

## Square One Community Signs Formal Partnership with Moose Jaw Non-Profit Housing Corporation, Securing the Use of William Milne for Supportive Housing



**Maxton Eckstein**  
Square One Community Inc.  
General Manager



October 18<sup>th</sup>, 2024



*Board Members of Square One Community and Moose Jaw Non-Profit Housing Corporation meet to sign a partnership agreement. From left to right: Heather Shepherd, Christine Boyczuk, Paul Wilder, Mary-Lee Booth, Mary Jukes, Maxton Eckstein, Brenda Walper-Bossence, Bernie Doepker, Josh MacNaughton and Della Ferguson.*

Board Members from Square One Community Inc. and the Moose Jaw Non-Profit Housing Corporation met on October 15<sup>th</sup>, 2024, to enter into a formal partnership. The agreement guarantees the use of the historic William Milne building in downtown Moose Jaw for Square One Community's new supportive housing project. The project will meet the mission of Square One and MJNPHC to provide supportive housing to both vulnerable unhoused community members and current tenants who are at an imminent risk of experiencing homelessness in the immediate future. With an agreement signed, Square One could potentially be housing their first program participants before Christmas.

Square One Community announced back in August they were shifting direction to become a direct service provider of supportive housing to Moose Jaw's unhoused and housing insecure population. While the project has been in its developmental stage for several months, a key component to initiating services was securing safe, accessible housing units. While talks had been taking place on and off for some time about the viability of William Milne's fifteen units being the initial location for the new supportive housing program, the partnership between the two organizations opens a notable opportunity to have a significant positive impact on the continuum of supports for Moose Jaw's unhoused and tenuously housed population.

Paul Wilder, Executive Director of MJNPHC was pleased to see the deal signed. "Today marks a pivotal moment in our commitment to community well-being. Through this partnership with Square One Community Inc, we are not just providing roofs over heads, but are now creating a supportive environment where individuals can thrive. Together, we are building brighter futures at William Milne Place, fostering resilience and hope for those we serve" he said.

Board Chair of Square One Community, Mary-Lee Booth, was also grateful for the partnership. "We are so looking forward to moving ahead on building supportive housing resources for our friends at William Milne and those who are exiting the Willow Lodge shelter. We are thankful for the opportunity to join together with MJNPHC to address service gaps in our community and to create safe housing opportunities for our friends."



*Board Chair's Mary-Lee Booth and Brenda Walper-Bossence Sign Partnership*

Supportive housing goes beyond simply opening up a unit for an individual struggling to secure housing. The model of service ensures that in addition to a roof over their head, clients receive wrap around supports from the host organization and their partners. With frequent daily interactions with key workers who are actively encouraging not only maintaining the tenancy, but also fostering independence and positive health outcomes, clients find the stability they need to change the trajectory of their lives.

"When someone thinks of a supportive housing program, they may imagine it is simply a safe unit to live in with periodic check ins from support workers, but it is much more than that" said Maxton Eckstein, General Manager at Square One Community. "Square One's clients at William Milne will be diligently working on personal service plans with their case worker, building up life skills, encouraging their employability where possible, getting support in their recovery from addictions, receiving prescribed medications to support their mental health and building connections to much needed community supports outside the program." Eckstein said. "Having clients in a single, centrally located building allows us to have direct daily contact to achieve these goals. Our partnership with MJNPHC today has opened up tremendous possibilities for positive outcomes for our unhoused community members."

The initial 2-year agreement is just the starting place of the partnership between Square One Community and MJNPHC. As the program expands and succeeds, the partnership could lead to other joint ventures in the city. "What I am most excited about" said Eckstein, "is the changed lives that will come out of this partnership, collaboration makes all the difference".

