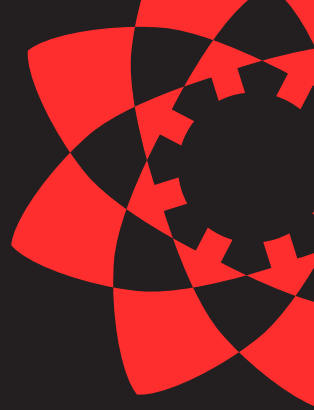


FORWARD WITH PURPOSE

**YWCA BC
STRATEGIC PLAN | 2024-2029**

TERRITORIAL ACKNOWLEDGEMENT



We respectfully acknowledge that our main office and many of our programs are located on the traditional, ancestral and unceded territories of the x^wməθk^wəyəm (Musqueam), Sk̓wx̓wú7mesh (Squamish) and səliłwətał (Tsleil-Waututh) Nations, and that our work across British Columbia spans the territories of more than 200 First Nations.

YWCA BC is committed to truth and reconciliation. This includes understanding the truth of our shared colonial history, making positive changes within our organization and taking actions that advance safety, justice and equity for Indigenous peoples.





FOREWORD

When I assumed the role of CEO of YWCA BC in June 2022, the world was emerging from a global pandemic and the organization's 2019–2022 Strategic Plan was ending. With this pause in the order of things, I asked: what could our organization look like in five years if we were truly aspirational?

Over the course of the YWCA's 125-year history, the world has seen inspiring progress in some areas, and a glaring lack of it in others. Today, still, violence is routinely committed against women, Two-Spirit and gender diverse people. The high cost of living and lack of affordable housing threaten safety and stability. Racism and oppression are entrenched in our health, justice, education and employment systems, with devastating consequences that echo through families and communities for generations. And those most impacted by these inequities continue to be women and gender diverse people living at the intersection of one or more identities, especially Indigenous and racialized peoples, those with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+, gender diverse and Two-Spirit people, youth and newcomers.

For an equitable and just society, opportunities must be fair and accessible, and they must be rooted in safety and autonomy. This is the aspirational vision we have for the future.

To devise a Strategic Plan for transformational impact, we committed to deep listening and wide collaboration. We engaged in community listening with internal and external contributors, researchers reported on trends, and the board and senior management team coalesced their own analyses. Next, board members and employees participated in a planning retreat. As we narrowed in, we encouraged more feedback from employees, especially those who work directly with the communities we serve.

After much hard work, we confirmed three overarching goals, along with strategic priorities and intended outcomes to align our actions in the coming five years. We also agreed that we must be wholehearted and disciplined in our commitment to inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility, with specific focus on advancing gender inclusion, anti-racism, truth and reconciliation, decolonization and participant-centered work. Collectively, these Commitments will guide our decisions for programming, advocacy, resourcing and growth.

The planning process reaffirmed that the YWCA's strength is its flexibility—delivering innovative services to people in multiple ways, while recognizing when we should respond to external circumstances and when we should drive change. We have created this Strategic Plan with the same resilience in mind. Progress is neither easy nor linear and we will always adjust course to adapt to a quickly changing world.

Seeing the alignment we share has been emotional, energizing and inspiring. We all want the same thing—a world that is safe, just and equitable. I believe this Strategic Plan will help get us there.



Erin Seeley
CEO, YWCA BC





ABOUT YWCA BC

YWCA BC has been serving the community since 1897, first offering women and girls housing and services as they sought opportunities and employment. The YWCA today is complex and growing. Currently, we employ more than 500 people and have an annual operating budget of over \$50 million. We serve more than 40,000 people annually, including program participants, and members and guests of our social enterprises—Hotel Willo and YWCA Health & Fitness Club. YWCA participants often live at the intersection of one or more identities, including women, Indigenous and racialized peoples, those with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, youth and newcomers. Many have experienced marginalization, systemic oppression and violence.

We recognize that to achieve personal and economic wellbeing, women and families need convenient access to core services. When possible, we employ a hub model to support multiple aspects of people's lives, delivering housing, early learning and child care, family, youth and mentorship programs, violence

prevention, legal services and opportunities for training, skills development and employment.

We also advocate for transformational change to discriminatory systems and oppressive cultural norms by educating the public and influencing policy. To guide this work, we listen to participants and frontline employees, collaborate with allied organizations and are committed to fostering deeper relationships with host First Nations.

VISION

We boldly envision a just and equitable world for women, families and allies.

MISSION

We advance gender equity alongside women, families, Two-Spirit and gender diverse people through advocacy and integrated services that support personal, collective, and economic wellbeing.

néca?mat ct

We are all one. All is connected.

During strategic planning, discussions often returned to opportunities and challenges that require truth-telling and bold action. To advance gender equity, we must acknowledge our organization's name, brand and colonial history and align to be inclusive and intersectional in all we do.

As an organization that has benefited from the privileges of settler colonialism, we also recognize that Indigenous Peoples have endured cultural genocide with devastating individual, systemic and intergenerational impacts. We are committed to understanding the truth of our shared history, actively pursuing reconciliation, and challenging colonialism by centering Indigenous knowledge, culture and values.

Through this process, a set of guiding principles emerged that we are calling our **Commitments**.

Broadly, these are inclusion, diversity, equity and accessibility, with specific focus on advancing gender inclusion, anti-racism, truth and reconciliation, decolonization and a participant-centred approach.

These Commitments have long been embedded in our work and we continue to learn and seek new ways to ground them in the culture, systems, policies and practices at every level of our organization. They already

unite us; going forward, they will guide our strategic decisions.

To give our Commitments a framework within which to operate, board member Dianne Sparrow and former board member Rosalind Campbell offered a Musqueam principle to reflect on:

néca?mat ct

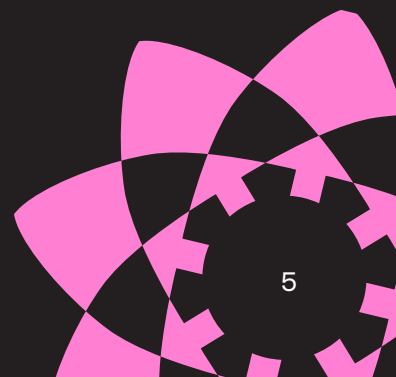
We are all one. All is connected.

"This important teaching asks each of us to work together in the spirit of collaboration and co-existence." (Musqueam Indian Band, 2020).

We know that by investing in people, we provide opportunities for personal, collective and economic wellbeing; that by driving transformational systems change through advocacy, we will positively impact society; and that by fostering a welcoming organization, we encourage a healthier, livelier whole. And as we learn and heal from our past, we create the potential for a future where we all can thrive.

Our Commitments and the teachings of néca?mat ct have guided us in determining the following goals and priorities and will be woven through our operational plans over the next five years and beyond.

We are grateful to the Musqueam Indian Band for permitting YWCA BC to use néca?mat ct as a guiding principle for our five-year plan.



OUR PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Participants who seek our services often live at the intersection of one or more identities, including women, Indigenous and racialized peoples, those with disabilities, 2SLGBTQIA+ people, youth and newcomers. We know that an integrated model that includes multiple services such as housing, child care, youth, family and employment programs best meets participants' needs and we must continue to

find the most efficient and effective ways to deliver these services. As leaders, this includes collaborating with other organizations to achieve the best results. With ongoing input from partners and frontline employees, we must also prioritize convenience and access as the affordability crisis drives participants further away from our current service hubs.



GOAL



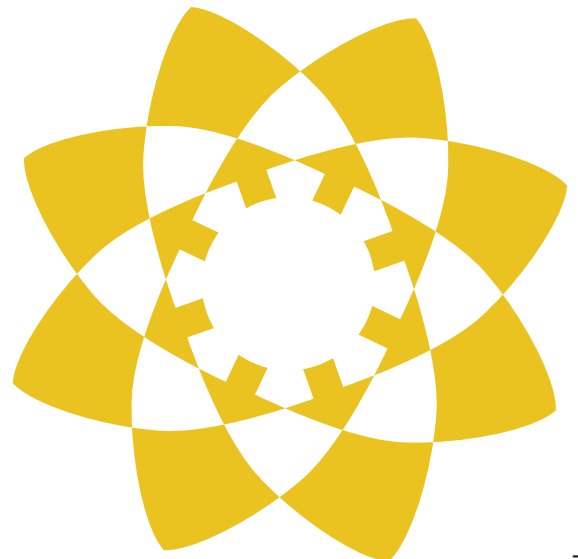
WE LEAD IN PARTICIPANT-CENTRED, INTEGRATED PROGRAMS AND SERVICES.

TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:

- Optimize and align our programs and services for greatest impact.
- Leverage and expand our hub model to connect multiple services within, and outside of, our current geographic service areas.
- Collaborate with community to deliver innovative programming and build long-term relationships with host First Nations.

OUTCOMES:

- Participants experience improved personal, collective and economic wellbeing.
- Programs and services are more accessible, relevant and inclusive.
- Meaningful progress toward reconciliation.



OUR ADVOCACY

Bold, systemic change is needed to ensure people have equitable access to safe, affordable housing, early learning and child care, opportunities for education, training and employment, and freedom from violence. To achieve a just and equitable world, communities must be safe, and opportunities must exist for everyone.

Our advocacy requires long-term vision, investment and partnerships with experts whose work intersects with ours. To achieve the best results, we will harness evidence-based research and amplify the expertise of frontline employees and participants to spotlight the impact of existing policies and push for change.



GOAL



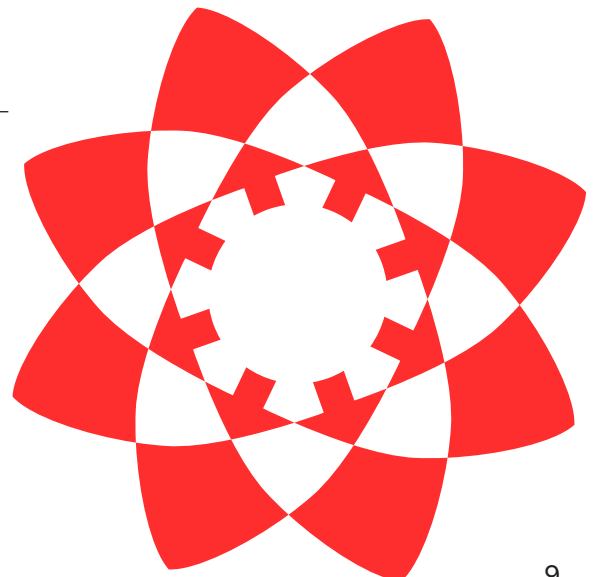
WE INSPIRE TRANSFORMATIONAL SYSTEMS AND CULTURE CHANGE THROUGH EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY.

TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:

- Build awareness of urgent community needs and advance policy solutions that are intersectional, partner-aligned, evidence-based and grounded in frontline experience.
- Pursue and demand equity and justice alongside Indigenous women, girls and Two-Spirit people.
- Share knowledge to build capacity and equip participants to advocate individually and collectively.

OUTCOMES:

- Greater public engagement and increased influence on government policy.
- Meaningful progress on the 231 Calls for Justice and 94 Calls to Action.
- Participants have skills and support to advocate for systemic change.



OUR ORGANIZATION

Our organization must continue to grow and diversify to respond authentically to participants in an increasingly complex environment. To ensure we have the organizational capacity to thrive, we must have a strong foundation.

Activating our Commitments at all levels of the organization and increasing cross-

departmental collaboration will keep our work participant-focused; leveraging technology to modernize our systems will increase efficiency and productivity; and pursuing new revenue sources and investing in our people will increase our ability to deliver on our vision and mission.



GOAL



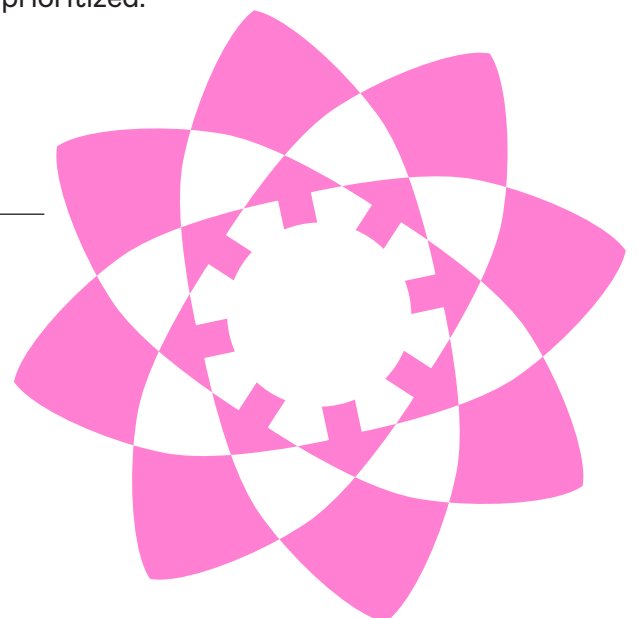
WE UNITE AS AN INCLUSIVE, RESPONSIVE AND THRIVING ORGANIZATION.

TO ACHIEVE THIS, WE WILL:

- Take action to understand, acknowledge and address our complicity in historic and current colonial practices.
- Invest in our people and create a safe, inclusive and welcoming culture.
- Cultivate collaboration across departments.
- Leverage technology and invest in data and systems integration.
- Pursue new and diverse revenue sources.

OUTCOMES:

- Substantive action toward reconciliation and decolonization.
- Leadership and employees reflect the diverse communities we serve.
- Employees feel they belong and collective wellbeing is prioritized.
- Improved organizational effectiveness and efficiency.
- Financial strength for innovation and growth.





PURPOSE



RESILIENCE



FLEXIBILITY

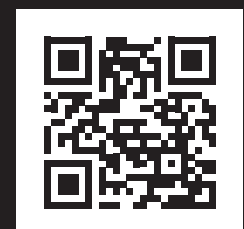


YWCA BC is a registered charity committed to advancing gender equity through our programs, advocacy and revenue-generating social enterprises. Guided by the needs of the people we serve, we empower and strengthen communities in our province through housing, child care, employment services, mentorship and more.

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Charitable Registration No. 108227943 RR0001

For a glossary of terms used in this plan, visit:
ywcabc.org/forward-purpose



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