



Letter of Intent

Re: **817 Rosser Avenue Brandon MB R7A 0L1**

September 28, 2023

Dear Community Planner,

On behalf of the Brandon Neighborhood Renewal Corporation (BNRC), I am applying to change the land use to a use substantially similar to a community centre, at 817 Rosser Avenue. Approving this variance will allow for the use of The Blue Door as a drop-in center at all hours of the day.

The Blue Door, which currently operates from 31-9th Street, serves as a vital daytime drop-in center where clients can access a range of services. These services include assistance with ID and birth certificate applications, referrals to other essential services and resources, laundry facilities, showers, and a safe and welcoming space for relaxation and socialization with peers and support workers. Our organization has been fortunate to receive funding from Reaching Home, a Federal Government initiative, which has allowed us to operate the Blue Door program effectively.

However, we have recognized a growing need within our community for additional services, particularly during the winter season. We have secured funding from the provincial government to operate a winter nighttime drop-in center from October 2023 to March 31, 2024, so that clients are not trying to seek warmth in store fronts. The City of Brandon has experienced the need for overnight services especially last winter when our community sprung into action when the Safe and Warm shelter exceeded its capacity and the Blue Door had to open for a few overnights so that clients do not freeze during the frigid winter. This expansion will also enable us to provide round-the-clock support to those in need. The strategic location of 817 Rosser Avenue, in close proximity to the Safe and Warm Shelter, makes it an ideal choice for this move and expansion. Additionally, the presence of a substantial parking lot adjacent to the property can serve as an outdoor gathering area for our clients with picnic benches and proper shading, thus minimizing loitering in the Downtown Business District.

To ensure the safety and well-being of both our clients and the surrounding community, we have developed a comprehensive plan in partnership with The City of Brandon. This plan includes the deployment of cadet/security patrols to maintain order and prevent loitering in front of the building. We will also encourage the use of the back entrance to minimize any disruptions to the neighborhood.

There are several factors surrounding the reasons for the move:

- 1) The project has outgrown the current Blue Door location.



- 2) There are apartments above the Blue Door and the landlord is concerned about his tenants should we utilize the space overnight.
- 3) The current Blue Door location is being advertised for sale and the project can be displaced at any time.

Signing this one-year lease at 817 Rosser Avenue would grant us peace of mind as we continue searching for a space to call our own. The previous use of Blue Door only included daytime hours and was classified as an Office use. The proposed overnight drop in use is not in the Zoning Bylaw but this use would function similar to an assembly place, which is permitted in DMU (Downtown Mixed Use) Zone. The Planning Act permits application for a variance to change a land use to a use that is substantially similar to a permitted use under the Zoning Bylaw. The Brandon & Area Planning District Development Plan also permits smaller scale community uses in various parts of the city, such as this site, as the proposed scale and use are reasonably compatible with the area.

Please feel free to contact me at 204-729-2490 ext 101 or via email at [director@bnrc.ca](mailto:director@bnrc.ca) for questions, concerns or more information.

We are excited about the potential positive impact of this project on our community and look forward to a favourable response from this variance application.

Sincerely,

Rushana Newman  
Executive Director