

YOUTH CENTRE JEUNESSE

Five-Year Strategic Plan (2024-2029)

Adopted by The Board of Directors in February 2024

Table of Contents

Introduction.....	3
A message from the Chair of the Board of Directors.....	3
Executive Summary.....	3
Six Strategic Directions: 2024-2029.....	4
Profile and History.....	5
History.....	5
Vision.....	5
Mission.....	6
Guiding Principles.....	6
Critical Issues.....	6
Goals.....	9
Strategic Direction 1: Human Resources.....	9
Strategic Direction 2: Fund Development.....	11
Strategic Direction 3: Program Development.....	12
Strategic Direction 4: Public Awareness/Branding and Outreach.....	13
Strategic Direction 5: Community Partnerships.....	14
Strategic Direction 6: Governance.....	15
5 Year Budget Projections.....	17



YOUTH CENTRE JEUNESSE

Introduction

A message from the Chair of the Board of Directors

The Door Youth Centre (the Centre) has proudly served adolescents of downtown Ottawa for over 29 years. We have built our reputation on the dedication of our staff members and the many opportunities provided to youth as they strive and struggle on their path to adulthood. To ensure our mission continues well into the future, we decided to develop our first-ever five-year strategic plan. Following a diligent search, we were extremely fortunate to retain the services of Brian Tardif, a talented and experienced consultant.

Brian was eager to assist us as he developed a thorough process to formulate a meaningful plan, including gathering impressions from key external informants, creating a perceptual snapshot from the Board of Directors and staff, and participating in a collaborative workshop in nine hours over two days.

At the conclusion of this process, we identified six strategic directions to be our priorities for the next five years. We are proud of this document and we are excited to implement its principles. The Door is now positioned for the future - resilient in the face of change and able to adapt to youths' evolving needs.

Executive Summary

In early 2023, the Board decided to embark on the organization's first ever-strategic plan with a goal to launch in 2024. The 11 member working board is very engaged in many aspects of the organization, particularly fundraising. The small staff consists of two full-time positions (the Executive Director (ED) and the Program Coordinator) and four part-time positions (two Youth Workers, one Youth Supervisor, and one Kitchen Supervisor). The Centre conducts regular satisfaction and feedback surveys of the youth who use the programs. The support of several partnerships with different organizations assists with running these programs. The biggest challenges from the ED's perspective are securing long-term and sustainable funding, retaining staff, and increasing public awareness of the Centre.

The process included the creation of a Strategic Planning Steering Committee of the Board, including Chair Richard Desclouds, Board Member Luc Lalande, Executive Director Malik Ayass, Program Coordinator Nadia Kulane, and Consultant Brian Tardif. The Committee identified ten key informants to be interviewed by the Consultant. Additional inputs included a document review, a review of successes, challenges, and opportunities, and a facilitated two-part, nine-hour workshop with all members of the Board, the ED, and the Program Coordinator. The process generated six strategic directions to guide the organization over the next five years.

Six Strategic Directions: 2024-2029

	1. Human Resources The Centre will develop and implement strategies aimed to increase staff perspectives and capacity, both quantitative (number of staff) and qualitative (skill acquisition and development), and further develop strategies to promote and support staff retention.
	2. Fund Development The Centre will aim to increase funding from all existing sources and identify potential new sources of funding.
	3. Program Development The Centre will aim to ensure flexible and responsive youth programming that values the uniqueness of each adolescent and the diversity of our community.
	4. Public Awareness/Banding and Outreach The Centre aims to convey to the public its presence as a pillar of the community.
	5. Community Partnerships The Centre aims to multiply its impact by building and growing reciprocal partnerships.
	6. Governance The Centre will develop and evolve its governance structure to be responsive to the evolving needs of the organization.

Profile and History

History

The Door (the Centre) was modelled after The Door New York, a youth centre located in the heart of New York City. Art Stinson, the former head of the School of Social Work at Carleton University felt that there was a need to offer a place for youth to interact with each other as peers, to make new friends and to access services. It was this vision that led to the opening of The Door in May 1994.



The Centre has evolved and is primarily a place for youth to access educational and employment support, health promotion and recreational programs. We also work to establish links to other youth-oriented programs and services throughout the community. Most important, it is a place where youth can feel good about themselves and their place in the community.

The Door is the only youth centre in the Centretown West area, thus fulfilling a need that is otherwise unmet. Working with youth in our city we see youth that may have a stable home environment and others may be high-risk. They come from various racial and ethnic backgrounds, some of them new Canadians. There is a range of gender diversity and also those who identify as members of the LGBTQ2S+ community. The Centre is a place youth can benefit from a safe

environment to learn, contribute and share or simply enjoy a safe place to hang out with friends.

Each youth is expected to help out in some small way at the centre, whether it's taking out the garbage, cooking dinner, working the front desk, basketball court, and/or participating in the decisions about how The Centre operates on a day-to-day basis. This ensures that The Centre is truly a facility of and for young people.

Vision

Our vision is one of a safe and welcoming place where young people acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and behaviours that help them realize their full potential and participate actively in their communities.

Mission

Our mission is to provide integrated social and developmental activities within an accessible, safe and supportive environment.

Guiding Principles

- We embrace possibility and seek opportunity for youth.
- We embrace and nourish the uniqueness of each adolescent.
- We value the knowledge, experience, and sound ethics of staff, volunteers, and older youth members,
- We assist adolescents in their divergent and sometimes, difficult, paths towards adulthood.
- We celebrate when youth embrace their own mentorship roles as they travel on their unique journey and contribute in meaningful ways to society.
- We welcome all members of our community to join us in our quest for fulfillment, justice, and equality.

Critical Issues

External Challenges

Conducted by the Ontario Nonprofit Network (ONN), this sector-wide survey gathered data from nearly 1,400 nonprofits, charities, and grassroots groups across the province from 2020-2023¹. The survey found that the nonprofit sector is facing many challenges:

- **Soaring Demand for Services:** Demand for nonprofit services has reached an unprecedented high, experiencing a remarkable 29% growth.
- **Financial Downturn:** Nonprofit financial situations are showing a concerning downward trend, posing challenges to sustainability.
- **Staffing Challenges:** Two-thirds of the sector is grappling with staffing challenges, particularly related to recruitment and retention.
- **Closure Reports Surge:** Reports of nonprofit closures have surged, with 35% of organizations indicating awareness of similar nonprofits shutting down.
- **Revenue Stagnation:** Only half of the sector reported marginal increases in revenue, highlighting financial struggles.

¹ <https://theonnc.ca/publication/2023-state-of-the-sector-survey-policy-report/>

- **Vulnerability to Context:** Nonprofits face unique challenges, with community crises leading to increased service demand without additional support. Economic uncertainty and austerity result in declining donations and government funding.

Based on these findings, ONN forecasts worsening conditions for the sector by 2026.

- **Rising Demand:** Every nonprofit in Ontario is expected to face an increase in demand for services.
- **Financial Sustainability Challenges:** Only 17% of nonprofits are projected to achieve financial sustainability for 12 months or more.
- **Cost Escalation:** Nonprofits are anticipated to experience a substantial 131% increase in costs.
- **Closures:** Approximately 63% of nonprofits will be aware of similar organizations closing down and ceasing operations.
- **Impacts on Communities:** The loss of nonprofits is foreseen to result in communities that are less economically viable, socially vibrant, and connected.

Despite the challenges, nonprofits continue to play a vital role in bringing immense value to communities across Ontario. As organizations face challenges, strategic planning becomes essential to access resources, address community needs, and enhance overall capacity.

Internal Challenges

Limitations of the Physical Space

The Centre's physical space has been customized to reflect its operations and programs, but it has limitations that hinder future expansion, including the limited square footage, the age and heritage status of the building, construction and renovation restrictions, and the potential prohibitive cost of future renovations. The Centre also offers important outdoor sports programming, but the outdoor sports space is limited and requires renovations.

The current space also presents visibility and accessibility challenges as it is situated on the second-floor of the building, limiting street visibility and physical access, making it less welcoming for youth.

Inflation and Revenue Generation

The Centre operates rent-free in a space owned by the Somerset West Community Health Centre (SWCHC) through a generous arrangement between the City of Ottawa and SWCHC. There are indications that this rent-free arrangement may come to an end during the implementation of the Strategic Plan, potentially resulting in significant increases in expenditures.

Rising inflation and economic downturn has increased costs and negatively impacted revenue generation through fundraising events and donations.

Changing Demographics and Travel

While the Centre is situated in a central location for youth in the local community, attracting youth from other parts of the city requires bus travel, which may pose challenges for some due to limited access to fare.

Downtown core school closures have reduced the number of inner-city referrals, requiring more youth to travel greater distances to access the Centre. Decreased availability of public and affordable housing in the catchment area has led to increased travel distances for youth accessing the Centre.

Staffing

The Centre's limited ability to offer competitive wages, benefits, and staff development opportunities has led to challenges in retaining employees, resulting in a higher than acceptable staff turnover.



Goals

Strategic Direction 1: Human Resources



The Centre will develop and implement strategies aimed to increase staff capacity, both quantitative (number of staff) and qualitative (skill acquisition and skill development) perspectives and further develop strategies to promote and support staff retention.

Goal 1: Develop a succession plan for all staff positions that ensures smooth future transitions.

Indicators of Success

- Established immediate short-term succession plan to ensure continuity of The Door's operations (e.g., have identified a potential interim ED) until such time that a more formal and long-term succession plan is in place.
- A communication plan developed to support the implementation of the succession plan if needed.
- A longer-term succession plan for the ED position established.
- Established succession plan for all other staff.

Goal 2: Develop and implement a staff development strategy that is ongoing, consistent, and builds staff capacity to better support youth.

Indicators of Success

- An initial consultation with ED to discuss staff job descriptions completed.
- Established and working ad hoc committee of the Board to oversee the consultation.
- Staff development plans that are explicit in the employee job descriptions (i.e., training needs, education supports, etc.), include annual performance reviews, and stay ongoing and consistent.

Goal 3: Develop a comprehensive wage and overall compensation strategy to help recruit new staff and support staff retention.

Indicators of Success

- An established annual plan for the ED to recommend staff salaries for the following year based strongly on rate of inflation to the Executive Committee for approval by November 2024.
- An established annual process for the Executive Committee to decide on the ED's salary by December 2024.
- Budget for the following year is proposed for full Board approval.

Goal 4: Develop a human resources strategy to be responsive to changing needs and future growth.

Indicators of Success

- Increase by one staff position for education and outreach functions with a corresponding increase to grant funding for this project.
- A strategy that identifies benchmarks for future staff needs based on projected program growth.

Goal 5: Develop a volunteer strategy to support volunteer recruitment, recognize, appreciate, and support development, and improve retention and engagement.

Indicators of Success

- Sustained and increased as needed the number of program volunteers.
- An established policy and practice of supporting volunteer development.
- An annual volunteer appreciation event.
- An increase in average length of volunteer engagement.
- An increase in the number and attrition of volunteers across the organization.

Strategic Direction 2: Fund Development



The Centre will aim to increase funding from all existing sources and identify potential new sources of funding.

Goal 1: Seek the services of a Fundraising Consultant to deliver a fundraising workshop for the Board

Indicator of Success

- Increased the Board's understanding of fundraising essentials and how Board members can support the organization's fundraising strategy.

Goal 2: Develop and implement a fundraising strategy to leverage existing organizational and personal connections to support fund development.

Indicators of Success

- Increased attendance at fundraising events starting with increased commitment from volunteers and board members by 2024-2025.
- Increased scope of fundraising activities to facilitate growth and capacity by 2026-2027.
- Established communication process that generates cross participation and engagement between fund development activities that maximizes connections by 2026-2027.

Goal 3: Develop and implement a strategy to increase recurring sources of funding donations.

Indicators of Success

- Identified recurring funding options by 2024-2025.
- Real-time success in recurring funding that significantly increases revenue by 2026-2027.
- Capitalize on recurring funding as a platform for expansion to corporate opportunities to larger scale by 2028-2029.
- Success in regular and larger fundraising activities while partnering with community and corporate interests by 2028-2029.

Goal 4: Implement an evaluation of current funding strategies.

Indicators of Success

- Secure project funding for Outreach position (as identified in the HR section) by 2025-2026.
- Increased fundraising revenues by 25% by 2024-2025.
- Building on the strength of the step up in fundraising in 2024-2025, continue to build fundraising revenues at 5% annual rate.

Goal 5: Develop a strategy that will improve and clarify expectations and communications regarding different fund development activities.

Indicators of Success

- Developed a communication process to work with board members responsible for different fund development activities by 2024-2025.
- All board members have defined specific roles and provide regular status updates during board meetings by 2028-2029.

Strategic Direction 3: Program Development



The Centre will aim to ensure flexible and responsive youth programs and activities that value the uniqueness of each adolescent and the diversity of our community.

A **program** is a planned series of activities or events, typically with a specific goal or outcome in mind. Programs repeat over time, with the goal of achieving a long-term objective. On the other hand, an **activity** is a single event or action that is undertaken for its own sake. Activities may be part of a larger program, but they can also stand alone as individual events.

Goal 1: Maintain and grow adaptable and youth focused programs.

Indicators of Success

- Increased program attendance
- Increased number of youth at the Centre.
- Post-program survey implemented on an annual and/or recurring basis.

Goal 2: Strengthen the commitment and motivation of youth in educational advancement.

Indicators of Success

- Increased participation in educational room hours.
- Established partnerships with organizations that offer educational services.
- Increased participation in incentive programs.
- Increased applications for The Door Scholarship program.

Goal 3: Lower barriers to participation at the Centre.

Indicators of Success

- More youth from different postal codes.
- Youth surveys indicate ease of participation in programming.
- A supported and sustained capacity to support subsidized bus tickets.

Goal 4: Create opportunities to engage youth in activities outside of the Centre.

Indicators of Success

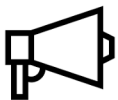
- Increase in The Door pop-up programming in different venues/community partner locations.
- Increase youth participation reflecting postal codes from different demographic areas.

Goal 5: Create more opportunities to involve youth alumni.

Indicator of Success

- Increase alumni participation in programming with a minimum of once per month.

Strategic Direction 4: Public Awareness/Branding and Outreach



The Centre aims to convey to the public its presence as a pillar of the community.

Goal 1: Develop and implement strategies to improve/increase attendance at events, including that of the Board and Volunteers.

Indicator of Success

- Increased attendance at Centre events.

Goal 2: Develop and implement a social media and marketing strategy.

Indicator of Success

- Increased presence on a variety of social media platforms.

Goal 3: Seek funding to support outreach and marketing initiatives.

Indicator of Success

- Successful attainment of funds to support outreach and marketing initiatives.

Goal 4: Engage youth in social media and marketing strategies.

Indicator of Success

- Engaged youth in social media messaging.

Goal 5: Sustain and improve the quarterly newsletter as a means of community with supporters and donors.

Indicator of Success

- Increase in newsletter readers.

Strategic Direction 5: Community Partnerships



The Centre aims to multiply its impact by building and growing reciprocal partnerships.

Goal 1: Develop a community engagement strategy to identify existing and potential partners and outline goals of each partnership.

Indicator of Success

- Strategy developed and with five new partners included.

Goal 2: Seek opportunities to enrich programs through community partnerships.

Indicator of Success

- Programs evolve and are enriched as needed with increased youth participation.

Goal 3: Seek opportunities for expansion and funding diversity through new and innovative partnerships and initiatives.

Indicator of Success

- Increased number of funding sources.

Goal 4: Develop a practice that will enhance our acknowledgement and appreciation of existing partnerships.

Indicator of Success

- An annual partnership appreciation and recognition practice.

Strategic Direction 6: Governance



The Centre will develop and evolve its governance structure to be responsive to the evolving needs of the organization.

Goal 1: Develop and implement a strategy to improve board retention.

Indicator of Success

- Decrease in board turnover.

Goal 2: Develop and implement a strategy that will strengthen the Board's policy function and capacity to evolve towards a hybrid working-policy board model.

Indicator of Success

- A board meeting agenda with an increased focus on the functions of a policy board.

Goal 3: Develop and implement a board orientation program.

Indicator of Success

- An articulated board orientation program implemented annually or as needed.

Goal 4: Establish and articulate a process for developing and implementing new policy and policy updates.

Indicator of Success

- An established and implemented policy development and monitoring process.



5 Year Budget Projections

	2024 Projected	2025 Projected	% Chg	2026 Projected	% Chg	2027 Projected	% Chg	2028 Projected	% Chg
INCOME									
CofO Sustainable Funding ¹	165,611	172,235	4%	179,124	4%	186,289	4%	193,741	4%
Donations ²	31,787	33,376	5%	35,045	5%	36,797	5%	38,637	5%
Fundraising ³	78,264	82,178	5%	86,287	5%	90,601	5%	95,131	5%
Project Funding Revenue ⁴	46,800	48,672	4%	50,619	4%	52,644	4%	54,749	4%
Total Income	322,462	336,461	4%	351,075	4%	366,331	4%	382,258	4%
EXPENSES									
Administration Expenses ⁵	24,095	47,059	95%	48,942	4%	50,899	4%	52,935	4%
Payroll Expenses ⁶	228,831	237,985	4%	247,504	4%	257,404	4%	267,700	4%
Program Expenses ⁷	7,001	7,281	4%	7,572	4%	7,875	4%	8,190	4%
Project Funding Expenses ⁴	46,800	48,672	4%	50,619	4%	52,644	4%	54,749	4%
Total Expenses	306,728	340,997	11%	354,637	4%	368,822	4%	383,575	4%
<i>Year over year increase/(decrease)</i>	<i>7%</i>	<i>11%</i>		<i>4%</i>		<i>4%</i>		<i>4%</i>	
<i>Other income expense</i>	<i>4,850</i>	<i>5,018</i>	<i>3%</i>	<i>4,896</i>	<i>-2%</i>	<i>4,806</i>	<i>-2%</i>	<i>4,998</i>	<i>4%</i>
SURPLUS/LOSS	15,734	-4,536		-3,562		-2,491		-1,317	
CASH	169,531	164,995		161,433		158,942		157,625	

Assumptions:

¹ - City of Ottawa Sustainable funding has an estimated cost of living adjustment factor of 4% for all years except 2024, for which the factor has been determined to be 6%.

² - Donations have estimated year over year growth of 5%.

³ - Fundraising has a one time increase of \$25,000 in 2024, followed by estimated year over year growth of 5%.

⁴ - Project Funding shows an equivalent Project Funding Expense so the numbers will be driven by active projects. One project will be a 1 year outreach position that will commence in 2024 (Strategic Direction 1, Goal 4).

⁵ - Administration Expense adjusted by: one-time Fundraising Consultant expense of \$3,000 in 2024 (Strategic Direction 2, Goal 1), and an ongoing \$25,000 rent expense, commencing in 2025.

⁶ - Payroll expense has estimated year over year growth of 4%, plus an incremental ongoing cost increase of \$4,000 to reflect employee benefits plan (Strategic Direction 1, Goal 3).

⁷ - Program expense has estimated year over year growth of 4%, plus an incremental ongoing cost increase of \$1,900 to reflect bussing for students to centre (Strategic Direction 3, Goal 3).