

Introducing YWCA Niagara Region's Strategic Plan 2019 - 2024



YWCA NIAGARA REGION

Hope for Homeless Women and their Families since 1927



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YWCA Niagara Region New Mission Statement

**To be the change agent for
community transformation
ending gender inequity and
social injustice.**



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YWCA Niagara Region New Vision Statement

**An equitable society where women
and families thrive.**



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Critical Success Factors

COMMUNITY
IMPACT



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COMMUNITY IMPACT

CSF #1: BASIC HUMAN NEED - Affordable Housing

Keeping within the YWCA's area of expertise and current focus, we will continue to look for new opportunities to create and provide affordable housing. Through advocacy, education and creative solutions, we believe we can make the shift from chronic emergency shelter space shortage to a smooth and swift transition of clients to safe and affordable housing.

GAP

While the YW continues to address affordable housing through transitional housing options, there remains a shortage of affordable housing causing chronic emergency situations and high demands on emergency shelter programs. This will require addressing income barriers and creating more sustainable affordable housing at a systems level.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY

Be a lead advocate for affordable housing in Niagara Region that meets the needs of women and families.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Decrease in shelter occupancy by addressing income barriers and increased sustainable housing.



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COMMUNITY IMPACT

CSF #2: ECONOMIC OPPORTUNITY

Our focus is not to enhance the local economy but rather to work within it and strive to create and leverage better economic opportunities for both the YWCA and our clients. We see the economic benefit to the community by providing an intersectional gender lens to ensure sustainable opportunities while addressing barriers.

GAP

The lack of an intersectional gender lens contributes to increased barriers and diminished equitable economic opportunities. We require that governments and the community be better informed on prevailing challenges that can be addressed through creative and sustainable opportunities.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
Successful intersectional gender lens program enabling minimal barriers and inequities.	Support increased sustainable living-wage employment opportunities through the development new economic partnerships.



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COMMUNITY IMPACT

CSF #3: EDUCATION

Formalizing our current work around community education and development will address two specific areas: Greater awareness and understanding of the work of the YWCA; Improving the understanding of intersectional gender inequity and social injustice.

GAP

There is a general lack of awareness in the community on the work of the YW and intersectional gender equity. We require a more strategic approach in how the community is educated.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
To educate the community on the YWCA's mission and mandate and where there is intersectional gender inequity.	Deeper understanding of the impact of the YWCA in the Niagara Community as well as around the issues of intersectional gender inequity.



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PARTNERS

CSF #4: DONORS/VOLUNTEERS

We recognize that our donors and volunteers are an important asset to the organization. Finding a creative approach to deepening our relationships, beyond financial, and engaging them as our champions will help to give the needs of the YWCA a voice today and for the future and create lasting partnerships.

GAP

While our donors and volunteers currently have a commitment to the YWCA, we recognize the need to better foster long term engagement with them. We require a robust engagement strategy to help deepen our understanding of their “WHY” and increase their understanding of our “WHY”.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
We have the opportunity to further engage and educate our donors and volunteers.	Increased and sustain number of donors/volunteers resulting in deeper engagement and commitment to our work



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PARTNERS

CSF #5: GOVERNMENT AND NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATIONS

Formalizing strategic partnerships to streamline services and maximize the impact of funding must be considered to improve access to service, fill service gaps and future viability.

GAP

While we currently work with many NPOs, we require a structured approach to strengthen best practices and build relationships that benefit all stakeholders.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
Reframed relationships with government and NPOs to be partnership driven & strengthen and expand opportunities.	Increase our engagement in forums and collaborations to formalize new partnerships.



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PARTNERS

CSF #6: COMMUNITY LEADERS

We will work to engage community leaders to champion an intersectional gender equity lens within their organizations as well as in the broader community.

GAP

While we are recognized as a community leader around women's equity, we require community leaders to have a better understanding as to why intersectional gender equity is important so they will understand the benefit of having this incorporated into their own organizations and the broader community.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
Create and support champions around intersectional gender equity issues.	More community leaders who understand intersectional gender equity issues.



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ADVOCACY

CSF #7: POLICY CHANGE

The YWCA must be seen as a key contributor locally but given our expertise and current reputation, we have the ability to be recognized and included in conversations reaching and impacting a broader audience. We seek to be at the table in creating, developing and changing policy and believe we can be a policy actor for equitable inclusion.

GAP

Social policy at a systems level often does not take into consideration the unique needs of women. To improve access for women we require that policies are developed through an intersectional gender lens.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY

A sought after voice on intersectional gender equity issues as it relates to policy development.

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE

Advocate for a intersectional gender equity lens as a foundational practice.



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ADVOCACY

CSF #8: COMMUNITY COLLABORATIVES

Leveraging our community leadership to bring a diverse group of community members together to take action and make change on intersectional gender equity issues. As a change agent, we will seek out new approaches, working with community and government through consultation and think-tanks.

GAP

Policy and systems development is reactive and does not consider how it impacts women. We require a more proactive approach on engaging the community in intersectional gender equity systems thinking for meaningful discussion and output.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
Engaging the community on issues that impact intersectional gender equity and create solutions to systemic issues.	Two-way communication allowing for the development of joint solutions to intersectional gender equity issues.



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ADVOCACY

CSF #9: GENDER EQUITY EDUCATION

An intersectional gender lens benefits the whole community. We will seek opportunities to end gender inequity through education and engagement.

GAP

While there is a shift in attitude and awareness of women's needs, it lacks a social justice framework. We need to assert our knowledge and expertise on women's issues and rights as best practice approaches.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
Taking leadership in the development of what a social justice framework looks like.	Develop a social justice framework that identifies issues of inequities.



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FINANCIAL

CSF #10: SELF-FUNDING RESOURCES

Given the competitive donor and fluctuating political environments, we need to find ways to become more self-sufficient as a means to expand our offerings and enable our mission as a change agent. Through affordable housing development as well as the services of training and consulting we provide, we have opportunities to create alternative revenue sources to fund future endeavours.

GAP

74% of our income comes from external sources (Government, United Way); 19% from fundraising/donations; both are variable. Our expenses are increasing because of increases in demand for our services and cost of living. We need to find more opportunities for self-funding (rent/training).

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
Explore additional revenue generating opportunities.	Increase earned income.



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FINANCIAL

CSF #11: TALENT RETENTION

Our employees are our greatest asset and the heart of the YWCA. In striving to be an “Employer of Choice”, we will pursue guidance and understanding on what makes a happy and engaged workforce. We know that fair compensation is a key contributor to employee satisfaction, but we also acknowledge and appreciate that our employees come to work with a commitment and passion to do good. We must recognize, reward and nurture them as they are our future leaders and the people we rely on each day to make a difference in the lives of women and families.

GAP

We have high turnover in part-time positions. We do not have fair compensation and workloads are increasing due to higher demand for our services BUT revenue from our external sources remains static. We require additional financial resources and a deeper understanding of our staff’s personal & professional interests & needs.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
Establish firm benchmarks to become an Employer of Choice.	Increase employee retention and satisfaction.



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FINANCIAL

CSF #12: DONOR POOL

We strive to be a charity of choice in the Niagara region.

GAP

The work we do is not fully understood in the community so we have challenges in attracting and retaining donors. We require increased donor acquisition and retention.

STRATEGIC OPPORTUNITY	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE
Educate potential and current donors on the work of the YWCA.	Increase number of new donors and retained donors.