



YMCA of  
Owen Sound Grey Bruce

# STRATEGIC PLAN 2023-2027

## POSITIONING FOR THE FUTURE



# A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO AND BOARD CHAIR

**Dear Community Members,**

Today, we are thrilled to share with you an exciting development that promises to make a profound impact on the lives of those we serve – a new strategic plan for our charity that is designed with you, those we serve, at its very heart.

At the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce, our mission has always been to build a caring, healthy community by creating opportunities for all people to achieve personal growth in spirit, mind, and body. We've made great strides, thanks to the dedication of our team of employees and volunteers, and the generosity of our supporters. However, we are committed to improving the health of our community, and our new strategic plan is a crucial step toward realizing this promise.

## **How This Strategic Plan Benefits You:**

1. Our strategic plan clarifies our mission and objectives, ensuring that every action we take is directly aligned with your needs. This means a more targeted and effective approach to addressing the challenges you face.
2. Through our strategic initiatives, we aim to reach even more individuals and communities in need. This means more resources, support, and opportunities for everyone.
3. We're committed to enhancing the quality and scope of the services we provide. Our plan includes investments in technology, training, and resources to ensure you receive the best possible assistance.
4. We recognize the diversity of those we serve, and our strategic plan is designed to be inclusive and responsive to your unique circumstances and needs, because everyone belongs at the Y.
5. With this plan, we will be setting clear goals and metrics to measure our impact. This means greater transparency and accountability to you, our valued community.

## **Your Voice Matters:**

We greatly appreciate your invaluable suggestions and insights. As we put this strategic plan into action, we want you to know that we've taken your feedback to heart. Your input has directly influenced our initiatives, ensuring they are both meaningful and effective. We invite you to continue to engage with our team and share your stories, as your experiences not only shape our approach but also fuel our unwavering dedication to working tirelessly on your behalf.

In closing, we want to emphasize that this strategic plan is more than just a document – it's a promise to you, our cherished community members, that we are dedicated to improving the wellbeing of Owen Sound and Grey and Bruce Counties. Together, we will create a brighter future, filled with hope, opportunity, and positive change.

Thank you for allowing us to serve you, and for being the inspiration behind everything we do.

With deep respect and commitment,



*S. Cowley*  
Sarah Cowley  
Chief Executive Officer

*B Price*

Bruce Price  
Chair, Board of Directors



# OUR MISSION

The YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce is a charity dedicated to building a caring, healthy community by creating opportunities for all people to achieve personal growth in spirit, mind, and body.

# OUR VISION

Our YMCA is a community leader focused on improving the health and wellbeing of Owen Sound and Grey and Bruce Counties.

# OUR VALUES

Our YMCA has been enriching the lives of people in Owen Sound and Grey Bruce since 1877.

## We deliver on our mission and vision by:

providing opportunities for personal development in Health, Fitness, Aquatics and Recreation, Camp experiences, Child Care, and Community Services including Employment programs, Settlement & Language, Youth in Transition, Adult and Youth Justice and Rural Homelessness Response.

## Our work is consistent with **our core values** of:



## WHERE ARE WE NOW?

***We remained strong through the pandemic and continue to be highly regarded.***

- We are a charity: We continue to provide subsidies that enable participation and access to services and enhance the overall wellbeing of our community.
- People in our community value the broad scope and consistent quality of services our YMCA provides across Grey and Bruce Counties. We are improving people's lives!
- We have a great team! Challenging times reinforced that our YMCA is a great place to work. Our employees are excited to stay and grow as a part of our team.
- We are recognized and respected for having the experience and expertise needed to lead our region to a healthier, more inclusive, and more vibrant future. People know our YMCA builds healthy communities!

## WE ARE WELL POSITIONED TO FACE THE FUTURE

- These difficult economic times have resulted in greater need for services and financial support in the communities we serve. This presents us with a valuable opportunity to increase our impact as a charity.
- We face our own economic challenges: operating costs are increasing, and we must find ways to be cost-effective and bring in more funds to run our organization.
- We are becoming a larger and more complex organization. To support our growth, we require more sophisticated capabilities as a charity. These improvements require time, talent, and money!
- Our region is growing and changing. We need to keep up with the changing needs of our population and pursue opportunities to increase wellbeing throughout Grey and Bruce Counties.
- There is strong competition for qualified employees and volunteers. We need to make sure we can attract and keep the best of the best at our YMCA.





# WHAT DO WE NEED TO FOCUS ON FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS?

## **Continue to provide an exceptional experience:**

- Maintain the quality and scope of our programs, services and facilities.
- Be the place where employees and volunteers want to work and grow.
- Ensure our values and culture shine through in everything we do.
- Provide a safe and inclusive environment for everyone.

## **Ensure we are positioned to evolve and grow alongside our communities:**

- Understand how our YMCA can have the greatest impact as our communities change.
- Work to become more efficient and effective as a business.
- Ensure our programs and services remain financially sustainable.

## **Be a champion for health and wellbeing in our region:**

- Demonstrate our expertise and our ability to make an impact.
- Grow and strengthen how we work with others who share our commitment to community wellbeing.
- Exemplify our value of belonging to ensure our Association is inclusive of everyone in our community.

## **To do all this, we need to:**

- Make responsible investments to grow our capabilities.
- Leverage YMCA Canada & YMCA Ontario resources.
- Develop responsible partnerships and collaborations.
- Evaluate and prioritize.
- Be creative and innovative.

# WHAT IS OUR STRATEGY?

Over the next 3 years, the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce will ensure we are positioned for continued success. We will continue to provide the exceptional programs and services that our community has come to expect, while we work to ensure we have the capacity as an organization to do even more to enhance the health and wellbeing of the growing communities that we serve.

## **To do this, we will focus on three strategic priorities:**



# STRATEGIC PRIORITY #1: EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES

Our YMCA is recognized for providing exceptional experiences.

Our values-based approach creates a unique culture of community that differentiates us from others. This culture is highly valued by our members, clients and families, employees and volunteers. It is the core of what makes us exceptional at what we do and is why people choose our YMCA.

Over the next 3 years we need to ensure that our values and culture continue to shine through, and that we continue to provide an exceptional experience for all.

To do this, we must ensure that we continue to offer the quality and scope of programs and services that people have come to expect. We will continuously improve our offerings and ensure we can accommodate growing demand.

We know our services are exceptional because of the exceptional people who deliver them. It is imperative that we continue to attract and retain the team we need to deliver on our values. Our YMCA should be “the place” to work in Grey and Bruce Counties. To achieve this, we will focus on offering attractive jobs, ensure our staff feel supported and have opportunities to develop and grow, and work to provide an exceptional team experience for our employees.

## Our 3 Strategic Objectives are:

### 1. Exceptional Services

- ☒ Continuously improve the programs and services we already provide.
- ☒ Cultivate responsible program and service growth in alignment with our mission, vision, and values.
- ☒ Maintain our excellent spaces and equipment.

### 2. Exceptional Workplace

- ☒ Offer fulfilling and rewarding employment and volunteer opportunities.
- ☒ Continue to improve compensation and benefits across the organization.
- ☒ Ensure all employees and volunteers have opportunities to grow and develop.
- ☒ Ensure strong front-line leadership.

### 3. Exceptional Culture

- ☒ Boost internal communication to ensure awareness of programs, services, and organizational impact.
- ☒ Strengthen the sense of community and team within and between service areas.
- ☒ Leverage YMCA leadership development resources.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY #2: STRONG BUSINESS PRACTICES

Our communities are growing and changing and are also currently experiencing difficult economic times. Because of this, more and more individuals and families need our support. Our YMCA is committed to delivering on our mission, and we recognize that to continue to meet the needs of our communities we will need to grow in a sustainable and financially responsible way.

To be prepared for sustainable growth, we need to ensure our organization has strong business practices in place. We will build on our business foundations by upgrading internal systems and using technology that enhances our capacity and capabilities. This will allow us to make better use of data and evidence in our planning processes and provide measurable evidence of our impact. Stronger business practices will enable us to be a strong provider in the future.

We also need to be strategic about how we grow as an Association. We will take the time to understand community needs, develop criteria to help us identify priority opportunities for growth, and evaluate activities that will have the greatest impact. This work will provide an important foundation for understanding the resources, skills, and funds we need to continue to expand services within our communities.

To ensure financial sustainability, we will work to optimize how we use available funds to support our objectives and will explore opportunities to share resources with others. We will work to expand our funding base to secure the resourcing we need to achieve our goals. This will become an increasingly important component of the work of our leaders, and we will equip them with the skills and opportunities they need to support attainment of additional revenue streams and enhanced fundraising.

## Our 3 Strategic Objectives are:

### 1. Enhance Organizational Capacity

- ☒ Invest in new technology, systems and digital tools that will improve employee, volunteer and service user experience.
- ☒ Streamline and improve business processes.
- ☒ Use data and evidence to enhance decision making.

### 2. Increase Our Impact

- ☒ Understand future community needs and our YMCA's opportunities to enhance wellbeing across Grey and Bruce Counties.
- ☒ Develop a decision-making framework to help prioritize how we can best invest our resources.
- ☒ Develop a multi-year plan to describe future scope of services and resources required.

### 3. Financial Sustainability

- ☒ Optimize budgets and our ability to plan and forecast.
- ☒ Increase our funding base to support growth.
- ☒ Support program leaders in the pursuit of funding opportunities.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITY #3: CHAMPION COMMUNITY WELLBEING

Our YMCA is committed to being a community leader focused on improving the health and wellbeing of Owen Sound and Grey and Bruce Counties. As the needs of our communities grow and change, so must the approaches that we use to lead and champion wellbeing.

While external stakeholders already view us as strong service providers, we will help our community understand the impact and contribution our YMCA has in relation to wellbeing. We will do this by showcasing success stories, and by building increased awareness of the range of programs and services we offer. Increased awareness of the knowledge and leadership capabilities our organization possesses will enhance our credibility and desirability as a provider, as a change-maker, and as a strategic partner.

We will strengthen and grow partnerships with others who share our commitment to community wellbeing. By working in new ways with community leaders, funders, policy makers and government, we can share resources and expertise to help our community achieve its objectives.

In order to be strong partners and champions for wellbeing, our YMCA must equip and enable our senior leaders with clear mandates, opportunities and skills needed to be at leadership tables. We will grow our skills in advocacy, planning and government relations, to ensure we have the presence we need.

Finally, we will ensure our YMCA actively demonstrates our value of belonging to ensure our Association is inclusive of everyone in our community. Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB) must be a part of everything that we do. We will work to ensure our programs and policies are aligned with our new core value of Belonging. We will engage external advisors with lived experience to ensure voices we may not be hearing from are included and informing our services and activities. As part of our community, we will lead by example as we make visible changes that promote and enhance inclusion and belonging.

## Our 3 Strategic Objectives are:

### 1. Increase Our Presence

- ☒ Improve external communication and marketing re: programs and services.
- ☒ Share our outcomes and impacts.
- ☒ Expand our footprint across Grey and Bruce Counties.

### 2. Strategic Partnerships

- ☒ Complete strategic stakeholder mapping to guide and expand Board and Senior Leadership Team engagement and partnership efforts.
- ☒ Grow strategic relationships with community leaders, partners and decision makers who share common objectives.
- ☒ Build our skills in government relations, advocacy and community leadership.

### 3. Lead by Example

- ☒ Develop an organizational DEIB strategy.
- ☒ Establish advisory groups to inform and champion our DEIB activity.
- ☒ Action, evaluate and embed meaningful and visible changes that advance belonging in our community.



# HOW WILL WE ACHIEVE THIS PLAN?

## **We will:**

- Develop an implementation plan to articulate the specific outcomes that will be achieved over the next three years as we execute this work.
- Carefully consider who will be accountable for ensuring each objective is achieved.
- Carefully consider how the work will be funded and resourced.
- Develop annual workplans and timelines for each strategic objective.
- Develop measures to demonstrate progress that is being made on each strategic objective.
- Adjust our plan as appropriate, if things change, as this is a living document.

## **We commit to communicating the plan and the progress on our strategy so as to:**

- Ensure our staff, partners and community understand what we are focusing on and why.
- Confirm our employees and volunteers understand how their contributions support our strategy.
- Demonstrate our values of honesty and responsibility in our work.

## **How was this plan developed?**

This plan was developed by the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce staff and Board of Directors, with input from members, users, partners and our community. We are grateful that more than 50 people shared their thoughts in our focus groups and more than 300 people took the time to respond to our strategic planning survey.

For inquiries, please contact Heather Smith at [heather.smith@osgb.ymca.ca](mailto:heather.smith@osgb.ymca.ca).





**YMCA of  
Owen Sound Grey Bruce**

## 2023-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

### MISSION

We are a charity dedicated to building a caring, health community by creating opportunities for all people to achieve personal growth in spirit, mind and body.

### VISION

Our YMCA is a community leader focused on improving the health and wellbeing of Owen Sound and Grey and Bruce Counties.

### VALUES

Our core values guide our every day decisions and actions. We encourage everyone involved with the YMCA of Owen Sound Grey Bruce to accept and demonstrate these values: Caring, Honesty, Respect, Responsibility and Belonging.

## OUR STRATEGIC PRIORITIES



### EXCEPTIONAL EXPERIENCES

- Exceptional Services
- Exceptional Workplace
- Exceptional Culture



### STRONG BUSINESS PRACTICES

- Enhance Organizational Capacity
- Plan for Impact
- Financial Sustainability



### CHAMPION COMMUNITY WELLBEING

- Increase Our Presence
- Strategic Partnerships
- Lead by Example

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