

Report to Municipality of East Ferris Council

“Callander and District Food Bank”

The Callander and District Food Bank is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to helping Callander and area residents, including those in East Ferris, who are food insecure. A small network of volunteers is dedicated to the Food Bank to alleviate hunger in our communities. The Municipality of East Ferris and the Town of Callander work with the Food Bank to understand the needs of our communities. The Food Bank's records are manual, and the following report is based on observation rather than detailed analysis.

On behalf of East Ferris, the undersigned contacted the Food Bank in January 2023 to understand the current situation and context. The level and type of activities were compared to the previous year. Emphasis was placed on reviewing user statistics, including user profiles and the number of visits.

Overall, the Food Bank reports that since mid-2022, it has seen an increase in clients and needs. At the height of the pandemic, the Food Bank reported seeing the following types of clients from East Ferris: seniors living alone, Ontario Work recipients, and young adults. For this report, they note a rise in young families. They point to the rapid rate of inflation, coupled with the rising cost of rent driving more young families to the Food Bank.

That is why in recent months the Food Bank has expanded their service to clarify that they are available 24/7 to ensure that no one goes hungry. This added service as well as the on-site hours they currently hold at their Callander location are sufficient to meet the needs of those seeking food.

Fortunately, they report that the generosity of the East Ferris community in recent months and at Christmas 2022 was at its highest level ever. As a result, they have sufficient food inventory levels and cash reserves to meet all immediate needs. When asked if there is a need for additional sites to drop off food donations in East Ferris, they concluded that they did not think so. They highlighted the work of the East Ferris Fire Department, the East Ferris Santa Fund, the East Ferris Knights of Columbus, the East Ferris Public Library, Astorville Freshmart and the local schools and churches with their food drives. They also expressed appreciation to the citizens of East Ferris.

They also explained that in recent months they have started communicating on social media via a newly created Facebook page and have started to accept online contributions via e-transfer. Further online activities are planned, and they will be contacting the Town of Callander to assist in installing internet service at their location. If further support is required, they will not hesitate to contact the Municipality of East Ferris.

Pauline Rochefort
Mayor Municipality of East Ferris
January 2023