



# PART 1: BACKGROUND

## INTRODUCTION

Nelson Community Services (NCS) is a well-established, community social service, non-profit organization and a registered Canadian charity which has been providing programs and services in Nelson, BC and just celebrated its 50-year Anniversary (incorporated February 1972). The organization focuses on **supporting families, youth, and individuals**. Programs and services include counseling, outreach support, parenting support, the Aimee Beaulieu Women's Transition House, and Cicada Place residential program for youth. The agency is well-respected in the community, and client satisfaction surveys consistently indicate that programs and services are positively received and that clients would recommend NCS to others.

NCS is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, with funding for the work provided through contracts with several provincial government Ministries, community partners, and through donations. NCS is managed by an Executive Director and services are delivered by approximately 30 staff members.

Nelson Community Services has been accredited by the Council on Accreditation (COA) since 2006, and in 2023 changed accreditation bodies with a successful three-year Accreditation with CARF International (Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities). Accreditation attests that NCS continues to meet the highest standards. It also provides assurance that NCS is performing services which the community needs, conducting its operations successfully and managing its funds effectively.

In 2018, a four-year Strategic Plan was developed for the Society and reviewed annually. In 2023 that plan was reviewed and updated. This document is the result of that review and update.

## BACKGROUND

As part of the review and updating process, a variety of techniques were used to collect information and develop ideas for this plan.

- The Executive Director reviewed the document.
- The previous years' plan, and client satisfaction survey results were examined.
- Staff and Board members participated in reviewing the plan.
- Information was also gathered and analyzed through an evening meeting with Board members, and the Executive Director on May 30, 2023.
- On June 13<sup>th</sup>, staff of NCS took part in a 3-hour facilitated session dedicated to developing the 2023-2027 Strategic Plan.
- Following both discussions, the Executive Director reviewed and collated the results.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The work of any non-profit agency is guided by a set of principles, usually including such elements as a vision, mission, values and some kind of service philosophy, that help set priorities and remind the group of where they want to go.

**OUR VISION:**

A compassionate and empowered community where families, youth and individuals receive the support and services they need to live dignified, resilient, and hopeful lives.

**OUR MISSION:**

To support the well-being of families, youth, and individuals in our community by providing counselling, housing, support, and outreach services.

**OUR SERVICE PHILOSOPHY:**

Nelson Community Services believes that all families, youth, and individuals, at some time, experience difficulties in their lives and that they have an inherent right to be heard and to be supported. Our relational approach to services delivery is respectful of each person's identity, issues, strengths, culture, needs, and choices.

**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT:**

Nelson Community Services acknowledges that the land upon which we offer our services is the traditional territory of the peoples who have lived here for thousands of years -- the Ktunaxa, the Syilx, and the Sinixt. We respect and honour all our relations.

**OUR VALUES:**

- Community collaboration
- Partnerships
- Bringing leadership to positive social change efforts
- Being responsive to evolving needs of our community
- Service excellence and professionalism
- Service relevance
- Ethical service delivery
- Innovation and creativity
- Integrity
- Inclusiveness and non-discrimination
- Trauma-Informed and anti-oppressive approaches
- Diversity, Dignity, Respect and Choice.
- Confidentiality
- Gender identity

- Truth and Reconciliation
- Compassion, relationships, and caring
- Responsibility and accountability for our actions

In preparation for identifying changes to the plan, participants at the planning session were asked to answer two questions to provide context. The questions and answers follow.

#### **WHAT HAS CHANGED SINCE THE LAST PLAN?**

- There has been a global pandemic.
- Change within the organization; in Executive Director and accreditation bodies (moved to CARF).
- An increase in domestic violence and the release of the first National Action Plan on Domestic Violence.
- An increase in mental health issues in both children and adults seeking counselling as well as the need for parenting and family counselling
- A dire housing crisis, increase in cost of living, increase in poverty and homelessness.
- More severe opioid crisis across BC and Canada
- Legalization of small amounts of cannabis
- Loss of COVID related funding
- New Collective Agreement
- Increase in transphobia and hate in the schools.
- Competition from more for-profit providers in the market and for grants
- On-line and tele counselling
- Loss of funding for trauma informed pre-employment services and for men's counselling.
- IT changes in organization
- Procurement for sexual assault services

#### **WHAT UPCOMING ISSUES AND TRENDS MIGHT AFFECT OUR WORK?**

- Ongoing rollout of \$10/day childcare
- Increased need to use technology to assist our work and need for training (for staff and Board)
- Aging population
- Ongoing implementation of the recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation report
- Potential for recession / economic headwinds.
- Ongoing impacts of global pandemic
- Impact of severe weather events/climate change on unhoused population

## Goals & Objectives

The following goals are interconnected and must be considered together for the co-operative to make significant progress towards improving the capacity to serve our communities. Each goal is supported by a number of objectives, activities and desired outcomes that describe how we will pursue progress towards the goals from 2023-2027

### Goals - Summary

1. **Program and Service Delivery** - Offer a spectrum of relevant and effective services and programs to meet the evolving needs of the community.
2. **Service Quality** - Using a PQI approach, continually review, assess, and improve programs, services, and plans to ensure their relevance and effectiveness
3. **Human Resources** - Build and sustain a qualified team of people to achieve the Vision, Mission, and Goals of NCS
2. **Community Relations** - Increase the profile of the organization and the issues it addresses.
3. **Partnerships** - Work collaboratively to achieve better results.
4. **Fund Development** - Secure, maintain, and responsibly expend the funds necessary to achieve the Vision and Mission of NCS

#### **1. Program and Service Delivery - Offer a spectrum of relevant and effective services and programs to meet the evolving needs of the community**

- a. Offer core services and programs including counselling for adults, children and youth, programs for victims of family violence, life skills and housing for at-risk youth, family support services, and outreach services.
- b. Maintain program flexibility to respond to changing community needs.
- c. Explore opportunities to offer additional services and programs where gaps in service have been identified such as supporting parents, additional second-stage housing, more youth housing, counselling for men.
- d. Utilize NCS website and social media to offer self-help opportunities, online materials, access to resources.
- e. Explore alternative methods for service delivery, such as groups for clients on waitlists or with common issues as well as virtual services.
- f. Design a set of "ready to deliver" programs that could be offered if funding or partnership opportunities become available.

#### **2. Service Quality - Using a Performance Quality Improvement approach, continually review, assess, and improve programs, services and plans to ensure their relevance and effectiveness**

- a. Review assessment tools to ensure they are tailored to demographics, user friendly and that relevant questions are being asked and useful information gathered.
- b. Create policy regarding the implementation of Truth and Reconciliation practices.

- c. Review policy regarding improving inclusiveness, i.e., gender identity.
- d. Become an employer of choice, promoting a staff culture of wellness and safety, recognizing the challenging nature of the work, and offering opportunities for learning, growth, and well-being.
- e. Engage in problem solving on topical issues, becoming a champion for causes, acting, and supporting existing initiatives where possible.

**3. Human Resources - Build and sustain a qualified team of people to achieve the Vision, Mission, and Goals of NCS**

- a. Recruit, maintain, and develop a highly qualified team of professional staff members, through ongoing staff recognition and staff wellness activities, providing a culture of support in the changing landscape of the non-profit workplace.
- b. Build and maintain an engaged Board of Directors that provides effective leadership and direction to the organization, through targeted recruitment (for specific topic areas such as legal, business, financial, fundraising, media/communications) and ongoing Board development.
- c. Explore opportunities to partner with Selkirk College and Kootenay Columbia College regarding training curriculum for Family Support and Domestic Violence Support Workers.
- d. Consider practicum students (including business and tech, not just social service)
- e. Ensure that staff and Board members receive the necessary training to stay up to date with technological improvements in the agency.

**4. Community Relations - Increase the profile of the organization and the issues it addresses**

- a. Continue to promote public awareness, understanding, and clarification of what NCS does and the impact of its work.
- b. Create opportunities to educate the community of the needs in the community (housing, mental health, prevention of violence, opioid use, etc.)
- c. Participate in issue-related activities and initiatives (such as Coldest Night of the Year, Prevention of violence Against Women Week)

**5. Partnerships - Work collaboratively to achieve better results**

- a. Maintain memberships in key organizations that bring together organizations with similar mandates (Community Social Services Employers Association, the Federation of Community Social Services of BC, BC Society of Transition Houses, Ending Violence Association of BC, BC Non-Profit Housing Association, the Kootenay Boundary Community Services Co-operative, SPAN, Womens' Shelters Canada etc.) with a goal to addressing common sectoral issues.
- b. Participate in group initiatives and **pilot projects** that aim to address common challenges in the social services sector, especially through innovation.

- c. Maintain and nurture relationships with key community partners (Nelson CARES, NCOH, Nelson Housing Committee, Nelson Food Cupboard, ANKORS, KATI, Kootenay Kids, Kootenay Career Development Society, etc.) with a goal of exploring options for shared services, shared programming, and joint training.
- d. Maintain and strengthen relationships with key funders such as MCFD, MPSSG, CBT, Osprey Foundation and with other community partners such as Nelson Chamber of Commerce and the City of Nelson
- e. Consider creating relationships with additional groups, agencies, service providers, and institutions as available such as alternative health practitioners, business community, school system and/or indigenous partners where working together will achieve better outcomes

**6. Fund Development - Secure, maintain, and responsibly expend the funds necessary to achieve the Vision and Mission of NCS**

- a. Continue to access contracts for service.
- b. Continue to apply for relevant grant funding.
- c. Create a long-range fund development plan.
- d. Expand the NCS donor base, through more recruitment, promotion, and management.
- e. Explore a continuum of fund development options including fee-for-service and social enterprise.

**Conclusion**

Nelson Community Services is an organization with a strong history of serving families, youth, and individuals in the Nelson area, adapting to the changing needs of the community over several decades of service. Although faced with the ongoing challenge of increasing demands for service without a corresponding increase in financial support from funders, the organization has a commitment to not just maintaining a high standard, but also to improving its service delivery. The 2023-2027 Strategic Plan is ambitious and will require participation from all levels of the organization. However, with a strong and engaged Board of Directors, and a staff team with both experience and expertise, the organization is well positioned to succeed.

## PART 2: THE PLAN

<b>GOAL 1: PROGRAMS AND SERVICE DELIVERY</b>			
<b>To offer a spectrum of relevant and effective services to meet the evolving needs of the community.</b>			
<b>Objectives</b>	<b>Desired Outcomes</b>	<b>Activities</b>	<b>Responsibility/Timeline/Outcome</b>
1. Explore opportunities, and required funding options, to offer additional services	The range of service options has expanded to address specific gaps in service	Explore opportunities for developing programming in the following identified gap areas:	

### GOAL 1: PROGRAMS AND SERVICE DELIVERY

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<p>where gaps in service have been identified</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Parenting Groups</li> </ul>	<p>Annually, Spring and Fall</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General counselling for community referrals (Parenting and couples)</li> </ul>	<p>Targeted 2023</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sexual Assault Services (SAS) Procurement and Development of new programming</li> </ul>	<p>Targeted 2023</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Second Stage Youth Housing and Second Stage for women Leaving violence</li> </ul>	<p>Continued discussion with BC housing and exploring agency needs/potential sites</p>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Explore partnership with EAP Services</li> </ul>	<p>2023 /2024</p>
<p>2. Explore alternative service delivery methods</p>	<p>A wider range of options for service delivery are available to clients that more expansively or better suit their needs</p>	<p>a. Explore Tele-Counselling and virtual options</p>	<p>Engage with counselling team and explore needs of clients</p>
		<p>b. Explore feasibility of offering extended hours of service</p>	<p>Engage with counselling team and research needs of clients</p>
		<p>c. Explore Online scheduling services and file management system.</p>	<p>Spring of 2024</p>
		<p>d. Develop Self-help materials to post on website.</p>	<p>Engage with staff for resources. Determine quarterly topics.</p>
		<p>e. Continue to explore fee-for-service counselling.</p>	<p>Explore groups as a fee for services option. Consider potential staffing and supervisory impacts.</p>
<p>3. Explore opportunities for new partnerships</p>	<p>Collaborations for service in new and different areas are made available.</p>	<p>Explore the possibility of contracts with groups such as:  <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. SD8 – ongoing groups and counselling (children/youth)</li> </ul> </p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Contract with LVR Oct/23 to June/24 for counsellor in school</li> <li>b. Explore funding options through mental/health substance use to support Street Outreach program.</li> </ul>



**GOAL 1: PROGRAMS AND SERVICE DELIVERY**

To offer a spectrum of relevant and effective services to meet the evolving needs of the community.

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>b. Government Ministries (mental health substance use, families, youth, men)</li> <li>c. City of Nelson</li> <li>d. Kootenay Kids</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>c. Engage in discussion with MCFD about additional support for families.</li> <li>d. Make annual presentation to the City of Nelson</li> <li>e. Pursue opportunities for provision of childcare during through Kootenay Kids</li> </ul> |
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**Performance Measurement**

Indicator	Data Source	Timing	March 2024 Target	March 2026 Target   Performance	March 2027 Target   Performance
# of new programs developed/delivered	Admin Tracking	Annually			
# of new service delivery methods developed/delivered across all existing NCS services	Admin Tracking	Annually			

**GOAL 2: SERVICE QUALITY**

To continue to review, assess and improve programs, services and plans to ensure their relevance and effectiveness.

Objectives	Desired Outcomes	Activities	Responsibility/Timeline/Outcome
1. Build upon our PQI Plan for improved tracking and reporting	NCS has robust tracking and reporting mechanisms with respect to all aspects of its operations and programs	a. Through the PQI team process and utilizing tools available through CARF and other means, conduct a review of the following tracking and reporting mechanisms:	This continues to be a work in progress. Management Team working with consultant to redevelop all programs' outcome measures/logic models. All staff receiving orientation through '23/24'
		b. Review Client Survey Measurement tools	PQI subcommittee to explore new measurement tools
		c. Develop a PQI Statement that aligns with agency mission and vision.	PQI Committee

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		d. Implement new Reporting mechanisms that provides comprehensiveness, and scope of service.	2023
		e. Adapt to new CARF Accreditation standards.	CARF Accreditation was successful in Spring 2023. Complete Quality Improvement cycle Provide training of new standards for staff
2. Conduct regular program evaluations	All NCS programs are evaluated annually, and results are used to improve service delivery	a. Determine a program evaluation schedule for agency	2023
		b. Review Program Logic Models and program evaluations outcomes with teams	Distribute Logic Models to teams. Provide Outcomes training to staff
3. Explore expanded uses of technology to support our work	Additional technology effectively and efficiently supports areas of work at NCS, including enhanced data security	a. Explore secure methods for offering tele-counselling, and social media use with clients	Consult on recommended platforms. Review existing policies
		b. Explore feasibility, safety, and security of work from home	Research Work Safe Requirements
4. Explore opportunities for innovation that will particularly increase organizational effectiveness and efficiency and reduce risks.	New and innovative options have helped NCS become more effective, efficient and to reduce its risk exposure in key areas (e.g., finance)	a. Continue to participate on shared financial team with KBCSC partners	Finance Manager to attend meetings.

Performance Measurement					
Indicator	Data Source	Timing	March 2024 Target	March 2026 Target Performance	March 2027 Target Performance
% of programs reporting complete performance data consistent with PQI plan measures"	PQI reporting	Annually			

<b>GOAL 3: COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS</b> <b>To promote the organization, the issues it represents, and its key partnerships.</b>			
Objectives	Desired Outcomes	Activities	Responsibility/Timeline/Outcome
1. Update our Communications and Donor Plan	NCS communicates regularly and clearly with the community about its programs and services, regularly engages with its donor base, promotes the work of the agency and the issues it represents, and celebrates its successes	a. Review and update Communications-Marketing plan and explore ways to keep local donors engaged	CR Committee Explore functions via Keela that nurture donor base.
		b. Consider Newspaper and radio in addition to social media	CR Committee Explore with teams.
2. Promote an awareness of community issues and needs.	NCS plays an important role in promoting the awareness of community issues and needs in which it holds expertise	a. CR Committee implements a quarterly calendar of awareness days/weeks/months that recognize specific social issues relevant to NCS	The quarterly calendar in place in January 2024 and awareness months are being acted upon through website primarily and Facebook.
3. Support issue- and sector-related community meetings and events	NCS staff have seats and a voice at community, regional, and provincial tables to ensure appropriate representation of the issues, the sector, and NCS	a. Community, regional, and provincial tables are identified, appropriate staff are designated to those tables, and regularly reporting from these tables takes place at bi-monthly staff meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>NCS staff continue to have seats at these groups.</li> <li>Developed and Inventory of where we have representation locally regionally, provincially.</li> <li>Explore potential partnerships with other organization for conferences and training</li> </ul>
4. Maintain memberships and collaborations with key partners	Key collaborative partnerships, affiliations, and memberships help NCS	a. Partnerships are purposefully identified and evaluated regularly as to their benefit to NCS's operations and role in the	Key partnerships are maintained

**GOAL 3: COMMUNITY RELATIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS**  
**To promote the organization, the issues it represents, and its key partnerships.**

	deliver more effectively on its vision and mission.	community (e.g., KBCSC, FCSS, BCNPHA, Board Voice, Chamber of Commerce)	
5. Ensure sufficient funding to deliver on vision and mission, with a focus on underfunded programs such as Street outreach.	NCS maintains an awareness of its annual financial needs and has mechanisms for securing needed funds	a. Board committees play a key role in identifying and ensuring sufficient funding is in place (esp. Finance and C.R. Committees)	The board continues to do this through regular finance committee meetings and CR development. Executive Director meets with existing and potential funders.

**Performance Measurement**

Indicator	Data Source	Timing	March 2024 Target   Performance	March 2026 Target   Performance	March 2027 Target   Performance
% of total budgets from fundraised and new grant dollars (total revenue/grant income + fundraised \$)	Financial Reporting	Annually			

**GOAL 4: LEARNING AND GROWTH**  
**To build our capacity to support a healthy, inclusive, safe, and professional workplace.**

Objectives	Desired Outcomes	Activities	Responsibility/Timeline/Outcome
1. Promote a staff culture of openness, acceptance, safety, and professionalism. 2. Be an employer of choice through increased referrals, retention, and a culture of care surrounding wellbeing and work-life balance.	The staff culture at NCS is healthy, open, accepting, safe and professional.	a. Regularly solicit personnel satisfaction feedback (bi-annually)	Conduct Health and Wellness Surveys <i>Review Health and Wellness Plan</i> Conduct Guarding Minds Survey (or similar)
		b. Promote team building and wellness promotion activities	Continue with and build on existing wellness promotion and initiatives
		c. Continue to be a 'learning' organization where professional and best practices and standards are valued and maintained	Staff are encouraged to attend learning opportunities. Establish peer-to-peer learning opportunities. Knowledge Exchange

**GOAL 4: LEARNING AND GROWTH**

**To build our capacity to support a healthy, inclusive, safe, and professional workplace.**

		d. Ensure staff receive relevant and quality supervision.	Explore models of Supervision Continue to implement revised Performance Review
		e. Create mentorship opportunities and develop leadership abilities	Management Team
		f. Pursue opportunities for staff/program/organization recognition. Promote agency with a culture of care, employee wellbeing that supports work life balance.	Management Team
		g. Continue to explore flexible work hours/day and time off models	Implement Condensed/Compressed Workweek Pilot and Review findings
3. Live into the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations	NCS has committed to the understanding and implementation of making changes in line with the TRC recommendations, where relevant to our agency	a. Update Territorial Acknowledgement Statement	Explore language change, Upgrade to wood plaque 2024
		b. Identify ways in which NCS can work to decolonize its practices	Explore further training opportunities. Incorporated into staff training plan Staff have access to a Mobile Indigenous Authors Library (MIAL) thanks to T-House Expand Four Feathers work into other work sites
		c. Work to become a culturally safer workplace	Explore training and learnings for Teams and Board.
4. Improve inclusivity and diversity practices	NCS service delivery, recruitment, and other practices reflect the inclusive and diverse nature of our community.	a. Develop and implement an Equity Recruitment policy and practice	Reviewing as part of accreditation process Research numbers and needs of immigrant service users.
5. Maintain an engaged Board to provide effective governance and leadership	NCS engages and maintains a diverse and skilled Board of Directors that delivers expert governance and leadership to the organization.	a. Seek opportunities to diversify the organizations board and pursue deeper connections to the diverse make up of community	Board of Directors .

**GOAL 4: LEARNING AND GROWTH**

**To build our capacity to support a healthy, inclusive, safe, and professional workplace.**

		<p>b. Engage in relevant Board development training</p>	<p>Add Board training as a standing agenda item. Annual Board Review Initiate a Board Orientation Project – that includes orientation to agency values and explores competencies. Organize Board Development training fall 2023</p>
		<p>c. Review and Revise Executive Director Succession Plan to ensure continuous, solid leadership of the organization.</p>	<p>Board of Directors</p>

**Conclusion**

Nelson Community Services is an organization with a strong history of serving families, youth, and individuals in the Nelson area, adapting to the changing needs of the community over several decades of service. Although faced with the ongoing challenge of increasing demands for service without a corresponding increase in financial support from funders, the organization has a commitment to not just maintaining a high standard, but also to improving its service delivery. The 2023 - 2027 Strategic Plan is ambitious and will require participation from all levels of the organization. However, with a new Vision and Mission in place, a strong and engaged Board of Directors, and a staff team with both experience and expertise, the organization is well positioned to succeed.

Formally approved by the NCS Board of Directors on December 5, 2023