

# Jackson Community Food Pantry will soon have new location

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By [Tarryl Jackson](#) | Jackson Citizen Patriot



Nick Dentamaro | Jackson Citizen Patriot From left, Mark Smith, Laurie Campbell, Bill Georgeopoulos and Elaine Crosby listen on as Georgeopoulos talk about maintenance issues and changes to be made at 701 Greenwood Ave. Smith, Campbell and Crosby are board members of the Jackson Community Food Pantry.

A local food pantry that serves hundreds of residents each week will soon have a new home in Jackson. The Jackson Community Food Pantry — formerly referred to as the Francis Street Food Pantry — last week bought a commercial building at 701 Greenwood Ave.

The pantry will sit in Partnership Park, a neighborhood of about 700 residents bordered by Washington Avenue and Morrell, Blackstone and Francis streets. Mark Smith, one of the pantry's directors, said it will be at a perfect location to serve those in need.

"They have a lot of people who are in need of food and shelter," Smith said of Partnership Park. "Now they can walk to a food pantry. Everything worked out wonderfully." Katie Luke, director of the Partnership Park Downtown Neighborhood Association, said she and the residents are excited about the pantry in the area.

"A once-vacant building is going to be used for something good," Luke said. "It brings another resource into our neighborhood." For the past three years, the food pantry has been operating out of a community room provided by the local American Red Cross chapter at 3425 Francis St. Red Cross officials said they need the space and had asked food pantry organizers to look for another location.

"They have been exceedingly gracious to us," director Laurie Campbell said about the Red Cross. "We can't thank them enough for getting us started." Shelly Hendrick, executive director of the local Red Cross, said the room will be used for blood drives, CPR classes and other services. The pantry has been heavily run by parishioners of the Queen of the Miraculous Medal Church and has about 150 people on its volunteer list.

Directors plan to open the new location in mid-October. They declined to reveal the property's price, but "we're thankful that it was reasonable," Campbell said. On Wednesday nights, the Jackson Community Food Pantry serves about 150 families — or about 500 people depending on the family size. It costs about \$2,000 a month to purchase food, most of which comes from the Food Bank of South Central Michigan in Battle Creek.

Directors are hoping to get a matching grant to help pay down the cost of the property's mortgage and plan to reach out to the community to raise funds for the pantry. "People pull through for these kinds of things," Campbell said. "We're now a community pantry. The need is going to skyrocket."

## New location

The Jackson Community Food Pantry will move to 701 Greenwood Ave. To donate, send checks to P.O. Box 5941, Jackson, MI 49204. For more information, call 392-3316 or email [jcfoodpantry@att.net](mailto:jcfoodpantry@att.net).