

# Sionito Community Development Corporation



**Sionito's social housing projects; three of which are presently operating in Toronto and one more that is in the development stages, represents a social enterprise that is focused on making Canadian society more civil. A civil society has citizens who look after their marginalized and impoverished. Citizens like you and me.**



**The citizens in 2020 who presently support Sionito in its enterprise consist of the following Board members:**

John Hamer (President), John Morgan (Treasurer), Brian Shantz, Alfredo Zelaya, Robert Terpstra, Kerry Richards, Darwood Shepherdson, Shaun Withrow.

**The properties are:**

The Alvaro Vidal Sr. Apartments on St. Clair Ave. (40 units), the Sionito Family Apartments on Bathurst Street (15 units), the Bill McMurray Residence on Sheridan Avenue (88 units) and the yet to be named new project at 591 Finch Avenue West (158 units).

The properties are managed by Tiomara Management and Development Corporation whose President is Bryce Taylor<sup>MSW RSW</sup>. Sixteen individuals provide services to the tenants. This year we are pleased to have Alfredo Zelaya become our Personnel Administrator and he is also the Administrator for the Bill McMurray Residence.

**Sionito's Funders**

Sionito is a charity and as such it receives donations from generous citizens. Of note this year is the fund-raising project to acquire TVs for residents at the Bill McMurray Residence who were isolated to their units as a result of COVID. The Sionito Board would like to indicate that all 21 tenants who requested a TV received one, along with its mounting bracket and its antennae system that provides them with 6 channels without having to make monthly payments. This would not have been possible without the support of many Community of Christ members who have a special interest in this project and the work it does. We also recognize the corporate support of Telus. The Board thanks everyone who participated, as this affirms that the mission is an important expression both of the church membership and corporate citizens such as Telus.

**The Sionito Program Model**

The Sionito Model, developed at the Bill McMurray Residence, is now to be replicated at the 591 Finch Avenue West development site. The Model is based on the values common to the Social Work Profession; empowering the innate quest for independent life-ability against the context of individual and societal realities; towards the parallel cultural quest for self-determining democratic civility. This Program Model understands the term "independence" as meaning reduced government intervention and costs. The model is based on providing the health related social work and medical support services through partnerships with community based mental health agencies and clinics already funded by Provincial level Ministries of Health. In this way the Sionito Model does not require further 'supportive program' funding. Instead, it depends on and advocates for governments to maintain realistic ODSP and Senior's pension levels, so they can independently provide for themselves. In parallel with this, the Model focuses on reducing dependence on support services through staffing Active Daily Living (ADL) supports. These come in the form of a common dining room amenity and weekly cleaning of units. The civil society sourced mandate of the Model is to give safe stable housing, along with a sense of community, back to our fellow citizens impoverished and isolated as a result of chronic mental health challenges. Research shows that young seniors with chronic health challenges can age in place delaying premature entry into nursing homes which often occurs due to their impoverishment more than their health status. This increased life-ability results from nutritional menus and being relieved of the anxiety, as a single person, on a daily basis; of establishing a

menu, transporting oneself to shop for food off site, preparing it, cooking it; and then cleaning up, 3x/day 24/7. Research shows that if these daily ADL challenges are removed; anxieties and mental health challenges along with fragilities will decrease and life-abilities in all areas will expand.

### **Expanding the Model**

Sionito with its new building is also expanding its program model to include the life-ability of global environments. It strives to be in the forefront of least carbon new building footprints and those in our civil society who are attempting to build a more sustainable environment. Sionito with its consultants has sourced and researched a building envelop cladding that captures solar energy and produces electricity. Mitrex is affiliated with Cladify, one of the largest building cladding companies in Toronto which assures Sionito that the cladding is backed by a reputable company. The outputs of this cladding is included in the Energy Modelling studies below, indicating that up to 338,500 KWh of electricity will be produced by the Sionito building each year, forever! Sionito at this point is the first apartment building in Toronto to make use of this cutting edge technology.

### **Summary**

From the beginning the Sionito values have been shared by the Community of Christ membership. The relief of poverty and suffering is a common human value aspired to by both. As Sionito grows in its ability to create wealth and dedicate it to maintaining the independence of those with mental health challenges we all grow in our civility towards our neighbour.