



Strategic Plan for 2016 - 2021

Approved March 2, 2016

Introduction

The James Bay Community Project (the Project), from its 40-year roots in community advocacy through to becoming a community services organization, is valued and respected by the individuals and groups it has been serving and by the stakeholders who support it.

The Project's broad foundations and breadth of services reflect the diversity of needs within the James Bay community and other Victoria communities. The Project has been directly operating a variety of programs and services for seniors, for parents and their children, and for youth. It has been doing so responsively to the changing needs of the broader Victoria communities and to the changing priorities of its stakeholders.

Over the course of the next 5 years, the Project is embarking on a new phase – one marked by significant changes to the scope of the services provided, the urgent need to strengthen and sustain financial sustainability in an era of austerity, and pressures to respond to new emerging needs across a broader geographic boundary.

This Strategic Plan outlines the Project's key areas of focus through 2016 to 2021. It focuses on key strategic priorities that reflect input provided by the board, staff and community participants. The previous strategic plan has been:

- Revised for clarity and focus – in Vision and Mission
- Renewed to reflect current aims and opportunities
- Reviewed to guide investment implications

Vision, Mission, Slogan, and Values

The Project enables connections and builds resilience – at its core. This is seen by stakeholders as the Project's fundamental competency and basis for funding support. This benefits communities and their members meaningfully and it is to this that the board, management, and staff dedicate themselves in their respective roles.

Vision, Mission, and Values are the Project's highest-level strategic elements – laying out what the Project strives to create (Vision), what its current focus will be (Mission) towards creating that Vision, and what principles (Values) will guide it as it does so. Given significant changes in the function and purposes of the Project, it has been necessary to review both the Mission and Vision to ensure they truly reflect the organization's aspirations.

Revised Vision: *A community of connected resilient people*

Revised Mission: *To build resilience through connections*

Revised Slogan: *Building Community Together*

The Importance of Community

Our effort to "Build Community Together" is more than a single objective that we include in our activities. It is at the heart of everything we do.

We connect people together face to face, making physical communities. We create communities when we connect people to services further afield or long-distance through virtual communities online, through the telephone or in print. Our staff and volunteers create communities as do our participants and partners. Some of these communities are long-lasting; others are transitory. All of them involve people acting together.

Whatever strategic plans we pursue, we measure them according to how they build and sustain communities. We succeed when we see healthy, positive communities. This outcome is not separate from our plans; it is the reason we make plans.

Values

The Project's core values demonstrate the essential, unchanging values of our organization and not only represent what our organization stands for, but guides each generation of leadership and staff.

- Integrity: It is crucial that all aspects of the Project conduct business in a way that is honest, transparent and ethical.
- Empowerment: The Project seeks to do more than provide supports for individual situations; we strive to address larger systemic problems and empower all stakeholders to make connections and build resilience.
- Excellence: We pursue excellence by assessing all our programs, services, policies and practices, aiming for the highest quality and effectiveness in all areas. We strive to build on our successes and learn from our mistakes. We want to recognize when we are doing well and when we are doing less well, and to improve both.
- Good Stewardship: Through setting standards for financial procedures and internal controls, the Project is committed to good stewardship of its resources and to making good returns on the resources available.
- Responsiveness: We are responsive to individual and community needs, and strive to look at the environment through the eyes of our participants.
- Openness: We strive to create a welcoming, caring and inclusive atmosphere that actively supports diversity of volunteers, participants and staff.
- Innovation and a sense of hope: The Project believes we can create a better future through innovation and societal change through creative approaches and new models that work. We seek to recognize and celebrate successes, as well as to learn from our mistakes.

Strategic Planning

Strategic planning identifies where the Project wants to be at some point in the future and how it is going to get there. The "strategic" part of this planning process is the attention to current changes in the organization and its external environment, and how this affects the future of the organization. The strategic planning process included:

- Taking a wide look around at what's going on outside the Project and how it might affect us (an environmental scan), and identifying opportunities and threats.
- Taking a hard look at what's going on inside the Project, including its strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT analysis).
- Establishing statements of mission, vision and values.
- Establishing goals to accomplish over the next 3 – 5 years, as a result of what's going on inside and outside the organization.

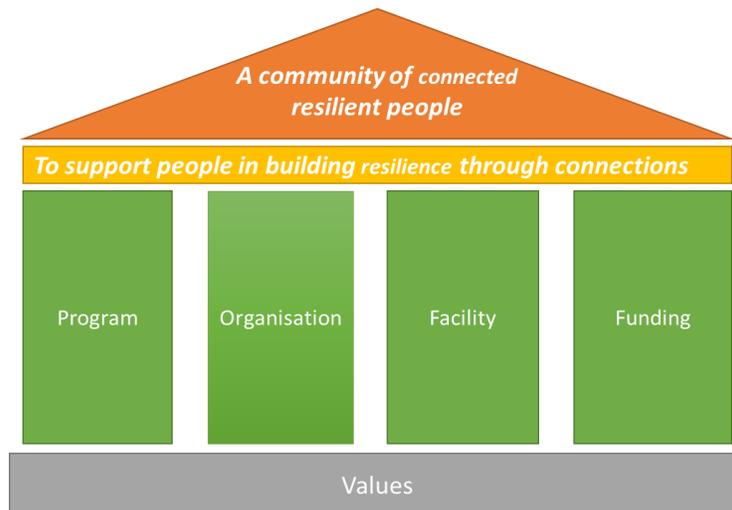
The strategic planning process has helped determine the overall direction and goals of the Project and consequently influences numerous aspects, including what:

- services will be provided;
- organization design and roles will be needed by the organization;
- board committees should be developed; and
- resources will be needed to achieve those goals, and consequently, how much money is needed to procure those resources -- ultimately, the goals determine the content of various budgets

Strategic Themes and Goals

Like the walls of a house, strategic themes hold up the structure of a plan. They are the very pillars that define the shape and distinctive thrusts of new growth and new direction. From this basis, feasibility plans will be initiated for each strategy and subsequently, if warranted, detailed plans for each strategic goal, measures of achievement and implementation actions, underpinned by secured costs and agreed time lines, will be developed.

Each theme is interdependent of each other with a cascading effect of impact:



Themes provide a mainstay for strategic planning. Whilst recognizing that ‘the devil is in the detail’, themes actually facilitate final agreement at the detail level.

Four strategic themes and accompanying goals were identified out of the consultation and planning process: 1) Program, 2) Organization, 3) Facility and 4) Funding, and are outlined below. Some goals are accompanied by proposed objectives and or approaches and others will have these approaches developed as we move forward. Please note that the following themes and goals are numbered for ease of reference, not to imply an order or priority.

1) PROGRAM theme:

The following issues and opportunities were identified during the consultation process, resulting in a need to review the programs and services we offer.

- Working at capacity: We close the doors of the family centre from time to time, because we cannot accommodate more people. We have waiting lists for many of our outreach and counselling services. Our staff members are working flat out to meet existing commitments. They barely have time to think strategically about how we deliver services and what we can improve. While we look for new opportunities, we want to acknowledge that our existing base also needs attention.
- A gap exists in our services to people dealing with challenges such as mental illness, addictions and homelessness. Some people with such needs come into our building to receive food or access basic lobby services while others are referred to us by concerned individuals or agencies. We do not have the staff or other resources to assist them. Staff and volunteers at reception do their best to help, but they are not equipped or trained to offer more help. Our existing outreach workers are distressed when they cannot help those who don’t fall within the mandate of current funding. We want to explore what more we can do. Can we formalize a system of referrals to other agencies? Can we find the resources to hire an outreach worker? The status quo is stressful and disappointing for our staff. We think we can do better.
- Integrated Community Service Hub: There is a potential for strengthening our integrated approaches that combines community and social services. It can reduce gaps in service, with more streamlined administration. We believe the provincial government is enthusiastic about this approach and is willing to consider different versions. We want to explore what kind of integrated model we might create.
- Child care: In our survey of participants, families said they want child care services. We want to explore whether we can assemble the space and resources to meet this need. We have not considered such a service in the past, and there is much to learn. This includes discussing how a child care service would or would not fit with the services and programs we offer at the present.

Goal 1	Review ways to strengthen existing services.
Goal 2	Establish outreach programs to link people with higher needs who come to our building, or who are referred to us, with the appropriate resources.

Goal 3	Explore options and opportunities to establish an “integrated community services hub”.
Goal 4	Explore establishing a child care resource for the community.

2) ORGANIZATION theme:

Our organization is currently at a crossroad necessitating a need to establish clear organizational priorities, a structure that supports those priorities, and roles and responsibilities that are explicit and accountable.

- For years we have provided important programs and services that are valued by the community. We have engaged, highly skilled staff and we are supported by a broad base of volunteers with diverse abilities. We have developed an organizational structure that has evolved and adapted over the years to meet operational needs. As well, we have judiciously managed our assets, including the building in which we provide those programs and services and which is owned and managed by the organization.
- However, we have growing community needs which we do not have the capacity to address. The economy continues to struggle which has resulted in dwindling funding opportunities. As a result of our limited human and financial capacity we are primarily able to focus only on our day to day activities and needs, lacking the resources to deal effectively with the unexpected or plan and organize for the future. Without change we will continue to struggle and find ourselves in the same position in the years to come.
- We need to review our current systems and structures in terms of what the organization needs moving forward, including looking at what currently works and what needs improvement/development.

Goal 1	<p>Establish an effective organizational structure that fosters innovation, accountability and teamwork.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase organizational capacity; • Confirm, understand and communicate the organization’s vision and strategic priorities; • Confirm a strong cohesive leadership team and organization structure that aligns with our goals and priorities, and links and coordinates work and people across the organization; and • Confirm clear roles and accountabilities for decision-making at all levels.
Goal 2	<p>Continue to strive to attract, retain and support outstanding staff, volunteers and directors.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm and enhance mechanisms to encourage professional development and networking; • Confirm processes for establishing performance expectations, providing feedback, recognition and acknowledgement; • Continue to ensure a respectful workplace that supports family and

	<p>work/life balance;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm mechanisms and cultural shifts for becoming a learning organization; and • Provide learning opportunities both within and outside of the organization.
Goal 3	<p>Establish a framework of policies, processes and best practices that support the work of the organization and its people.</p> <p>Objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Confirm current policies, procedures and best practices and identify what is needed to meet future accountability, operational, business, human resource, legal and program requirements; • Enhance communications (often and in innovative ways); and • Confirm the necessary materials, equipment and technologies that support and enhance effective work processes.

3) FACILITY/BUILDING theme:

As with many program providers, the Project faces the challenge of creating a welcoming environment for all community members. The following issues were identified confirming the need to review available options and opportunities.

- The facility represents a positive history of promoting effective community relationships as well as creating a sense of community for those who use it. Participants noted that they experience an excessive demand for space and wondered if the organization and programs had surpassed capacity. They also noted the aging of the facility and the need for planning for its upkeep. As well they noted the dilemma in creating space for tenants in order to support sustainable funding while experiencing a shortage of space for programs and potential growth.
- Other comments included consideration in expanding the hours of operation to 8 am – 8 pm, 7 days a week, securing additional space or building outward or upwards in the space available, or renovating to establish more flexible, adaptable rooms.
- We heard that more can be done to make the facility more amenable to diverse programming as well as reconfiguring the location of tenants to align with services and programs. One specific suggestion included renovating the kitchen.
- The building configuration, decor and functionality are critical to the success of the Project in achieving its mission. The aging of the facility also demands long-term financial planning to continue to ensure the highest building standards and maintenance schedule.

Goal 1	Prepare an analysis of the benefits of ownership, or of leasing of the facility
Goal 2	Prepare a plan that links organizational needs to facility design, operation and function.
Goal 3	Prepare a facility life-cycle maintenance plan with cost projections to guide funding decisions
Goal 4	Establish a process to review reconfiguration, redesign or expansion of existing space.

4) FUNDING theme:

The need for sufficient funding is an important strategic priority in order to maintain existing programs and services and to develop new programs and services that are needed by the community. Our funding landscape is changing. There is increased competition for every type of funding. At the same time, there are new opportunities for funding, particularly in ventures involving agency partnerships.

Key factors:

- Much of our regular funding is earmarked for hard commitments. MCFD, the Vancouver and Victoria Foundations, BC Housing, Island Health, the City of Victoria, and so on.
- Gaming grants and rental income are not earmarked by the source; we have more discretion over how we allocate those funds.
- The Community Closet is a financial success, in addition to its other benefits
- Rental income is valued, but there is a trade-off between income and the amount of space we can use for our own activities, present and future.
- In-kind donations are valued, e.g. frozen food from Cold Star, bread from Thrifty Foods.
- Concern about loss of core funding, as governments and foundations cut back. We are competing with other agencies for a shrinking pool of money.
- We have a record of recent success, attracting new program funding for Better at Home, and rental income from Her Way Home.
- We have good relations with our major funders.
- Concern that we don't know enough about how governments and agencies are setting their priorities for the future.
- Concern that we aren't pursuing some other means of raising money: high-income donors, bequests, corporate funding where appropriate.
- Acknowledgement that our fundraising capacity is limited. One part-time position can't meet all our needs.

All funding is co-ordinated by senior management and the board of directors. Some types of funding are primarily the responsibility of management. Some types are primarily the responsibility of the fundraising committee.

- Core Funding: This funding is primarily the responsibility of senior management. This includes large grants from government and other agencies. Much of this funding is renewable, year after year. Renewal is not automatic, but it is possible and expected.
- Term Limited Funding – Programs or Services: This type of funding is primarily the responsibility of senior management and staff. It comprises donations that support specific programs or services for a specific time. If we want the programs or services to continue, we have to replace the term-limited funding when it expires.
- Term-Limited Funding – Philanthropy: This type of funding is primarily the responsibility of the board's fundraising committee and the manager of fundraising. It comprises donations and proceeds from fundraising projects.

Goal 1	<p>Identify programs and services that are at risk of losing their funding and explore options to secure funding.</p> <p>Approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask managers and our fundraising committee to search for funding sources that will allow us to keep or restore the at-risk programs. Enlist support from staff and directors in these efforts.
Goal 2	<p>Identify sources of funding, in all three strategic themes and subsequent goals that we are not presently addressing.</p> <p>Approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Look for sources of funds that match the programming priorities we set out in other parts of this plan. • Increase our understanding of the priorities and objectives of our major funders. • As governments and agencies change their focus, ensure we keep up with the changes and identify new opportunities, where appropriate.
Goal 3	<p>Expand our budget for fundraising, and dedicated human resources.</p> <p>Approach:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider options to expand the fundraising manager's position. Consider hiring assistants for specific Projects. Re-energize directors role in fundraising

Looking ahead:

The strategic direction and goals included in this plan reflect our understanding of what board members, staff and the community value most about the organization, and current and future opportunities and challenges in offering a high quality system of services.

The five-year period of this strategic plan will be a time of assessing and deepening the Project’s approaches to its work. Concurrently, the Board will take more of a leadership role in working with a broader array of community resources

Five years ago, we could not have anticipated the challenges we face today. We will face unanticipated challenges in the next five years. We have to be prepared to change course to face the most important of those challenges.

This strategic plan is our best attempt to move into the future. We acknowledge that it is always a work in progress.