



Strategic Plan 2020-2022

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1. Overview

Boyle Street Community Services acknowledges that we operate on Treaty 6 Territory. We respect the histories, languages, and cultures of First Nations, Métis, Inuit, and all First Peoples of Canada who enrich our community.

Boyle Street Community Services continues to work to create healthier, safer and more inclusive spaces for all. Due to the make-up of those we serve, we place particular focus on making our services and spaces inclusive to First Nation, Metis and Inuit people. However, we encourage each Boyle Street Community Services site and team to provide additional supports based on the diverse cultures and groups they serve.

This document was informed by one-on-one and group conversations on the future direction of the organization held by the Deputy Executive Director/Executive Director with individuals and teams throughout the organization, including the Indigenous, LGBTQIA2S+, and People of Colour staff groups. This document is also guided by our collaboration with partners, most notably with the C5. It is through these deep and enduring collaborations that Boyle Street is able to focus its efforts on those challenges and opportunities it is uniquely suited to address while leaving many others in the able hands of our partners.

Our values and beliefs continue to guide us in our work and practice. The strategic plan outlines where we are focusing our energy over the next two years based on the most acute needs of those we serve and our needs as an organization.

This plan was drafted in response to the shift in organizational priorities due to COVID-19 and the required changes in practice to meet the needs of those we serve. This document is subject to change based on economic, public policy, legislative changes and organizational capacity.

2. Purpose Statement

Our **mission** at Boyle Street Community Services is to **end chronic homelessness**.

Our **strategy** to achieve our mission:

1. We focus on two distinct, inter-related service lines and advocacy streams: prevention and intervention.
 - a. **Prevention** addresses aspects we know are leading causes of chronic homelessness and end it before it begins.
 - b. **Intervention** supports those already caught in chronic homelessness and supports them to move beyond it.
2. We are led by the knowledge and strength of the people we serve and empowered by data.

- a. We ensure those we work with are determining their own path; our role is to walk alongside, provide support, encouragement and continually offer opportunity and choice. We are a motivating force when they need it.
 - b. We are guided by our values and know that lasting change comes from building **holistic resiliency**: mental, emotional, physical and spiritual resiliency in balance.
 - c. We use data and research to constantly reflect, refine and improve our work, and to make better, quicker organizational decisions.
3. We relentlessly advocate on behalf of those we serve to create system changes.
 - a. We leverage partnerships to amplify the voices of those we serve and challenge systems that are not working in the best interests of those we serve.

Our **core ambitions** are:

1. Everyone we work with has a safe place to call **home**.
2. Everyone we work with feels connected to **family** and **community**.
3. Everyone we work with is building **holistic resiliency**.
4. Everyone we work with feels a sense of **purpose** and **meaning** in their life.
5. Everyone we work with **needs us less and less** over time.

The **culture** we will foster to achieve our mission will be characterized by:

1. Driven by our organizational values.
2. A relentless focus on the best interest of those we are serving, even when it is difficult.
3. Creativity, innovation and risk-taking.
4. Learning from what we do and constantly challenging assumptions, long-held beliefs and ways of practice.
5. Freedom and autonomy by all team members to be nimble and adaptive to the needs of those we serve.
6. Being highly accountable to each other and those we serve for decisions and actions.

Excellence in all we do – those we serve deserve nothing but our best.

3. Strategic Priorities 2020-2022

ONE: Digital Transformation

a. Key Outcomes:

- ✓ One entry point and data collection point for those we serve.
- ✓ Boyle Street Community Services' teams are able to leverage technology to work more effectively and efficiently to achieve better outcomes for those we serve.
- ✓ Boyle Street Community Services' teams are empowered to do their work.
- ✓ Greater organizational efficiency.
- ✓ Better, quicker, evidence-based decisions by utilizing data and a robust data system.
- ✓ Decentralize decision making, giving team members more autonomy to provide adaptive service delivery.

b. Key Activities:

- ✓ Create a robust database that empowers our work.
- ✓ Create a single portal for all team members to access that gives them everything they need to do their work.
- ✓ Embed the technology infrastructure – such as accounting, maintenance, HR, Critical Incidents – that will serve our growth as an organization for the next decade.
- ✓ Create an ethics panel to inform and examine data collection processes.

TWO: Practice Renewal

a. Key Outcomes:

- ✓ Those we serve have access to Indigenous and other ethno-cultural supports based on the demographics of each specific site.
- ✓ Boyle Street Community Services is a safe place for all with a particular focus on those who have faced discrimination and oppression.
- ✓ Practice (how we engage with those we serve) is regularly reflected on and improved to allow us to be better at achieving our core ambitions and hold each other accountable.
- ✓ Boyle Street Community Services' practices are grounded in research and balanced with teachings from Elders and Knowledge Keepers.

b. Key Activities:

- ✓ Develop and implement “culture as practice” through training, mentorship and system integration that embeds culture into day-to-day work including the implementation of an Indigenous mentorship program.
- ✓ Create an organization-wide evaluation framework that allows those we serve to be active participants in the evaluation of our work and reflect on their experience.
- ✓ Re-orient default practice toward integrated case-planning processes (both internal and external).
- ✓ Engage in a comprehensive equity review of Boyle Street Community Services to ensure that systemic forms of discrimination within the organization are reduced and eliminated over time.
- ✓ Direct line of communication between ED/Dep. ED and team members identifying as Indigenous, People of Colour, LGBTQIA2S+, and general engagement opportunities that informs decision making.

THREE: Housing Choice

a. Key Outcomes

- ✓ Those we serve are offered more choice in their housing options.
- ✓ Boyle Street Community Services is able to improve its long-term financial sustainability through the acquisition of housing assets.
- ✓ Those we serve have access to housing maintenance supports.

b. Key Activities

- ✓ Develop a housing strategy for Boyle Street Community Services that includes viable housing options to be pursued and non-viable options we could pursue with proper funding support or public policy shifts.
- ✓ On-board new housing projects that create effective housing options for those we serve.
- ✓ Create a housing maintenance strategy for those we serve with a focus on interdisciplinary supports and partnership.

FOUR: Partnership

a. Key Outcomes:

- ✓ Create systemic change through key working partnerships with large systems (Alberta Health Services, Edmonton Police Service, | Children’s Services)



- ✓ Greater system-wide service integration – allowing Boyle Street Community Services to focus on its mission and facilitating easier access to organizations that compliment our work.
- ✓ Greater organizational efficiency.
- ✓ Improved financial sustainability and risk mitigation.
- ✓ Structures are in place that give those we serve a voice on decisions that impact them.
- ✓ Structures are in place that support creating more inclusive spaces.

b. Key Activities

- ✓ Build on existing, and create new partnerships with large systems that allow for deeper understanding and collective practice changes for both partners, including Alberta Health Services, Edmonton Police Service, Children’s Services
- ✓ Deepen key partnerships with other organizations, with an emphasis on the C5, other inner-city partners to: better integrate service delivery; find cost efficiencies by sharing operational burdens; and engage in joint-public policy advocacy.
- ✓ Shift public policy advocacy to a coalition approach through the C5 and groups of like-minded organizations.
- ✓ Create a pan-Canadian coalition of organizations with a similar mission to work on best practice research, knowledge sharing and joint advocacy.
- ✓ Create a strategy for partnership with those we serve.
- ✓ Deepen and expand partnerships with key business, community and individual allies.
- ✓ Deepen partnerships with EMCN and the Pride Centre and other trusted organizations and partners to create more inclusive spaces for those we serve.

4. Boyle Street Community Services' Values

- We never give up even if the challenge is tough, seemingly impossible.
- We stand with our community members, side by side, patiently and for as long as they want – a constant and consistent caring force.
- Giving and receiving is a two-way street at Boyle Street Community Services – our community members share many gifts with great generosity and open hearts.
- Boyle Street Community Services is a home, a family, a village – a place of safety, trust, love, welcome and also a place with all the challenges that a home, a family, and a village bring.
- We are there for our colleagues, supporting them, valuing their unique contribution to our community.
- Everything we do matters and the little things are just as important as the big ones – a small gesture can have a great impact on another's life.
- Our work is always ongoing and that is OK.
- We share much in common and that connectedness of experience is a strength to be recognized, celebrated and drawn on.
- We are many nations, many beliefs, many walks of life coming together, seeking to understand each other, accepting each other and enjoying each other for what we are and for where we are at.
- The Creator is with us, the spirits soar within us and the culture of the First Peoples surrounds and protects us. We value our history as an agency and reflect on our past for guidance in moving forward – we value the experience and wisdom of our community elders.
- Despite great challenges we believe unhealthy cycles can be broken, new opportunities created and, through healing, health restored.
- Each member of our community is deserving of a full measure of dignity, support, and respect.
- We honour our community's resilience and celebrate and recognize our individual strengths and uniqueness.
- We advocate and educate creatively and innovatively at many levels for justice for all.
- We believe that life is too serious to be taken seriously and humour is a central part of our life and work at Boyle Street Community Services.
- At the heart of our work, we listen, care and empower our clients in order to assist them to find solutions to their challenges.
- Our community members are diverse, and we welcome everyone. We serve adults, youth, and families and are proud to act as a knowledgeable resource for Indigenous, LGBTQIA2S+, and new immigrant communities.
- Our Culture: that which we want to foster to achieve our Mission.

5. FAQs

Q: What do we mean by “Mission”?

A: Our mission is the high-level, long-term change we are trying to create in Edmonton.

- Our mission ties into all parts of the organization, especially when connecting our strategy to achieve it (prevention and intervention)
- Our mission also connects to the heart, soul and history of Boyle Street Community Services.

Q: What does “Strategy” mean with regards to our Mission?

A: Our strategy is how we plan to achieve our mission.

- Our strategy connects our work on prevention (Primarily Ubuntu, Group Living, Youth Community Support Program) and intervention (most of our work out of the Community Centre) around a common long-term mission.
- It provides a commitment to let those we serve guide their own journey and a commitment to holistic resiliency. People will face challenges in their life, but by building resiliency they can better weather those challenges.

Q: What is a “Core Ambition”?

A: These are the high-level outcomes to measure our effectiveness at achieving our mission.

Q: What do we mean by “Chronic Homelessness”?

A: Chronic homelessness is defined as people who experience homelessness on an on-going basis, usually for a period of at least six months, to the point where it is entrenched. There are typically multiple factors leading to someone being chronically homeless: a history of trauma and/or abuse; struggles with mental illness and/or addictions; physical health issues; lack of community and/or family support; etc.

For the purpose of this document, we are most interested in Chronic Homelessness as a societal condition than a particular state a person might find themselves in. As an organization, we are focused on eliminating the conditions that lead to chronic homelessness and establishing the systems necessary to moving people out of it.

Q: What is “Holistic Resiliency?”

A: A means to provide support that looks at the whole person, not just one aspect of their needs. The support we provide will consider physical, emotional, social and spiritual wellbeing and focus on building capacity in all areas.

Q: What does “integrated case planning” mean?

A: Creation of internal processes (including new single data portal) to break down barriers between programs and provide seamless service-delivery across the organization. It’s about putting our community members at the centre of their case plan, and bring the team and services around them that they need (rather than having them go to department by department to access their needs). It’s about moving away from a shopping mall approach (where you physically go from place to place to make your purchased) toward an online shopping experience (where you figure out what you need and it all comes to you).