

# **Strategic Plan 2023 to 2026**

August 10, 2023

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**LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

Saanich Neighbourhood Place is located on the traditional territories of the W̱SÁNEĆ and Songhees Peoples, on whose traditional territories, we live, we learn, we play, and we do our work.  
  
We acknowledge that the historical relationship to the land and territories of these peoples continues to this day.  
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We acknowledge that acts of colonization (such as requiring Indigenous children to attend residential schools and the ongoing high rates of Indigenous children in care), has made many inequities for First Nations, Inuit and Métis people in multiple forms. Despite these acts of colonization, Indigenous people continue to have vibrant communities and cultures.   
  
As a family-serving organization, we recognize that we have a responsibility to work towards truth and reconciliation, and to remain open to suggestions and consultations, especially with local Indigenous communities, on how our organization can continue to work towards reconciliation. Through the work we do on territory, we are accountable to the following communities: Esquimalt, Songhees, Tsawout, W̱JOȽEȽP (Tsartlip), Pauquachin, MÁLEXEŁ (Malahat), and Tseycum First Nations.  
  
We hope that Saanich Neighbourhood Place acts a gathering space for children, families, and elders to be a safe, welcoming and engaging environment for all people, including Indigenous peoples.

**INTRODUCTION**

Saanich Neighbourhood Place (SNP) was established in 1993 by local community members who recognized the need for a place where parents with young children could come together to share resources and offer each other support. In 1997 SNP became a registered not for profit family resource centre providing programs and services for families, children and youth. Since this time SNP has steadily increased its complement of wrap-around services to support families across Saanich, as well as establish satellite locations across the region.

In 2021, SNP opened Saanich Neighbourhood Place Child and Family Centre, which offers an additional 49 childcare spaces, increasing the number of childcare spaces offered through SNP from 40 to 89 and providing additional program space. Saanich Neighbourhood Place is committed to providing families with community-based programs and services that enhance their quality of life and sense of well-being. SNP offers a range of options for children and families to access support and services within their community, and provides these services in a safe and welcoming environment. SNP works to reduce isolation and build strong resilient communities by connecting people and resources.

**SNP offers programs and services in four areas:**

**Child and Family Programs** include pre/post-natal support and education, family outreach and support, parenting education, specialized programs for Dads and Young Parents, and playgroups for children up to five years of age.

**Youth Programs** include support groups for youth up to nineteen years of age and individualized outreach and support.

**Food Equity** programming includes fun and educational cooking classes, access to food resources, a family dinner program and providing healthy snacks for children.

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**Licensed Childcare** programs include part-day, morning preschool, and full-day childcare for children twelve months to five years.

**PLANNING CONTEXT**

Strategic planning is undertaken regularly to ensure the organization is able to respond to community need effectively, deliver on the organizational mandates, and make decisions about how to use available resources. The following strategic plan was developed using information gathered from client and community stakeholder surveys, an all-staff planning session, and Board and Management planning sessions.

The external context in which Saanich Neighbourhood Place (SNP) works continues to change and evolve. Saanich is the largest municipality in the Capital Region District (CRD), and the eighth largest in the province. The population is projected to grow by 19% over the next 15 years. Not only does the District of Saanich have the greatest number of children and youth ages 0-19 across the CRD at 21,684, but the percentage of the population that is made up of children and youth 0-19 years (18.5%) is greater than surrounding municipalities. The only regions with greater per capita number of children and youth are Langford at 22%, Colwood at 21.8% and Sooke at 21%[[1]](#endnote-1). The demographics of Saanich are predicted to change along with the CRD with the continued increase in newcomers coming to south Vancouver Island[[2]](#endnote-2).

Saanich Neighbourhood Place is part of a vibrant non-profit sector in British Columbia. There are over 25,000 non-profit societies in the province ranging from small community-based volunteer led groups to large well funded organizations. In terms of Neighbourhood Houses, SNP is one of only 10 such organizations in the Capital Region, and the only Neighbourhood House that is responsible for an entire region rather than neighbourhood.

The non-profit sector contributes $6.4 billion to BC’s GDP and employs 86,000 people. The sector plays a vital role in the health and wellbeing of communities and provides critical resources to thousands of people. Despite this important role, the sector is struggling and although many of the issues can be traced to before the pandemic, covid-19 exacerbated many of these issues. Since the pandemic the sector has seen some stabilization, especially in terms of ability to deliver programs and re-engage donors, however at the same time, rising costs, stagnant funding, labour shortages and the ending of government emergency funding has continued to add stressors to the sector. In particular non-profit organizations are facing three critical issues[[3]](#endnote-3):

1. *Overwhelmed, doing more with less* - Non-profit organizations are doing more to meet increasing program and service demands from communities. With rising costs, expenses are increasing while overall revenues are staying the same, meaning non-profits are doing more with less.

2. *Facing HR concerns* - Concerns related to human resources are contributing to feelings of uncertainty, anxiety, and worry about the future. A) There is not sufficient funding to recruit and retain qualified staff, especially given the need for inflation-adjusted wages, and benefits. B) Staff are suffering from burnout, stress, work overload and feeling financially stretched and struggling. These conditions are leading to high staff turnover and organizational instability due to overuse of sick or disability leaves.

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| Strengths | Challenges | Opportunities |
| Organizational culture & leadership  SNP is welcoming and low barrier. Services are family centred, inclusive and offered in a warm and respectful space, where people feel a sense of belonging. Leadership works to be responsive to community needs and environmental conditions. Staff work in a supportive and collaborative team environment offering programs and services in a consistent and effective manner. | **Service capacity, growth & resources**  Increased demand for services but limited funding and rising program delivery costs. SNP is reliant on project grants and current funding will not meet increasing demands. Limited funding means limited-service capacity. SNP is unable to offer more programming even though there is the demand for more and different services. | **Diverse & dependable funding**  Diversifying funding in order to address future service demand and growth. Explore ways to increase community investment as one way to reduce dependency on short-term program and grant funding. SNP is committed to making services available across Saanich, but with limited funds, infrastructure, and staff, it is challenging to meet the growing needs of the Saanich community without increasing the diversity and sustainability of resources. |
| Community connections & reputation  SNP is committed to creating and supporting community connections, whether with individuals, families or organizations. Partnerships and meaningful connections with the community and other services providers are key to SNP’s work. | **Regional coverage**  SNP serves a large region without the corresponding funds required to offer services across Saanich. The challenge for SNP is both limited funds but also the sheer size of the District of Saanich. It is impossible to offer neighbourhood-based programs and services without opening several satellite locations across the region. | **Satellite locations**  SNP is well positioned to continue to build a regional presence across Saanich through the effective use of partner and satellite locations. Using a hub and spoke model SNP can ensure that children, youth and families across the region are able to access necessary services within their neighbourhoods. |
| Quality of care & staff ability  SNP offers high quality and diverse programs and services. They provide wrap around services in a community hub setting to support families, especially those experiencing marginalization and service barriers. Programs are adapted to meet the needs of changing families. Talented and knowledgeable staff work collaboratively with each other, partner organizations and the wider community to meet the needs of the residents of Saanich. | **Infrastructure & staff retention**  SNP needs more space in order to meet current needs as well as expand services. Along with limited space comes staffing challenges, including burnout, ability to provide competitive compensation packages, and provincial labour shortages. | **Staff support**  SNP is well positioned to build on its strong HR practices and to further build the internal processes and practices that support staff retention and wellness. Practices and training that support staff to more fully collaborate and communicate across programs will reduce isolation and further build team cohesion. |
| Accessibility and inclusion  SNP is a value-based organization that is  family centred, and trauma informed.  Staff have genuine empathy and support for their clients and broader community members. There is a commitment to be flexible, accommodating, and responsive  in terms of both client and staff needs. | Under-served families & communities  SNP like many organizations must  grapple with how to be a more open,  accessible, and just organization for all community members. This means  creating the structures and practices to effectively address reconciliation and racism. | Relationship building  SNP has the opportunity to deepen the  organization’s commitment to diversity  and inclusion by strengthening  relationships with Indigenous and  diverse communities and embracing  diverse perspectives and experiences. |

3. *Stabilizing, but for how long*? Non-profit organizations continue to adapt and innovate to meet community needs, but the increasing precarity of the sector caused by HR challenges and rising cost pressures is creating serious concerns about the sustainability and future wellbeing of many of these vital community services

To address these and other issues faced by the sector, SNP will need to build on its past success, leverage its relationships with the wider community and continue to adapt and innovate to meet needs. The Board and management of SNP understand that to continue to provide effective and accessible services, they must build on what is working, address challenges and actively seek out new opportunities. The following information is based on input from staff, community stakeholders and the Board:

**STRATEGIC DIRECTION**

**Mission Statement**

To enrich lives through caring programs that connect people to each other and their community.

**Our Values**

* Accessible
* Inclusive
* Diverse
* Collaborative
* Respectful
* Compassionate

**Guiding Principles:**

* Strength-based, trauma informed practice and programs that foster resilience.
* Family focused, children and families are at the centre of everything we do.
* Multi-disciplinary approach that utilizes cross-sectoral and cross-cultural program expertise and experience.
* Effective use of resources that nurture families and connect communities.
* Working collaboratively with our partners to ensure families can access all the services and supports they require.

**Our Mandate:**

* To provide services to families.
* To respond to the needs of the communities we serve.
* To provide community leadership.
* To be innovative in our sector.

**Strategic Directions**

**Effective Programs and Services**

**Strong Community Relations and Awareness**

**Sustainable Organization and Governance**

**GOALS AND STRATEGIES**

**STRATEGIC GOALS**

**Strategic Direction # 1: Effective Programs and Services**

**Goal 1.1: Increased connections between SNP programs to enhance service responsiveness and accessibility.**

*Strategy 1.1.1:* Improve communication, information sharing, connections and referrals between family services and childcare programs.

*Strategy 1.1.2:* Work with staff to share and use program data and other relevant information to better understand changing family needs, demographic shifts, and promising practices to enhance services.

*Strategy 1.1.3:* Build relationships with relevant schools to help support SNP families with children in the school system.

**Goal 1.2: Expanded support and services for children and families.**

*Strategy 1.2.1:* Expand support for families that require enhanced supported development services.

*Strategy 1.2.2:* Explore ways to increase accessibility to services for families through different service delivery and service time options.

*Strategy 1.2.3:* Work with SNP partners and the broader community to raise awareness of the gap in services for families with middle-year aged children (5 to 12 years).

**Goal 1.3: Enhanced coordinated access for seniors requiring food equity support.**

*Strategy 1.3.1:* Explore ways to enhance access to food equity services for seniors requesting support from SNP.

*Strategy 1.3.2:* Build partnerships with other senior-serving organizations to increase accessibility for seniors across Saanich.

**Strategic Direction # 2: Strong Community Relationships & Awareness**

**Goal 2.1: Strengthened relationships between SNP, its partners, and the broader community.**

*Strategy 2.1.1:* Continue to build the understanding of the District of Saanich and the role it has in supporting the work of SNP.

*Strategy 2.1.2*: Support SNP staff with building connections, sharing information, and collaborating with organizations with shared values and mandates, including other Neighbourhood Houses.

**Goal 2.2: Increased outreach with diverse populations and community organizations across the region.**

*Strategy 2.2.1:* Explore ways to work with settlement service agencies to better support newcomer families.

*Strategy 2.2.2:* Continue to strengthen relationships with Indigenous communities and service providers.

*Strategy 2.2.3:* Explore ways in which the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action can inform the work of SNP.

**Goal 2.3: Enhanced awareness of SNP across the region.**

*Strategy 2.3.1:* Create public awareness materials and messages that inform the broader community of Saanich about SNP’s mission, values and services.

*Strategy 2.3.2:* Work with staff and volunteers to ensure that everyone is communicating a clear and consistent message about the organization.

*Strategy 2.3.3:* Be intentional about building awareness of SNP for fundraising and engaging SNP stakeholders in advocacy for sustainable funding.

**Strategic Direction # 3: Sustainable Organization and Governance**

**Goal 3.1: Enhanced human resource practices that build staff capacity, support and retention.**

*Strategy 3.1.1*: Target professional development training to enhance the skills and capacity of SNP staff to provide effective programs and services.

*Strategy 3.1.2:* Develop ways to further integrate staff teams and improve communication across the organization.

*Strategy 3.1.3:* Review and formalize staff practices, policies, procedures and structures to better support staff and reduce staff burnout and turnover.

**Goal 3.2: Appropriate office and programming space across the region.**

*Strategy 3.2.1:* Explore ways to better address space shortages in the short-term including working with SNP partners to identify options for shared programming space.

*Strategy 3.2.2:* Work with the Board to create a plan for increasing SNP programming space that will address the growth in service and programs needs across Saanich.

**Goal 3.3: Increased financial capacity that meets diverse and growing community needs.**

*Strategy 3.3.1:* Work with the Board to develop a case for support, and engagement strategy for increased and consistent funding from the District of Saanich.

*Strategy 3.3.2:* Support the Board to engage in strategic fundraising activities.

*Strategy 3.3.3:* Explore other ways to enhance and diversify SNP funding.

**Goal 3.4: Enhanced Board governance and capacity.**

*Strategy 3.4.1:* Develop a Board Succession plan that ensures seamless transition for key Executive positions on the Board.

*Strategy 3.4.2:* Continue to ensure that the Board represents the diversity of people SNP serves and the community.

*Strategy 3.4.3:* Create a comprehensive Board orientation that includes an overview of SNP governance, mission, values and programs/services.

*Strategy 3.4.4:* Strengthen the understanding and engagement between the Board

and staff.

1. Statistics Canada (2021). *Census Data 2021 Capital Regional District*. [↑](#endnote-ref-1)
2. Kozakowski, M. (2022, February 9). *2021 census reveals West Shore’s surging growth as Victoria’s core loses momentum* . Citified.Ca. https://victoria.citified.ca/news/2021-census-reveals-west-shores-surging-growth-as-victorias-core-loses-momentum/ [↑](#endnote-ref-2)
3. Point, V., Foundation, V., & Foundation, V. 2023 *Safety Net: 2023 State of BC’s Non-Profit Sector*. [↑](#endnote-ref-3)