

# Community Opportunity Scan Report

## April 30, 2007

(prepared by Maranatha Christian Reformed Church, Cambridge ON)

The **VISIONING TASK FORCE (VTF)** recognized early on in it's work that in casting a vision for Maranatha it would need to search out not only what God is doing at Maranatha, but also what He is doing in our community. We need to first of all hear what God is saying to us, secondly we need to listen to the church and we need to hear the voices of the people whom the church is called to minister to. This report focuses on listening to the people we are called to reach out to.

One of the best tools that churches can use in order to hear and to better understand it's community is a **COMMUNITY OPPORTUNITY SCAN (COS)**. The VTF, with council's endorsement, sponsored and set in motion the COS team. The team started out with the following people, Mary VanderMunnik, Janice Koiter, Maurice Lemsra, Herman Reinders, and Len Bakelaar, who is also part of the VTF. After several meeting Herman requested to step back from the team due to other commitments. Each of these persons has gifts that enabled the team to function well and to accomplish it's mandate.

The purpose of the COS is to;

- Guide the church to see and hear what God is already doing in the community.
- help understand its community
- reveal opportunities and not just needs.
- challenge the church to become involved.
- nurture a heart for harvest.

As a team we discussed these points with the help of Hans Kater, from Diaconal Ministries Canada, who helped us on to a good start. We each felt that **PRAYER** would be an essential part in moving forward with our mandate. Our interviews were preceded by prayer; so that we might be led and encouraged in our conversation and that we might find receptive hearts with those we talked with. We also experienced a time of "Prayer Walking" facilitated by Hilda VanderKlippe from Home Missions. This was an opportunity for teams of two people to walk down some of the streets commenting and praying for some of the people whose homes they passed by as well as the schools, apartments and churches that they encountered. Prayer has been and continues to be the key ingredient of why this team was able to accomplish its task.

The team set out a geographical area in which it wanted to do it's scan. The boundaries has Main St. at the North, Franklin on the East, Myers on the South, and Christopher on the West, but we also wanted to include the new subdivision South of Myers up on the hill. Some of our interviews were with people and agencies outside of this perimeter, but they were representative of the people in our target area, or had programs that could be followed up on or incorporated into this area. We also made a list of the agencies and people we would like to interview, they included:

1. Cambridge Self help Food Bank
2. The Bridges shelter
3. Social Planning council of Cambridge and North Dumfries
4. Family and Children Services
5. Forward Baptist Church
6. Christopher Champlain Community Centre

7. Waterloo Regional Police
8. Rob Davis, Youth Officer
9. Cornerstone Church
10. Steward Ave. School
11. Glenview Secondary School
12. Gary Price ward 6 councilor
13. A community survey of local people at their homes

The community Survey was done mainly by some of the youth and their leaders. We really appreciated their help. We went in teams of two and had a maps showing where each pair would go. A card from Maranatha was left with each stop and if they took the time to answer the questions, they received a two dollar gift certificate. A summary of this survey can be found as **Appendix A**.

The team members were often amazed to learn through their interviews of the many programs and activities that are already being offered. As examples, the self help food bank offers many programs such as “employment counseling”, “cooking on a shoestring” and many more. Sometimes they are limited due to lack of volunteers. The Waterloo Regional Police offers to train volunteers for its various programs. It often was for us a real eye opener as we realized the scope of what is already happening in our community but a lot of this depends on volunteers. It is also note worthy that in our conversation with the people they often were surprised to learn that a church would be genuinely interested in what they were doing, therefore were usually eager to share with us their activities. In our written reports it was not always possible to convey all the feelings that came out in our discussions, sometimes heart breaking but often heart warming. Our conversations were a positive experience for us as members of the team and for the people whom we met and spoke with. All our reports will be kept on file at the church office.

The team took all of the interview reports and summarized them, taking note of 1. Primary People Served, 2. Service and Programs Offered, and 3. Possible Connections. The team realized that the scan revealed more needs and opportunities than we can even hope to address. That should not stop us from making a start. At Maranatha we are called to be faithful in showing compassion, to hold out the cup of cold water to those around us who genuinely thirst. The team has high lighted a number of activities which we feel will encompass the strengths of Maranatha and its vision. We trust that Maranatha will initiate some of these activities and seek avenues and resources to set them in motion. Some of the obvious resources are Deacons, Gems and other clubs, Outreach, Coffee break and the like. It would be easy to say that all this is already on going but we need to re evaluate all of our groups in light of what the scan in our community has revealed. The summaries are all found in **Appendix B**.

The activities that we highlighted or prioritized were done because of several factors.

1. They were most frequently mentioned in our conversations.
2. We can support these programs that are already in progress
3. We can make more use of our facilities
4. Programs we are already doing but needs more promoting in the community
5. Partnering programs with other churches.
6. A major gap that is not being met at all.

The recommended activities are found in **Appendix C**.

Before we even started our COS, questions came up such as “If we find a need or an opportunity, how can we deal with it? What resources do we have? Are there people with talents, with time? What about financing”? Sometimes, as a team member it was very tempting to drop every thing and get involved in a

service that really excited us, but we knew we could not do that just yet. We first had to finish our mandate - which was to make a report of our findings. How can we make sure this excitement is passed on to the leaders of the church and to a significant number of our congregation? We are convinced that one of the things that need to happen as soon as possible is that the leadership of Maranatha will move to have a "Discover Your Gifts" workshop - a comprehensive, well planned and facilitated workshop that would include a large part of the congregation in all age levels. People can accomplish great things when they work out of their gifts and they will enjoy it much more. They will be positive about what they are doing and will be an encouraging influence on others. Another aspect that needs to happen is that the congregation is made aware of what the COS team has done and of the opportunities and ministries that are so evident right in our community. There needs to be a passion to connect with the people of the community, especially the church leaders, deacons, outreach and a significant portion of the congregation. There has to be a willingness to be involved in relationships with people of the community for the long term. And, a determination to act on the findings of the COS.

We may have to start small. Some things can be started in 2007. Other activities can be implemented next year. We are convinced, with God's leading, He will use us to make a real difference here in our community. He will not leave us on our own, but will be with us every step of the way.

The COS Team

## Community Survey April 23, 2007

**1. Are you actively involved in a church?**

18 - No 14 - Yes 7 - no response 39 surveys in total

**2. What do you think is the greatest need in this community?**

This was a difficult question for most people.

Kids programs	Lousy prices
Men's nights	Realize spiritual needs/morals/boundaries
Volleyball nights (2)	Education
Mother/daughter cooking	Homeless
Youth drop in	Programs
Gym nights	Poverty, homeless
Lost faith	More faith and more training
Cake decorating and cooking	Tax breaks/political relief
Teams	Yoga
Children's programs (5)	Cooking classes
Litter clean up	Kids play time w. coffee for Moms (5)
Teen programs (3)	Gym rental
No needs - ok	

**3. Why do you think that most people don't attend church?**

Don't realize God is important	Faith (lack of it) (2)
Too involved in work	Focus on money, not religion
Day off	Disillusioned
Push people to attend	Opinions are changing
Too ceremonial	Secularization
No interest	Shy, fearful
Irrelevant	Others are judgemental
Too busy (9)	Non-religious
Need help to get there (blind)	Too many controversial ideas
Bad experience	Too selfish
Not involved from the start	Don't see the need for God
Not involved	

**4. If you were looking for a church in this area, what would you look for?**

Upbeat with solid foundation	Family programs
Community programs (5)	Catholic
Outgoing people	Child friendly, invest in kids
Not money oriented	Friendly, good worship service
More small groups	Clean environment
Looking for good people	Non-biased, just teach the Bible
Friendly	Seniors programs
Gentle preaching	People who care for one another
Talk to people involved	Good Pastor - not doomsday things
Mission trips/faith in action	Adult programs
Inspiring, not dull	

**5. What advice would you give to a church in this community?**

Modernize church service	In your face community stuff
In touch with the community	Helping out in the community
Reach out to all	Community events
Make it about God, not money	Helping out around the world

Building relationships  
Fix a bad world  
Bring in more people  
Hand out brochures  
Advertising  
Open doors to all faiths  
Get to know God more  
Come back to what they were brought up  
with

Young people  
God be the centre  
More outreach  
Slogans (sign) (2)  
Be patient  
Be strong & good stewardship  
Outgoing, friendly, open doors

\* \* \*



**Appendix B**

Agency Name Contact Person	Primary People Served	Services and programs offered	Possible connections
Cambridge Self Help Food Bank Pat Singleton, Executive Director	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Help people out of the cycle of poverty.</li> <li>- Emergency Assistance</li> <li>-for individuals</li> <li>-for groups (e.g. Overland Hotel fire)</li> <li>- Co-operative based on 4 hours of work a week</li> </ul>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A fabulous kitchen teaches (a) safe food handling, (b) nutrition, (c) skills</li> <li>2. Kans for Kids</li> <li>3. Cooking on a shoestring</li> <li>4. Low cost birthday party</li> <li>5. Choices for wellness</li> <li>6. Peer counselor</li> <li>7. Small steps to success – employment counseling</li> <li>8. Craft Program</li> <li>9. Outreach worker</li> <li>10. Backpacks for bookworms</li> <li>11. Tim Hortons food share</li> <li>12. AA Group meets @ cshfb</li> <li>13. Other services as needed</li> </ol>	Volunteers Sorting food Sorting coats, toys Maintenance Christmas parcels Special events  Prayer For staff (patience) For clients For needs Especially at Christmas
Agency Name Contact Person	Primary People Served	Services and programs offered	Possible connections
Waterloo Regional Police Angela Jackson, Community Resource Officer	City of Cambridge "Serve and Protect"	Emergency Services Enforcing the law Community liaison with – <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- City of Cambridge</li> <li>- YMCA</li> <li>- Mental Health Assn</li> <li>- The Bridges</li> <li>- Family and Children's Services</li> <li>- Schools – education on bullying, drugs, strangers</li> <li>- Social agencies</li> </ul>	Volunteers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Neighbourhood Watch</li> <li>- Victims Services</li> <li>- Auxiliary officers</li> <li>- Citizens Watch</li> <li>- Student volunteer hours</li> <li>- Help with Open House</li> <li>- Food, Coat, and Toy Drives</li> <li>- Work in partnership with other organizations</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Community centres</li> <li>- CCAC 883-5500 x 5412</li> <li>- Youth officer 653-0070 x 8864</li> </ul>	
<b>Agency Name Contact Person</b>	<b>Primary People Served</b>	<b>Services and programs offered</b>	<b>Possible connections</b>
Social Planning Counsel of Camb. & N. Dumfries Linda Terry Dina Etmanskie	City of Cambridge		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Seek opportunities to volunteer at Bridges, Food Bank, and local neighbourhood associations (Christopher Champlain Centre).</li> <li>- Recommends the church use a collaborative approach, partnering with other groups or agencies, as to avoid overlap of services.</li> <li>- Encouraged church members to become involved in agency boards and government groups advocating for poverty reduction and social services for the needy.</li> <li>- Use opportunities to sponsor student help for agencies that are often stretched to the limit.</li> <li>- Initiate community gardens</li> <li>- Emails will be sent to the church on upcoming events, training, seminars, and newsletters.</li> </ul>
<b>Agency Name Contact Person</b>	<b>Primary People Served</b>	<b>Services and programs offered</b>	<b>Possible connections</b>
Bridges Shelter Corporation Anne Tinker, Ex. Director 519-624-9305	Those that need safe shelter and assistance in accessing resources in dealing with their needs. They also offer encouragement for the individuals hopes and needs of people dealing with life issues. There is hope for future projects ie: connecting strong families	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Bridges brings the supports and services into the shelter because it is physically and mentally too difficult for clients to go out for help. See attached “programs and services” for the many services and programs</li> </ul>	Affordable housing is the biggest need. Volunteer are always needed for cooking, cleaning, serving, socializing, or donations of goodies or snack type food for social nights. Churches are providing Sunday dinner, or snacks, socializing for hockey night or other special evenings, or providing gift bags for clients.

	with needy families.	offered	
<b>Agency Name Contact Person</b>	<b>Primary People Served</b>	<b>Services and programs offered</b>	<b>Possible connections</b>
Family and Children Services Kim Henry Candy Harrington 519-576-0540	Protecting and supporting children, strengthening families, breaking the cycle of dysfunctional families.	- Respond to referrals, support parents in caring for their children, enable adoption, deliver counseling, provide foster care, prepare youth for independence, provide education, assist children who have been abused.	- Volunteers are needed for Adopt a Family Holiday Program, foster homes, Befriending Program (similar to big brother/sister programs) - Office space is needed for coordinators of various programs. - Volunteers are needed to drive children or youth to appointments, assist with special events, babysitting at the drop-in centre on Fridays, providing childcare, office help.
<b>Agency Name Contact Person</b>	<b>Primary People Served</b>	<b>Services and programs offered</b>	<b>Possible connections</b>
Waterloo Regional Police Rob Davis – Community Resources 519-650-8500 X 8864	Waterloo Region (Kitchener/Cambridge mainly)	Rob works in building relationships in communities to promote overall community health. He establishes relationships with youth. Provides seminars to public or struggling areas to help educate about community mobilization and inclusion. Often he will organize special events and programs to help bring communities (especially youth) together.	- Activities for youth is the greatest unmet need (basketball courts, soccer nets). - There is government funding available to WRP immediately, the just need outdoor and indoor space to run fitness programs. We can speak to Rob for further details. - Bike Camps – becoming part of the The Working Centre Recycle Cycles Community Bike Shop program. They can use our location to run a day program a couple times in the summer, and WRP would love to be involved in hosting a pizza party/BBQ afterwards to build relationships with Police as well. - The working Centre at 58 & 43 Queen St. S. in Kitchener has an inspiring concept of bringing communities together. - Local community gardens are also a need. Stephanie and Joe Mancini, Founders of The Working Centre are strong supporters of

			<p>community gardens and would be available to speak with if needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Nutrition for Learning Programs (before school programs). Kids come for breakfast.</li> <li>- After School Homework Programs</li> <li>- Create opportunities for your community to come together – community BBQ’s, veggie &amp; herb gardens, seminars on community mobilization and inclusion (Rob has offered to provide this at Maranatha).</li> <li>- If any further inspiration is needed check out The Working Centre Website. They have a really neat philosophy and are doing some amazing things in their community. <a href="http://www.theworkingcentre.org">www.theworkingcentre.org</a></li> <li>- Recycle Cycles Community Bike Shop can also be found at the above website. Phone# 519-749-9177 contact person: Jesse</li> </ul>
<b>Agency Name Contact Person</b>	<b>Primary People Served</b>	<b>Services and programs offered</b>	<b>Possible connections</b>
Stewart Avenue Public School Bob Derosie – Principal	Public School Children		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Free or low-cost childcare</li> <li>- Afterschool homework and fitness programs.</li> <li>- Inclusion practices that promote a respectful community</li> <li>- Breakfast Program at the school possibly with parent volunteers and student help it could be a success. Teachers are unable to take on this responsibility.</li> <li>- Food programs to supplement their homes and Social skill development are the greatest unmet needs due to a lack of resources.</li> <li>- Suggestions made: afterschool programs from</li> </ul>

			3:30-9pm. Activities such as games, sports, cycling, hiking, ball hockey in parking lot, basketball, place to skateboard. Coordinate with other community programs. Develop a social skills mentoring program.
<b>Agency Name Contact Person</b>	<b>Primary People Served</b>	<b>Services and programs offered</b>	<b>Possible connections</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> Inning – Langs Farm Village Association Kit Bresnahan – Special Education Resource Teacher 519-653-1263	Sudents come from low to no income families and most only have one parent at home. The students are in grade 7 & 8, live in high density housing areas, and all student have mental health, behavioural disorders, or both.	The school is called a section 23 school.	Clothing donations are always greatly appreciated, especially now that winter is over, people can donate outgrown winter clothing immediately for the following year (boots, coats, gloves, hats, skates). The students come in all shapes and sizes. Other items that are useful are sporting equipment (baseball gloves). Staff at 7 <sup>th</sup> Inning will provide a more detailed list of needs in the near future.
<b>Agency Name Contact Person</b>	<b>Primary People Served</b>	<b>Services and programs offered</b>	<b>Possible connections</b>
Glenview Secondary School Vonda Martins-Gardiner	Secondary Students. Low to middle income families	The school offers programs available to all of Cambridge for those going directly into the workforce – horticulture, aesthetics, construction, auto mechanics. The school also offers students volunteer credits. It partners with the Christopher-Champlain Community Centre, Soup Kitchen, and other agencies in Cambridge. Glenview also offers special sessions on anger management and suicide prevention.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Glenview needs help in teaching kids how to go about getting their volunteer hours. They could also use a list of possible volunteer opportunities to choose from. Students need volunteer hours even in the Summer.</li> <li>- Co-op programs are also a need.</li> <li>- There is a need for recreation activities outside school (basketball, street hockey, or using drop-in centre to hang out). They need an outlet for their energy.</li> <li>- Workshops for parents – “parenting for single parent families” and new families to Canada struggling to fit in. They need connections in the community on how to adjust to their new surroundings.</li> <li>- There is a need for funding for a lunch program at the school – food and games or other interests.</li> <li>- The school needs volunteers for off campus</li> </ul>

			<p>activities.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Advice: contact Social Planning Council and Cambridge Volunteer Bureau</li> </ul>
<b>Agency Name Contact Person</b>	<b>Primary People Served</b>	<b>Services and programs offered</b>	<b>Possible connections</b>
Youth Unlimited Drop-In Centre (Youth For Christ) Brierdale Plaza Champlain Dr.	Youth, primarily targeting grades 7, 8, & 9.	Open 3 days per week from 3-5pm Provide a safe place for kids to come and hang out, play games. There is a coffee bar.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Youth Unlimited would be able to staff activities that could be held at Maranatha like gym games – volleyball, basketball or street hockey in the parking lot.</li> <li>- Sunday night youth worship could be advertised at Youth Unlimited to encourage kids to attend.</li> <li>- Youth For Christ is looking for board of directors.</li> </ul> <p>Youth Unlimited has a few paid position for summer employment that Maranatha could possibly advertise.</p>
<b>Agency Name Contact Person</b>	<b>Primary People Served</b>	<b>Services and programs offered</b>	<b>Possible connections</b>
Forward Baptist Church Dave Brubacher – Adult Ministries (small groups)	Much potential for growth due to large increase of families moving into newer subdivisions	Side door ministries – parenting classes, budgeting, Drug proofing your kids, debt reduction, internet safety, marriage & relationships, Alpha. The church also offers small group ministries (some groups do volunteering at Bridges, Pregnancy Centre, Food Bank, etc. They also have a VBS program and a day camp for kids from low-income families in the summer. Other programs offered are youth programs similar to cadets & gems, as well MOPS a program for moms.	

<b>Agency Name Contact Person</b>	<b>Primary People Served</b>	<b>Services and programs offered</b>	<b>Possible connections</b>
Cornerstone Community Church Pastor Doug Hope Youth Pastor Natalie Dekker		Before & After School Programs Boys & Girls Club	Natalie has offered to assist Maranatha any way possible in the area of before & after school programs if needed. Advice: meet the needs of the children and teens. All churches should have before & after school programs if possible. Maranatha is in an excellent location because so many schools are close by. Youth need safe places to go.

## Appendix C

The COS team met on April 30, 2007 to review the findings that are recorded in Appendix A and Appendix B. The team sorted through these findings in order to name some ministry possibilities that surfaced from the voices of the community. The team also reviewed a document outlining the 4 area of focus for Maranatha CRC, especially, the section entitled, *EXPRESS GODS' CARE*.

In reflecting on COS findings, the team noted the many remarkable ways in which God is already working through people and organizations in the City of Cambridge. The team also commented on the very positive reception that they experienced in all the interviews.

The team identified about a dozen opportunities which were then consolidated into three recommended areas of community focus:

### **1. Connect with youth in the community:**

The team encourages the exploration of partnerships with Youth Unlimited, Waterloo Police, Working Centre, Christopher Champlain Centre, etc., in order to develop opportunities for the youth to enhance their social, physical, spiritual well-being.

### **2. Explore ways of using the church building in order to strengthen community relationships.**

The team supports partnerships with local churches, police services and others in order that the church's physical resources are used to build relationships with singles, families and seniors in the community. Possible activities could include before/after school programs, tutoring, seminars, BBQs, fitness, gardens, etc.

### **3. Engage individual members and small groups of the church into volunteer opportunities in the community.**

The team desires greater participation by church members of all ages in the multitude of ministry opportunities that surfaced in the COS findings. These opportunities include volunteer time (short term and long term) as well as physical donations.

The team was blessed by the COS process as it opened their hearts, their ears and their eyes to not only what God is already doing in the community, but also to the possibility of new opportunities to "express" God's care in Cambridge. The team strongly urges the leadership of the church to continue to pray for the church's ministry that serves Cambridge, to communicate ministry opportunities to the congregation on a regular basis and to encourage greater congregational involvement.