

CARLETON COMMUNITY CENTRE

JANUARY 1, 2022

STRATEGIC
PLAN
2022-2025



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SECTION - EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1.1 Message from the Chair:

Carleton Community Centre has been the cornerstone of the lower west neighbourhood for 71 years. The notion of being the west side neighbourhood hub has always been foundational to the centre's operations though we have had to be nimble in how we maintain that (ex. theatre, recreation centre, basic need supports, youth drop-in etc.).

Currently, Carleton Community Centre has 4 full time employees, 7 part time/seasonal employees. Our centre is available to the community 7 days a week and our core programming runs 6 days a week. With a "new team", an energized board, and healthy funding relationships now is the time to create a strategic direction.

Dennis Sisco, Board Chair

1.2 Mission:

The Carleton Community Centre inspires and promotes a holistic approach to wellness and quality of life through the delivery and support of programs and activities responsive to local needs.

Vision:

To create a west side that is a thriving community where residents feel valued, and no one is left behind. Carleton Community Centre will be a community hub that is financially sustainable and executes opportunities that benefit the west side residents.

Values:

We value inclusivity, respect, wellness, sustainable growth, innovation, integrity, and strive to be reflective of the community we serve.

1.3 Board of Directors:

Dennis Sisco, Chair

_____, Vice – Chair

Margaret McDevitt, Treasurer

Jill Roberts, Secretary

Dianne Thomas, Director

Roy Walker, Director

Michel Boudreau, Director

Jason DeMerchant, Director

Jose Daniel Rito, Director

Paul Ross, Director

Naomi Leslie, Director

Lauren McKelvey, Director

Anna Mattie, Director

1.4 Full-Time Staff:

Jen Brown Oliver, Executive Director
Kate Worden, Programs and Marketing Coordinator
Madelynn Ryan, Youth Programs Coordinator
Tim Chaffey, Neighbourhood Developer

Part-Time/Seasonal Staff:

Marta Kelly, Finance Coordinator
Morgan Salter, Cheer Coordinator
Michael Eatman, Groundskeeper
Sydney Ryan, Youth Leader/Rental Coordinator
Brooklyn Marsman, Youth Leader/Rental Coordinator
Tamika Chevarie, Youth Leader
Eliot Sprague-Hay, Youth Leader
Hailey Sanderson, Youth Leader

SECTION 2 - PROCESS

2.1 Resident-Informed Strategic Planning Concept:

To create this strategic plan, including the voices and needs of the community was paramount. Not only because we will have a better product but because our mission clearly states that our work will always be *“responsive to local needs”*.

Not only did we have Resonance Inc. facilitate a strategic planning session for our board of directors but we made various efforts to engage with residents in our community and other Carleton Community Centre stakeholders. Throughout 2021, we conducted door to door surveying, informal one on one interviews, social media polls, and various special projects (we had over 150 residents participate). The data was then interpreted by our UNBSJ research student, and it provided an overview of needs present in our community. This process brought more information and validation to our process.

2.2 Community Needs Assessment:

From May through to August, Carleton Community Centre employed a student through the Experiential Learning program at UNBSJ (Courtney Belyea) to conduct a community needs assessment. The assessment focused on three categories: **Survival Needs** (Food Security, Shelter, and Employment/Income), **Environment Needs** (Transportation, Safety, Healthcare), and **Social Needs** (Sense of Belonging, Relationships, and Recreation). The categories are a strategic blend of the Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs and the 12 Social Determinants of Health because we only wanted to collect the information that was relevant to our potential impact at Carleton Community Centre. Below is some of the data that will inform our strategic plan:

Food Security (Community Need): 33% of the residents surveyed have skipped at least one meal in the last 6 months due to a financial or access barrier.

Shelter (Community Need): 43% of residents surveyed were unsatisfied or very unsatisfied with the accessibility of quality housing in their neighbourhood. Additionally, 41% of residents surveyed reported that they have worried about not having enough money to pay for housing at least on time in the last 6 months.

Employment Income (Community Need): 59.5% of residents surveyed were not currently part of the workforce. 34.7% of people surveyed reported that their household income was less than \$25,000 in the past year.

Sense of Belonging (Community Need): 39% of residents surveyed described their sense of belonging as neutral. Lower West Saint John has the highest moving rate in 2018 of 47%.

Relationships (Community Need): 21% of residents surveyed said they do not have someone outside their immediate household to connect with socially/recreationally.

Recreation (Community Need): 20.5% of residents surveyed wanted *more* programming for children/youth. Through this question we also gathered new parent, senior, and persons with disabilities programming/services were also identified as priorities.

SECTION 3 – SWOT ANALYSIS (STRENGTHS, WEAKNESSES, OPPORTUNITIES, AND THREATS)

3.1 Analysis of opportunities and externally originated threats:

Opportunities:

1. Further build reputation in the community.
2. Develop and deliver more senior programming
3. Partnerships/relationships with other community centres and leaders.
4. Develop and deliver teaching and learning opportunities to the community.
5. Diversify funding through creative avenues.
6. Strengthen marketing and communications (beyond Facebook).
7. Partner/Align with like-minded organizations.
8. Engage/learn from subject matter experts.
9. Develop and deliver programs/services for newcomers.
10. Develop measurement/assessment processes to maintain outcome focused.

Threats:

1. Loss/Reduction of funding from the City of Saint John.
2. Changing landscape of social media.
3. Lack of community policing on the West Side.
4. Disconnect from various essential services on the West Side.
5. Vandalism/Theft.
6. Reputational Risk.
7. Pandemic/Limitation to services.
8. Loss of building (physical operating location).
9. High rates of poverty and increasing effects on residents associated with poverty.

3.2 Analysis of originated strengths and internally originated weaknesses:

Strengths:

1. Strong and young leadership.
2. Welcoming and inclusive environment.
3. Diverse programming and services.
4. Healthy partnerships that are long standing.

5. Good relationship and communication between the Board and ED.
6. Skilled staff with corporate history of the organization and neighbourhood.
7. Entire organization embraces a forward-thinking attitude.
8. A beautiful building with many amenities.
9. Flexibility, trust, and autonomy with our primary funder – City of Saint John.

Weaknesses:

1. Dependency on ED, and primary funders (gaps in succession planning).
2. Lack of regional visibility.
3. Old public perception of the organization and practices.
4. Lack of parking.
5. Limitations on programming space and definitive spaces for needs.
6. Building in need of cosmetic upgrades.
7. Perception that our organization is heavily focused on recreation only.

SECTION 4 – STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES

4.1 Foster Community Hub:

- Action 1. Increase brand awareness and our communication across the community regarding our programs, events, and services.
2. Build policies and procedures to ensure all ages, genders, and cultures are represented in the organization and involved in what we offer.
 3. Increase community engagement and program participation.
 4. Provide cultural activities.
 5. Provide leadership/mentorship programming.
 6. Provide multi-generational events and programming.
 7. Ensure board, staff, and volunteers are engaged and active.
 8. Provide learning opportunities to the board in this specific area.
 9. Continue community assessments and tailor programming and services to address the needs of the residents (ex. community needs assessment).

4.2 Financial Sustainability:

- Action 1. Develop a funding sustainability with diversity and overhead consideration.
2. Enhance our eligibility/availability to receive grants.
 3. Be proactive in relationship building and decision making with the city.
 4. Build and maintain relationships with new funders – regardless of ask.

4.3 Execute on Opportunities:

- Action 1. Solidify partnerships/relationships with other community centres and leaders.
2. Utilize community needs assessment findings to inform programs.
 3. Align with City priorities to be incorporated in long term financial planning.
 4. Longer and healthier service agreements with the city.
 5. Explore social enterprise opportunities.
 6. Scale up successful/at capacity programs.
 7. Asset growth.
 8. Develop well rounded succession plans for ED and board.
 9. Work placement programs and subsidized employment.

4.4 Advocacy for Residents:

- Action 1. Inform/advocate to change public policy that relate to food security, affordable housing, employment, recreation, and social belonging/empowerment.
2. Bring new programming to the neighbourhood that alleviate the effects of poverty, specifically in the areas of need identified in the community needs assessment.
3. Share impact and stories broadly to build awareness.
4. Work collaboratively with the community and other agencies to lobby for positive change.

SECTION 5 – ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The board of directors and the centre staff would like to extend thanks to the entire community that supported the development of our 2022-2025 strategic plan. As always, we thank the City of Saint John for the continued financial support/partnership so that we can deliver the listed objectives. We would like to specifically acknowledge the following individuals and organizations for providing their support and knowledge to this process:

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Erika McGee, Horizon Health
Rob Moir, UNBSJ
City of Saint John
Hillcrest Church
Human Development Council
Kent (West Location)
Participants of the West Side Network