway. If nothing comes they will be many people moving away.</p>
<p>Love thy neighbor as yourself.</p>
<p>Low Income Housing. Any services are greatly needed, esp Doctors and low income housing is in desperate need in Fort Erie.</p>
<p>Make it great - active kids, place to learn better life skills, avoid drug use, or get free faster mental health help. Acupuncture and physio combine with an ON SITE LAB! not left to be ill and to die without pain or injury relief!! access to timely he</p>
<p>Make it kids friendly adding a daycare and drug store would be most important and a doctors office would be great to. Maybe a bank. Thanks you for making this survey.</p>
<p>make sure public transit goes near location. all can be done to network resources is a great idea</p>
<p>make the recreational park free</p>
<p>Mental health & counselling are the tops!!</p>

<p>Mental health care is desperately needed across the region. Once individuals have access to counselling and mental wellness services they gain confidence, motivation and are able to give back to the community. Time to make mental health a priority! As fa</p>
<p>Mental health counselling is huge. An affordable grocery store. An indoor playground for children would be fantastic. A bakery.</p>
<p>Model it using Community Hubs in existence in other communities that is working for the end user, and not for the politicians self promotion</p>
<p>More Dr.s are defiantly required</p>
<p>More for seniors</p>
<p>Most of the services listed here are already available in greater Fort Erie. With bus service now available in town, residents have access to all services in town This community Hub is a waste of Money. Put your funding into public transit for residents</p>
<p>Music therapy - circles, instruction etc.</p>
<p>My concern is that Fort Erie does not have activities that appeal to students who want to "go out" that do not only involve sports, or fitness, or just "hanging around", which can lead to trouble - A fun place that does not encourage "partying".</p>
<p>Need better housing options ... seems only high end development being done</p>
<p>Need family doctors, need and odsp office, need services for youth and addiction services like a Raam clinic in Hamilton.</p>
<p>Need for family doctors!!!!!! And odsp office as well as disabled adult developmental and social support services and programs</p>
<p>need police and ambulance</p>
<p>need recreation opportunities for all age groups..... would love to play soccer for over 20's but nothing exists or maybe isn't publicized properly Being a relative newcomer to the area... finding it very difficult to connect with others my age</p>
<p>need varied services to assist all ages.</p>
<p>Needs to be another grocery store and gas station in Ridgeway Crystal Beach area</p>
<p>Not at this time</p>
<p>Not interested in Fort Erie as I do not drive. I can not access facilities here in niagara falls because they are spread out.</p>
<p>Nothing at this time</p>
<p>Only 2 genders</p>
<p>Other then in Ridgeway the west end of Fort Erie has no real services - Crystal Beach will close it's fire hall and will have no public or private services.</p>

OUR AREA IS GROWING SO VERY QUICKLY. I ONLY HOPE AND FEEL IT IS SO VERY IMPORTANT THAT CAREFUL CONSIDERATION WILL BE GIVEN TO DEVELOPMENT AND THE INFUSTRUCTER. SO MANY OF OUR DISEASED TREES HAVE COME DOWN. BUT RESPECT MUST BE GIVEN TO KEEP OUR HEALTH
our community does have some of the services listed like a senior centre/ doctor ..etc but my answers reflect what I believe a community hub needs.
parking
Part Time Job
participation from other groups in Crystal Beach ie: Friends of CB and BIA
Partner with Library for many programs is a good use of money and resources to keep costs down.
Please do NOT employ any supposedly officially trained planning people. Experts in their respective fields of ACTUAL SERVICE WORK , to seniors ,medical ,indigenous , youth , etc. ... need to be facilitated by a fiscally responsible motivator . This
Please do this. It's a great idea no matter where it goes in Fort Erie and My family would love to be a part of it.
Please make sure there is enough support and services for the community
proper area for kids to play and connect
Public schools are natural hubs that connect families in a neighbourhood. When they are closed there is a void in those neighbourhoods. Bridgeburg has been hit very hard with the closings of Rose Seaton, Fort Erie Elementary and FESS. There is a need to s
put it in the north end, put a weed store in there also
Put together some sort of volunteer program involving seniors helping young people or visa versa...lots of seniors in this area.....could help keep kids out of trouble...give older people something to focus on. Kitchen facilities would make the hub more u
Question 8 I checked off a lot of "wants" for my neighbourhood that could be fulfilled with a grocery store that had a pharmacy in it that also carried hardware store supplies . I would like adult support because I have an adult with special needs and th
Reasonable grocery store
Recreational activities is paramount. Not just for kids but adults as well.
Retraining for those who lose their jobs
Ridgeway is extremely lacking in accessible health care to support the significant senior population that has chosen to retire here.
Self sustaining, with leadership development and accountability, mentor and peer support; and succession planning and the nonprofits able to coordinate and meet before events to iron out details, and there to help each other for bigger events/issues. An i
Should include housing,social and re relational services

Simply make the existing YMCA more affordable for everyday use and the town won't have to build anything new. It is presently too expensive to use and that is a shame because more people would use it if the price was more affordable.
So many places in area are not accessible, not acceptable!
Some individuals who would be a great resource to ask re: planning/community needs is the staff at South Niagara Life Ministries. They have been serving those in the GFEA for over 20 years and have direct knowledge of where big needs are. They are a Chris
Some service providers could pay a reasonable rent for their space..the cost of heat and electricity is the heavy part of the bills..
something for the youth. All we have in the entire town is a YMCA that 80% of the population CAN NOT afford. If you want to keep the kids busy and out of trouble you need to offer something free or minimal charge...Teen dances and functions...sports lik
Stevensville Work Out area and Line dance
Talk about spoon feeding your citizens and at what cost! Fort Erie has some of the highest tax rates in the province and you want people servicing medical. legal, workout facilities. Ever hear of the YMCA, Indian and Northern Affairs, Ontario Welfare Serv
Thanks for getting this going. There is a great need for all levels of incomes.
The area has attracted a large number of retirees. Once this demographic becomes older there is currently no facility to house them. There is a definite need for Assisted Living facilities in the area
The Community Hub as I see it is for providing a range of individual services (see Q 11) for which a municipality is generally responsible for. Services such as Dentist, Doctor, Banking and other private services such as mental health councillors, obtain
The community Hub should be for those in need and not for pleasure.
The community seed to support the changing dynamic of aged persons within its boundaries, to the best of its abilities. The transportation infrastructure is not supportive of this communities need for care and preventative medical issues, as well as acces
The complete Ridgeway High School Property should be used for seniors and low-income housing, and not for new home development. The track at this location would be ideal for use by Seniors. We have enough new home development in this area adversely affe
The demographics in Greater Fort Erie are changing; the majority of newcomers to this Town are seniors from much larger urban centres, buying/building large homes that they probably will not be able to maintain in a few years and which, the majority of pe
the existing crystal ridge community centre should be utilized for community recreation not just weddings , bazaars, spaghetti suppers and ball hockey. many communities have a recreation department or volunteer community associations which organize comm
The goal of the community hub in Fort Erie should be to move the support services off of Jarvis Street. By bringing services together more people will be able to be helped, and Jarvis Street can become the town centre it should be, like Ridgeway and other
the hub must provide services the community asks for, rather than what staff or otherwise thinking is needed. All too often, with good intention, the services that are thought to be needed/required aren't what the people require or ask for. Once the data

<p>The Hub should provide the means and opportunity for young people, middle-aged adults and seniors to mingle by offering activities of universal interest such as cooking, chess, dancing, playing musical instruments, etc. Let's also consider programs that c</p>
<p>The North/Bridgeburg area could really use a community centre-like recreational place where people can gather, stay active, and promote health in a positive manner. This is also a densely populated area and is often overlooked when it comes to community.</p>
<p>The questions are redundant. I wouldn't pay a fee for a doctor but would consider paying for things that were provided for interest</p>
<p>The Ridgeway high school would be an ideal site for a new com hub</p>
<p>The tourism center across from the racetrack would accomodate everything</p>
<p>The Town of Fort Erie took away 2 councillors , because the Chamber of Commerce told them to do that, Willoughby Ward, needs it's own councillor, Stevensville councillors complain that they can't handle our area, even though nobody has seen him in 4 years</p>
<p>the youth need a place to go. The main branch of the library is not a recreation centre. The library has lost it's focus at the main branch the kids are out of control.</p>
<p>There are 2 under serviced areas in Fort Erie, Crystal Beach and the North End. These 2 areas are in need, however I believe that Crystal Beach has a higher need due to distance. Many people in Crystal Beach do not have access to services because they d</p>
<p>There are alot of low income families and individuals in the Fort Erie core that would benefit but the cost would need to be low for membership if there was one. I would be willing to pay a membership but I am not able to.</p>
<p>There is an error in this survey: Q14 is an "If yes" question relating to Q13. But even tho' I ticked off "No" for Q13, I couldn't submit this without putting something in Q14.</p>
<p>There is most likely a need for more than one community hub location since Fort Erie covers such a large area</p>
<p>There is only ONE walk-in clinic doctor's office in the area and that is located in Fort Erie- we need something in the west side, in Ridgeway or Crystal Beach.</p>
<p>There needs to also be more supports for single parent mothers and homeless supports for the community. There needs to be addiction or mental health tap in services as the crime and substance use is on a rise in Fort Erie, Ontario</p>
<p>This community hub should look at the needs of all citizens, including families, seniors, those with mental health concerns, low income, new immigrants & indigenous nations. But I also see this as a place for those to just come together in our community,</p>
<p>This community is growing faster as the years go by. We need future planning to reflect the needs of our seniors as they progress through their lives to the end with affordable care and housing to allow them to stay in the same area throughout their days.</p>
<p>This ctr should offer a myriad of activities to all ages. Especially activities that have young and old interacting together.</p>
<p>This is a fabulous idea. Sorry we didn't hear about it until the night of The Spirit of Christmas in Ridgeway. We would have gone to one of the Community Engagement sessions. Good luck and look forward to hearing how things develop.</p>
<p>This is a great idea. The more support for people the better.</p>

This is extremely needed
This would be a miracle for our community. Everything like Doctors, Lawyers, and Daycare in one place. I think many people should talk about this.
to find a dr for people who cant find one
Town History and heritage could be included to provide a larger sense of community
Townhouse style and/or apartment style housing for senior citizens, so they don't have to move out of the community.
transportation for those in need
transportation services, assisted living and in home personal assistance
travelling services to go to various communities
Use an old school - transit stops at hub
Use the municipalities budget
Use the vacant schools for programs and groups. Enlist volunteer materials/labour and other services to bring the Hub up to safety standards.
Utilize a community hub as one of several major steps required to help "fix" Crystal Beach. Since 1970 it has lost its main employer (crystal beach amusement park), Library, Town hall, Police station, Provincial gas office, 2 dedicated by-law enforcemen
Very important the Town of Fort Erie encourages both public funding and private investment into some of the abandoned bldgs in our town - recycle and re-use
We already have libraries with meeting rooms, community centres, senior centres, a new theatre at the high school, YMCA, legion halls, leisureplex, urgent care and many local churches are under utilized. What more do we need????? When will it end with a f
We already have some spots in place and more coming with the park at crystal ridge but I don't understand why the city has so many restrictions on places like Ridgeway Hockey who can offer so many of the sporting activities you mentioned in this survey. T
We are in desperate need of affordable housing for seniors and health care
we are more interested in senior needs. Others will have thing that are more important to them.
We are town that is expanding with senior residents. Nothing is happening in Fort Erie.Young people are living town.No jobs, no industry and we are just talking about Ridgeway,Chrystal Beach.Very sad
We definitely need more activities for children and teens
We have enough facilities in town already. Who is going to pay to maintain this new facility?
We have many areas of town that are so beautiful along the riverfront. There are many unused and deteriorating buildings in the area, the east end of Garrison, the bottom of Jarvis, the South End business area.
We need a larger Seniors center. The Beachcombers in Ridgeway needs more space.

We need Capitalist and Progressive Conservative educational services. All those Socialist social suggestions listed above breed laziness, drug use and increased crime. They promote depression, low self-esteem and poverty. Instead of Social programs tha
We need housing
We need more in Fort Erie's North End, where the majority of the lower or lower middle class are in the town. It needs to be able to be accessed by the transit. If it was within walking distance of my home and a price that is not crazy for my large family
we need more non sedentary recreation for seniors.
We need things for teens to do and places to hang out in the North end. Boredom equals trouble.
We need things for the young teens to do, a place to go
we need to have more free programs or activities for children
We pay an astronomical rate for property taxes here and feel that these services should be covered.
We pay high taxes for very little service from the town. Crystal Beach has very little to offer the influx of new residents and it is letting us Beach residents down.
We pay high taxes for very little service from the town. Crystal Beach has very little to offer the influx of new residents and it is letting us Beach residents down.
We would need to talk to community about reasonable price for annual fee.
Well qualified coordinator of services to be available to welcome and direct clients
what about a band shell in Crescent Park and have bands play sat nights. Stevensville has the amp theatre at zooz, welland has the illuminaqua on the canal, crystal beach has the big bands play at the water front park public boat launch. ridgeway has the
What about a community hub that focuses on kids and seniors! After school board games and card games etc. Services to get the community together
What is a community Hub?
What is odsp
Why can't the RCB High School be used. Even temporarily.. Why can't the High School be reused as an apartment building. At least the newer part, on the north side of the building. Seniors and persons with disabilities could use the lower levels.
Why is there no library on the list? I am unsure what a community hub is, Housing, Services, Healthcare, Retail Bussing is needed - Keep improving This!
With growth comes expansion and the Hub would be an important asset to the community. A place for people to meet, share thoughts and ideas on how to make Fort Erie a great place to live. The town needs so much more than what it currently has.
With the answer to Question 13 being NO, there should be no mandatory entry required in Question 14. This is an IT oversight. If Question 13 is = No, then Question 14 should either not require an entry, or Question 14 should auto populate with zero.
Without smooth road surfaces every trip is a frustration whether esthetic or of function. Traversing these corduroy roads negates any willingness to engage. Road and drainage work is shoddy. Lack of parking in Crystal Beach (paid multi tier parking) The f

working churches are struggling to provide their services so they could be placed in the hub we need to develop more community interest
would want it to be funded by government taxes funded
Yes I would like to be involved in a capacity where I would be able to help the improvement of the community Jesse James
Yes. Either provide free wheelchair transport to these facilities. Or provide wheel trans that isn't just for medical appointments and isn't an unaffordable cost
you really should check out Port Cares - its the best community hub in Ontario
You have to take students and younger people into consideration to build this community because the kids are the future and yes appealing the older folks is good and needed but please don't make this entire town to cater to older people when the younger p
You may need satellite offices as most communities in GFE do not like to play in the same sandbox.