

Journeying Together:

Inclusive and Welcoming Communities



Message from the Board Chair and CEO

We are pleased to present to you, our valued community member, Community Living Toronto's Strategic Plan 2023–2028. This Strategic Plan continues to put us on a path of building a society where everyone belongs and is valued.

The Strategic Plan is a result of months of reflection and extensive consultation with internal and external stakeholders.

As we looked to the next five years, we also reflected on the past five. The COVID-19 pandemic represented the most significant challenge we have faced as an organization. We learned to be agile and responsive, while creating innovative program offerings to benefit the people we support. We have used these learnings to inform our vision for the next five years.

Equally important, our Strategic Plan 2017–2022 focused on stabilizing the organization and establishing a solid foundation on which to build. We are proud of the accomplishments we achieved throughout those five years.

With our new strategic goals and initiatives, we are poised to support over 4,000 children, youth, and adults, along with their networks, in diverse neighbourhoods across Toronto. We are proud of our more than 1,200 staff members, who will continue to be equipped to meet the varied needs, goals, and aspirations of the people we support.

We will keep working shoulder to shoulder with families, caregivers, community partners, Community Living Toronto Influencers, government officials at all levels, and allies in implementing this ambitious Strategic Plan. Together, we have built a path forward that will take a village to make a reality.

We would like to thank everyone who engaged in this process, shaping the direction and content of this Strategic Plan. Your participation provided invaluable feedback that informed the development of meaningful strategic goals and initiatives.

As the saying goes: *If you want to go fast, go alone. If you want to go far, go together.* Let us continue to journey together in creating welcoming, inclusive, and communities of belonging.



Valérie Picher,
Board Chair



Brad Saunders,
Chief Executive Officer

75 years of advocacy and support

Community Living Toronto’s journey began in 1948, when Victoria Glover wrote to the Toronto Star to demand that people like her granddaughter, a seven-year-old with a developmental disability, receive the support they need so they can live full, meaningful lives outside of institutions.

At the heart of Victoria’s letter was a belief that society could do better – that inclusive and welcoming communities are essential for a vibrant and functioning society, that children and adults with developmental disabilities are an essential part of such a society and that the status quo can and must be challenged.

Over the past eight decades, we have strived to maintain these guiding principles. As an organization, we are open to reflecting, adjusting, and changing what we do; always with a commitment to meeting the needs of people we support and families that rely on our organization.

Vision, Mission and Values

Vision

A society where everyone belongs.
A society where everyone is valued.

Mission

To foster inclusive communities by supporting the rights and choices of people with an intellectual disability.



Values

Inclusion • Choice • Diversity

Strategic Goals 2023–2028

We have set out three critical goals to help us successfully manage a complex organization in an increasingly complex time – because when Community Living Toronto thrives, the people we support thrive too.



1 Put People We Support First

- Develop a people-first mindset and deliver an excellent customer service experience
- Seek out and include the views of the people we support when designing our programs, in keeping with the guiding principle of Nothing Without Us
- Develop initiatives that move people out of poverty, improve health outcomes, and foster greater autonomy
- Use data to improve our supports and services

The **Nothing Without Us** principle is part of a global movement to ensure the active involvement of persons with disabilities in the planning of policies that affect their lives. It underpins everything we do at Community Living Toronto.



2 Grow to Meet Increasing Demand

- Continuously examine our program models to ensure they have the intended impact, and then evolve accordingly
- Expand our services, resources, and capabilities to support more people with intellectual disabilities and their support networks, whenever possible
- Look for opportunities to broaden and expand the services we provide



3 Contribute to Fostering Community

- Help make Toronto a more welcoming city, one where people with intellectual disabilities are valued members of their communities
- Strengthen our Community Councils to better connect with neighbourhoods where we offer supports and services
- Foster community-to-community relationships with disability organizations around the world, so we can share knowledge and gain a global understanding of the experience of people with disabilities

Strategic Initiatives 2023–2028

Now that we have created a shared vision of where we want to go, here is what we are going to do to make sure we get there.

INITIATIVE 1



Transform our program and service models

How we will do it

- Enhance our person-centred approach
- Deliver with excellence and innovation, and look to industry best practices to inspire and guide our work
- Evolve to better understand and meet the needs of the people we support

Inclusive Vertical Communities

Over the next five years, there is an opportunity for us to continue to build and set the standards for inclusive vertical communities.



An investment from the Government of Canada and the City of Toronto was made for the creation of a new building on Birchmount in Scarborough featuring dedicated deeply affordable and barrier-free units for CLTO. **Birchmount Green** will further expand Community Living Toronto’s support and housing options, get people off waitlists and into appropriate and affordable housing, and provide stability for people of all ages and with various types of disabilities.

Evolving to better understand and meet the needs of the people we support means supporting people at every stage of life. Community Living Toronto has 10 newly renovated suits throughout **St. Hilda’s Towers** – supportive housing dedicated to seniors aged 59 and older – which will allow CLTO to provide seniors from Supportive Independent Living and Adult Protective Services a wide range of accommodations and supports, and foster independence and a sense of community.

Community Living Toronto has also partnered with Tridel on the redevelopment of our **Lawson** property. Together, over the next decade, we will build a world-class inclusive vertical community in Scarborough designed with accessibility in mind, and where people with intellectual disabilities are included from the beginning. For more information on Lawson, visit: cltoronto.ca/lawson-redevelopment/



INITIATIVE 2

Modernize our business operations

How we will do it

- Continue our digital transformation
- Use data to monitor performance, inform decision-making, and set targets for service excellence
- Ensure our core corporate functions operate efficiently and effectively, so we are better able to support the needs of our program teams
- Increase revenue through philanthropy and social enterprise opportunities
- Enhance the responsible management of our organization, so we can achieve our goals and ensure our long-term success



As Community Living Toronto readies for an increasingly tech-enabled future, we are putting an urgent focus on innovation. MyServicesConnect is just one initiative that is helping us rethink and renew the way we do things – from continuous learning for staff members to programs for those we support.

[Learn more about My Services Connect >](#)

Data-driven insights drive better supports for the people we serve

MyServicesConnect is a transformative new Community Living Toronto program that is allowing us to better perform two essential tasks: capture and generate more data than ever before, and use this critical information to gain a deeper understanding of how best to meet the evolving needs of both our staff and the people we support.

By making data available anywhere, anytime through always-connected devices, MyServicesConnect empowers us to continuously measure the value and impact of our services at the client, location, program, and agency level.

We believe MyServicesConnect is a powerful differentiator for Community Living Toronto, one that helps cement our position as a premier service provider for those we support and an employer of choice for talented people who want to make the world a more inclusive place.

SAP Concur Solutions: Digital Transformation

The implementation of SAP Concur will allow Community Living Toronto to reinvent resident finances and expense management. The new software will increase accuracy, remove paper from the process, and redirect thousands of administrative hours back into our services and the people we support.



INITIATIVE 3

Equip our workforce for the future

How we will do it

- Attract, reward, and retain a skilled, dynamic, and diverse workforce
- Enhance staff health, safety, and wellness
- Develop employee skills and capabilities at all levels of the organization

Helping our staff be and do their best

We strive to offer a workplace where our staff can make a difference in the lives of people they work with, where they feel valued and where they can engage in purpose-driven and meaningful work. Here are just a few of the ways we are working to achieve those goals:



Employee-in-Training Program

This innovative program provides students in their last year of studies with an opportunity to gain experience, build skills, and be mentored so they can join the workforce with confidence.

Float Stream Staffing

A scalable and sustainable approach to meeting temporary staffing needs, this strategy allows us to provide high-quality service to the people we support in a fiscally responsible way.

Expression of Interest (EOI)

This intentional approach to providing Community Living Toronto learning and career development opportunities helps participants explore a variety of roles and get involved in different task and advisory teams.

Learning and Development Plan

An agency-wide initiative, this robust plan is focused on Leadership Development, Digital Transformation, Building a Workforce for the Future, and Talent Management.

Commitment to Anti-Racism/Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (AR/EDI)

Part of our ongoing commitment to creating an equitable and inclusive learning environment and work culture, this program covers key Anti-Racism and EDI concepts and a relevant case study to help staff put principles into practice.

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA)

We believe the workplace plays an essential role in supporting employee mental wellness, so we are now able to certify our workforce in Mental Health First Aid.

New Recruitment Initiatives

Career opportunities for individuals looking to change careers and foreign-trained professionals. CLTO offers a Developmental Services Collaborative learning program for upskilling the skillset and preparing individuals for entering the Developmental Services Sector.



INITIATIVE 3

Equip our workforce for the future

23

frontline staff were promoted to program supervisor roles*

11

learners participated in career-development onboarding programs*

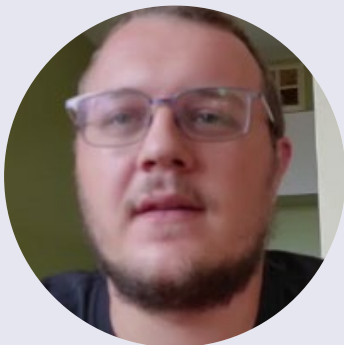
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Community Living Toronto employees received their MHFA certificate**

* May 2022 to May 2023 **October 2022 to May 2023

Attracting and retaining outstanding staff members like Program Supervisor Jayson starts with ensuring they can discover their calling while building a truly meaningful career.

Meet Jayson >



[Watch video >](#)

A pathway to learning and success

I am now a Program Supervisor with Community Living Toronto, but when I first started with the organization, I was able to experience different work scenarios. I liked the idea of being able to float around, that I wouldn't be in just one group home all the time working with one set of staff and individuals. I worked with people from very high needs to people who were very independent and everything in between, so I was able to really get an idea of where I would fit in best.

Soon there was a Support Worker 2 opportunity that presented itself and I was able to take a contract on that. Then I worked my way up to a Support Worker 3 and now I'm settled the the Amick and Coatesworth Clusters as a Program Supervisor.

The ability to find the group home, team, and individuals that I worked best in – where my strengths were best put into practise – is one of the things I have enjoyed most about my time at Community Living Toronto.



INITIATIVE 4

Embed Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

How we will do it

- Develop a culture of acceptance, understanding, support, and openness for our staff, the people we support, and their support networks
- Stand against racism
- Celebrate difference
- Play our part in reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples by implementing relevant recommendations from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission

We are able to make a difference in the lives of the people we support because our exceptional employees bring so many skills and so much compassion to their roles. Raj – world traveller, Latin dancer, and Community Living Toronto’s Technical Sales Specialist – is a perfect example.

Meet Raj >

In just one year, Raj has gone from newcomer to new member of the Community Living Toronto team

When I moved to Canada last year, like any other international student, I had my fair share of challenges – whether it was finding a place to stay or employment or making genuine connections.

I was attending George Brown for Strategic Relationship Marketing, which had a co-op component that needed to be completed before graduation. Since I was living in the Annex at the time, I made a post in the Annex Facebook group about how I was looking for an internship.

My post caught the attention of Angela Bradley, Community Living Toronto’s Senior Director of Social Enterprise, Development and Philanthropy, who told me about the opportunities available with the organization. Before long, I was working as a Customer Service and Marketing Intern helping the MyCommunityHub digital product team. Shortly after a full-time opportunity with Community Living Toronto’s employment program MyJobMatch opened up. I applied right away – and got the job.

As a MyJobMatch Technical Sales Specialist, I market the platform to Toronto-based employers and onboard new employers to help ensure meaningful employment for the people we support across our locations.

Outside of work, I am a passionate Latin dancer! I live for Bachata, and I have made great progress with Salsa. Dancing is a huge part of my life in Canada. It has helped me make great connections across cultures and professions. Dancing always makes me feel like I have been living here for a long time, when in reality it’s just been one year.



Data-driven Equity Action Plan

Community Living Toronto will develop an Action Plan that will support the collection, tracking, and analysis of equity-based and race-based data to create a data-driven understanding of the diversity of our workforce and inform our investments in Anti-Racism and Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion.



INITIATIVE 5

Advocate for what is important to us

How we will do it

- Ensure our work always centres the people we support
- Focus on the issues that most directly benefit people with intellectual disabilities, our communities, and allies
- Take positions that align with our Mission, Vision, and Values, and support policies that improve the lives of people with disabilities

CLTO Influencers

The CLTO Influencers are a group of people who have an intellectual disability and lots of abilities, and is currently made up of members Nelson, Farrah, Josh, Sam, Jenna, and Lorraine. Together, they are raising awareness and creating positive change in our communities and beyond.

In their work, they are aiming to promote inclusion, create respectful in-person and virtual communities, support people’s rights and choices, and educate the public about Community Living Toronto.

The CLTO Influencers engage regularly in advocacy initiatives both here in Toronto, and across the globe. In the Fall of 2022, they presented to a full crowd at the Community Living Ontario (CLO) Conference where they promoted the importance of including people with lived experience in advocacy work and built meaningful connections with other self-advocates in the sector. Plus, Farrah, was successfully elected to be a member of the CLO Council and now engages regularly in advocacy work with Council members across Ontario.

Speaking directly with members of government can have a significant impact on the work in our sector. In early 2023, Jenna joined a presentation to Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Children, Community and Social Services, Logan Kanopathi, where she shared her story and advocated for important policy priorities. And across the border, Sam presented at the General Assembly for the United Nations to speak to the importance of the Resolution on Easy to Understand Communication, to ensure that accessible communication, a basic human right, can be a reality for all.

Global Self-Advocates Work

True inclusion comes from working together to promote the human rights of all people, regardless of the place they call home. By working with organizations and groups like Alexandria Self-Advocates Resource Group based in Alexandria (Egypt), CLTO’s Influencers will expand advocacy efforts beyond Ontario and Canada and reinforce their common goal of advocating for inclusive spaces for all.



Joining in on the Journey to Belonging

A word on how we will help bring Ontario's new long-term vision for developmental services to life over the next five years.

Journey to Belonging, the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Service's reform plan, was designed to improve services for those with developmental disabilities by focusing on people, not the systems around them. In it, the province makes three major commitments to help empower people with disabilities to live rich and rewarding lives:

- Putting People First
- Improving Services Experience
- Improving Quality and Accountability

We are committed to delivering on these ambitions – as well as our own – through the continuous evolution of our capabilities and capacity. This commitment does not come without its challenges. As people with intellectual disabilities rightfully demand a meaningful place in their communities, and as they are living longer and their caregivers are aging, our operating environment grows in complexity.

But where there are challenges, there are also opportunities, and we look forward to working alongside the province of Ontario, the people we support, our communities, and our stakeholders as we broaden our delivery of tailored, timely, and meaningful supports.

Looking ahead: how we will keep this Strategic Plan relevant

An evolution of the existing Project Management Office is being established. It will be a centralized, action-oriented office that will provide oversight and coordination in the Proposal, Planning/Prioritization, Implementing and Reporting, and Evaluation of Enterprise-wide Work and Strategic Initiatives. Core elements of the Strategic Plan will be integrated into annual strategic communications and operational materials and activities.

For 75 years, Community Living Toronto has been evolving, learning, and growing to support and include people with an intellectual disability. Our Strategic Plan 2023–2028 is an opportunity to apply 75 years of learnings and continue to build communities of belonging.

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