



# Strategic Plan

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2023

 WINhouse

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# Building a Solid Foundation

Building a Solid Foundation for Growth and Success is a working initiative and evolving a strategic plan that outlines the priorities and key initiatives that will guide Edmonton Women's Shelter Ltd. (WIN House) over the next three fiscal years, 2024-2027.

The continuing impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic and racial, political, and social movements that began in 2020 could not be predicted. The pandemic has created a new reality for Women's Shelters, as we have experienced a growth in the number of calls, the severity of abuse for our clients, and an increase in working initiatives with those with complex needs.

Making the situation more complicated, our front-line workers have shown up daily, risking their health and well-being, to ensure services continue and they are feeling burned out.

Government funding has stagnated for multiple years, and the recession has caused increased pricing. Understanding these dynamics and meeting these challenges is critical to navigating the issues of today and tomorrow so we can positively impact the lives of the individuals we serve.

This strategy lays the groundwork to ensure that we can not only survive the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic and the current recession but also create solid foundations to focus on growth and success in the future.

# A b o u t W I N H o u s e

Edmonton Women's Shelter has a history that spans 55 years. In 1968, 28 organizations met to discuss the growing problem of houseless women. An action committee established a point of contact and referral for the women. In 1973, Edmonton Women's Shelter incorporated, and work began raising funds to build a shelter where women could find food and emergency accommodations. In 1978, the first shelter opened, providing space for six families.

## MISSION

WIN House exists to further non-violent relationships and environments for women and non-binary individuals with or without children.

## VISION

Women, non-binary individuals, and children are safe and free from abuse in their environments and relationships.

## VALUES

WIN House is people focused and forward-thinking, without exception.



# *WIN House Is...*

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## People Focused

The people we serve, work and connect with deserve an extraordinary experience - one that allows them to be safe, healthy, productive, and motivated, their best selves.

We build authentic relationships, prioritize well-being, connect regularly, provide support, encouragement, and recognition. We nurture natural talents and strengths and invest in the success of others because we care about them. We are a community committed to making a positive impact, continued growth, and development. We rely on trust, accountability, transparency, and open communication.

## Forward Thinking

We think ahead. We plan. We courageously work through setbacks and challenges to avoid hardships and achieve growth and success through creative thinking and innovation.

We adapt. We persevere. Setbacks and adversity do not stop us. We see the bigger picture and are committed to building a better future together.

## Without Exception

We are inclusive. We value, appreciate and welcome people of all backgrounds and diverse characteristics. We offer a space where people are respected, accepted, and safe.

We create connections, acknowledge individual differences, value contributions, and share an understanding that we all belong.

The key objectives of this plan are related to our values. We illustrate how we will live these values through action.

# Value Proposition:

WIN House provides a safe haven for women, children, and non-binary individuals in the Edmonton area. Our commitment involves offering temporary accommodation, nutritious meals, and valuable assistance with navigating support systems. What sets us apart is our inclusive approach, catering to a diverse range of individuals, and our emphasis on a harm reduction program model.

Moreover, WIN House strives to pioneer innovative initiatives, including collaborative efforts with community partners to enhance services for our residents. We actively seek to foster unity among gender-based violence organizations, working together towards a shared mission.

# Assumptions:

WIN House must continue to work to understand our changing environment, be proactive in our planning and be ready to act regardless of uncertainty.

The plan for Building a Solid Foundation for Growth and Success 2024-2027 developed under the following assumptions:

Due to the economic impacts of COVID-19 and the recession, the current WIN House funding model may not be financially sustainable. There is an urgent need to find short, medium, and long-term solutions.

There is, and will continue to be, an increase in acute social issues (such as mental health, unemployment, homelessness, poverty, etc.) that will continue to increase the demand for Women's Shelters. At the same time, all levels of government will struggle financially, and fewer charities will survive, leading to gaps in support, services, and programs.

There is an opportunity to be aggressive in our service delivery model and philanthropic case, to position ourselves as a significant contributor for solutions to the problems facing the individuals we serve. We will take an entrepreneurial approach to try new things and accept that failure sometimes happens.

WIN house values of inclusivity and diversity are as relevant today as ever.

There will be an increased opportunity and benefit to partnerships within and across sectors.

We will need to continue to make complex decisions through restructuring positions and programs within the shelters and the business office to better utilize our human, financial, and facility resources.



# **Strategic Direction and Key Initiatives**

# 1 Strategic Direction

## Innovative and Pro-Active Service Delivery

WIN House is an industry content expert, knowledge keeper and transferrer. WIN House is more than a shelter, delivering services through partnerships. WIN House is a trusted advisor to others and demonstrates the inherent benefits of supporting individuals. WIN House is a hub of services. WIN House continues to have a solid foundation of sheltering, and we are innovative in how we provide services.

### **A** Key Initiative: Diversifying and expanding the reach of our programs and services.

- Develop and implement a three-year operational plan for Shelter Operations that presents and evaluates options, creates a vision for the future of programs and services, and explores new ways to use, leverage, and partner to increase community impact and financial sustainability.
- Revise or adapt existing programs and services while discontinuing the provision of certain services to address evolving community needs.
- Position ourselves as a key partner in the housing/homelessness sector. Look for opportunities to increase capacity by “thinking outside of the box.” Explore opportunities for more space for our Second Stage programming.

### **B** Key Initiative: WIN House uses our data to leverage what we do and how we can be proactive.

- Be evidence-based: Seek emerging data, best practices, and research to understand community needs and perceptions.
- Explore new opportunities to support or expand program and service delivery (i.e., LGBTQ+, new Canadians, etc.).

### **C** Key Initiative: Partner & collaborate to make us and others stronger.

- Seek new relationships with governments, organizations, businesses, and various sectors to explore and engage in new opportunities that align with our priorities.
- At WIN House, we ensure that individuals seeking our assistance encounter no unnecessary obstacles. We will establish partnerships that provide a seamless and accessible environment, where everything they require is readily available.



## ② Strategic Direction

### Enhance our community presence through a compelling story.

We want the community to know, feel and speak our story. They should know WIN House is proactive, more than just a shelter and is a charity of choice for an individual through their lifetime and passing that passion on to the next generation. The narrative of our story should be consistent with one primary story that can be adapted to the audience's needs. The story should hit hearts and minds through data and linking it to a narrative. WIN House should be top of mind for business owners, donors and people who need services due to enhanced community presence. WIN House should be forefront not only for donors, but for those sharing resources. Key messaging must be consistent and aligned, communicating our impact on the lives of the individuals we serve and on our community. We will do this so everyone can recognize, participate in, donate, or volunteer in support of the achievement of our vision.

**A**

**Key Initiative: Develop and implement a three-year Fund Development plan to grow our donor and partner base to maximize community impact. The plan will include the following.**

- Continue to grow sponsorship and partnerships through collaborations with other organizations and third-party event organizers with aligned values.
- Leverage grants, contracts, and sponsorships to deliver programs and services, which will also assist in covering operational and administrative costs.
- Develop and implement a major gift, annual, stewardship and planned giving plans.
- Re-imagine WIN House's events and find new ways to engage and connect with the community, donors, sponsors, volunteers, and partners.

**B**

**Key Initiative: Create a "WIN House story"**

- Our WIN House story will connect with people and help build relationships throughout their journey, leading to diversification through things such as legacy gifts.
- We will create cases for support that highlight the full impact of WIN House on the individuals we serve and the broader community.
- Make an emotional appeal that resonates with internal and external partners.

**C**

**Key Initiative: Build plans and systems for better communications. This will include, but not limited to.**

- Create marketing plans and campaigns to support all programs, services, and fundraising.
- Enhance internal communications by launching a WIN House Intranet.
- Implement innovative technology to improve communications and workflow.

This will ensure effective and organized dissemination of information, fostering clarity, consistency, and timely exchange of ideas, ultimately enhancing productivity and collaboration within WIN House.

## 3 Strategic Direction

### Explore opportunities for Funding Diversification

By exploring avenues to diversify funding sources, the organization aims to reduce reliance on government grants. This strategic approach allows WIN House to broaden its revenue streams, ensuring stability and enabling the continuation of critical services for those in need. Additionally, seeking diverse ways to monetize existing strengths and expertise helps maximize the impact of WIN House's programs and services. Building partnerships, even if they do not directly provide funds, can still contribute significantly by offering services and programs at minimal or no cost, alleviating budgetary pressures and strengthening the organization's overall effectiveness.

A

**Key Initiative: Research avenues for WIN House to diversify funding to reduce the reliance on Government grants.**

- Explore and implement opportunities for program diversification and social enterprises to bring in revenue.
- Research and execute opportunities to partner with other like-minded agencies to create pathways for revenue acquisition.

B

**Key Initiative: We will seek numerous ways to monetize our existing strengths.**

- Look at programs, organizational knowledge, and expertise through the lens of monetization.

C

**Key Initiatives: Seek out other partnership opportunities.**

- Build connections that do not necessarily result in funds but may mitigate some challenges and strains on our budget by providing services and programs at low or no cost.

## ④ Strategic Direction

### **Ensure organizational Administrative Excellence**

These key initiatives collectively aim to fortify the organizational structure and culture of the institution. By establishing clear roles and responsibilities, implementing defined policies aligned with the mission, vision, and values, and fostering a productive People & Culture strategy, the organization seeks to create a cohesive and accountable workforce.

Additionally, succession planning and cross-training ensure operational continuity, while incorporating Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) into evaluations bolsters accountability and ties individual efforts to the broader organizational mission, fostering a culture of continuous improvement and effectiveness.

**A** Key Initiative: Create and implement a plan to provide a clear understanding of roles within the organization, to ensure the board, leadership, and staff, stay focused on their role to ensure the mission, vision, and values are lived out through their work.

- Create a document that explains roles, responsibilities and working relationships.
- Establish accurate and prompt financial and program reporting.
- Develop quarterly reporting of key metrics which includes risk and organizational impacts and solutions.
- Ensure time and space for the discussion of new and emerging issues, ideas, plans and opportunities.

**B** Key Initiative: Create defined policies and procedures that incorporate the mission, vision, and values of the organization.

**C** Key Initiative: Develop and implement a three-year People & Culture strategy that includes but not limited to:

- The workforce is happy, engaged, and well-trained.
- Volunteer plan
- Diversity and social inclusion plan
- Develop standardized evaluations for staff that include key indicators that will foster accountability

**D** Key Initiatives: Create clear succession plans and cross-training in leadership and other key roles.