



true north

STRATEGIC PLAN

2022 – 2027

(DECEMBER 2024 UPDATE)

*Together we walk the path with those in crisis;
honouring the past, providing support in the present and
awakening hope for the future.*



Table of Contents

- EXECUTIVE SUMMARY 3**
- INTRODUCTION 6**
- 1.0 PRINCIPLES/PROCESSES GUIDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2022-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN 8**
- 2.0 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR 2022-2027 – THE PATH FORWARD 12**
 - 2.1 Governance 14**
 - 2.2 People & Culture..... 19**
 - 2.3 Service: Programming..... 22**
 - 2.4 Quality: Infrastructure..... 26**
 - 2.5 Quality: Branding..... 28**
 - 2.6 Growth: Community Development..... 30**
 - 2.7 Growth: Expansion..... 31**
 - 2.8 Finance: Funding..... 35**
- SUMMARY 40**



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The 2022-27 Strategic Plan was guided by a number of key principles and factors. At the base of all of the work and deliberations undertaken by the Board and Leadership of the True North Society (True North) is the Mission, Vision and Values of the organization.

Beyond these foundational elements other core realities or principles that guided development of the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan included:

- COVID-19 Pandemic Lessons
- Consequences Arising from COVID-19
- Access to Services
- Organizational Capacity – Short Term & Mid Term
- Balancing Development & Achievement; and
- Balancing Measurement & Action

Using the above noted elements as a guide, True North has determined that its strategic focus for the next five (5) years will encompass the following core strategic priority areas arranged by five pillars.

1. Governance:
2. People:
3. Service: Programming
4. Quality: Infrastructure
 Branding
5. Growth: Community Development
 Expansion
6. Finance: Funding

These core strategic priority areas are detailed in the full body of this document, along with an overview of accountability for actions, some level of detail about first steps, and how True North intends to measure

and report on its efforts moving forward. Moreover, these strategic directions are highly interrelated and dependent on one another – initiatives will rarely have impact in solely one area of strategic focus.

These foundational elements are noted as follows:

Our Mission (What We Do)

Together we walk the path with those in crisis, honouring the past, providing support in the present and awakening hope for the future.

Our Vision (What We Strive to Be)

Interrupting the cycle of abuse through empowerment to create a safe environment for all.

Our Values (How We Conduct Ourselves)

Connection: *We foster belonging through acceptance, inclusion, and collaboration.*

Compassion: *We take action to help others through kindness, respect, and nonjudgement.*

Courage: *We create space for vulnerability, innovation, education, and opportunity.*

Integrity: *We are ethical, accountable, and honest.*

Empowerment: *We recognize the capacity of each human to find their strengths and exercise their autonomy.*

Integrity: *We are ethical, accountable, and honest.*

All initiatives in our 2022-2027 Strategic Plan, and any alterations required by changes in our operating environment in the next five years, will have these foundational elements and our core strategic pillars as our primary focus. We view our strategic priorities as fundamentally and inseparably connected. The sole reason True North exists is to deliver the best experience possible for those we walk the path with conscious of the financial and personal resources we have available to us, striving constantly to improve.

We are called to deliver on this commitment with compassion, respect, integrity, trust, empowerment, and safety – and we cannot deliver on this promise without similarly supporting our staff with this same perspective.



INTRODUCTION

True North Society (formerly the Wheatland Crisis Society) was established, in 1992, over thirty years ago as a community movement to support those in need. It has evolved into a mature organization employing over 30 staff to support this important work. True North is proud to support individuals & families regardless of gender or age.

The work encompasses the provision of a 24-hour crisis line. Typical calls support the clients in their time of need and ensure safety. The support provided by our team often changes lives. Many of the calls are from individuals in their darkest moment, seeking safety, shelter, and compassion. Our organization provides safe emergency accommodation for 30 days, where risk assessment, case planning, and safety planning are top priority. True North also operates a preventative outreach program that engages community to provide support before emergency shelter is needed, and to continue to provide assistance in the community when families transition. During this time important personal connections are made, services offered and information on the next steps to assist with the client's goals. Recently, the organization has focused on servicing our Indigenous clients more holistically and has hired an Indigenous Community Resource worker to assist the team, our community and our clients.

Today, families come from all walks of life and have experienced unspeakable pain, many living with multi-generational trauma. Some of our clients have a history of suffering from the residential school system, others come to us as immigrants or refugees, and others who are members of the LGBTQ2SI+ community, struggling to find an accepting place to support them. It is safe to say that True North is a place of calmness and sanctuary for the healing to begin.

True North operates out of a 7000 sq. ft, secure, residential facility that can accommodate up to 25 people in seven bedrooms, with shared bathrooms. One bedroom & bathroom is located on the main floor and is wheelchair accessible. The kitchen, living room and yard are communal spaces. Communal living can be a challenge for people seeking safety after experiencing trauma. The team strives to provide predictable, consistent, and personalized programming with the goal to support the client and their needs. The programming is developed and implemented using a trauma-informed lens. Two counselling spaces are available within the facility, and childcare space.

As we continue to navigate the challenges post-COVID-19, True North has also come to recognize several realities that inform the work we are still called to do over the next five years. Our history and our commitment to our clients allows us to be even more committed to our mission and vision. While 2020 and 2021 have been challenging it has provided an opportunity for us to review and renew our commitment to our future and taking the next steps in our evolution as an organization.

As the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan was developed and solidified, all our staff have been offered a voice in developing the plan that they are so integral to carrying out. Further consultation was achieved in talking with key stakeholders. The future is exciting, and this document serves as a pathway forward for the next five years.



1.0 PRINCIPLES/PROCESSES GUIDING THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE 2022-2027 STRATEGIC PLAN

True North developed the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan guided by several key principles and factors. At the base of all the work of True North work and deliberations in developing and implementing the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan are our Mission, Vision, Values as noted previously.

Beyond these foundational elements other core realities or principles that guided development of the 2022-2027 Strategic Plan are as follows:

COVID-19 Pandemic Lessons

At the beginning of the pandemic needs for shelter accommodation was minimal, as the pandemic continues, demands for residential support is on the increase for both singles and families. The COVID-19 pandemic has accelerated the need for our services as violence at home is on the increase and options for housing after the initial crisis is over is limited. Furthermore, COVID-19 has highlighted the challenges communal living presents with the existing infrastructure - shared washrooms has limited our capacity and an inability to properly isolate clients and maintain mental health. The pandemic has helped us to identify gaps and/or opportunities which now inform future priorities.

Consequences Arising from COVID-19

- Services at True North have been curtailed in the areas we service. Most notably the ability to provide outreach services in outlying communities – such as Siksika, Drumheller and Chestermere.
- Within the town of Strathmore support from the business community has been consistent. However there has been a lack of fundraising opportunities within the community and hence raising awareness of domestic violence and True North Society’s ability to provide service has been markedly reduced.
- Additional funding has been made available from both the Provincial and Federal Governments to help support our COVID needs. Much needed personal protective equipment, additional cleaning, and maintenance to increase the infection control
- The staff have become very adept at change and keeping up to date with every changing protocols related to COVID.

Services We Deliver

Client exit surveys consistently shown that the crisis services delivered at the shelter have met their needs to stabilize and determine the next steps in their journey. The shelter is currently funded for clients to stay for 30 days. The challenge remains how to support clients seeking low income and secure accommodation after these 30 days. There is currently no option for clients to remain in the area and they are forced to relocate to keep themselves and/or their family safe. While moving to another community provides physical safety the mental health impact cannot be underestimated, while at True North trust is built and a support system begins to develop. This is lost when relocation is the only option available.

True North works with many different stakeholders, through interviews it has been identified that there is an opportunity to increase the collaboration to expand our reach and awareness of our service within the community.

Access to Services

Accessing our services can often be challenging for clients. The current system in Alberta requires a client fleeing from abuse to call each shelter individually to seek if there is space available. Since COVID the ability to maintain an awareness and name recognition in the community has been limited to online presence only. Searching for the True North number to seek assistance is difficult. Clients must know what our name is to find us and call for help. Currently there is confusion with other non-profit organizations to find the appropriate service. This is a particular area of concern when immediate action may be required. We will need to develop our image as an organization to provide both residential and outreach support services. This includes evaluating the current brand and name recognition and ease of accessing the services.

Organizational Capacity – Short-Term

Staff and other resources of True North have been under remarkable strain since early 2020. COVID has been unlike any disaster scenario that any organization has experienced. True North has had to invest, invent, implement, revise, and then repeat processes for months on end relating to infection prevention control practices and guidelines, isolation restrictions, working in a virtual environment, reduced physical capacity, supply chain management, and a range of other operational challenges.

From our leaders through to our front-line staff, from individuals and families, from Board and senior leadership changes, all have had to adjust working patterns, up to and including virtual engagement, working remotely where possible, restricting their work activity to one site, and new process implemented within the workplace. Coupled with travel restrictions and mandatory vaccinations, this has also meant that staff and client wellness is a priority.

Organizational Capacity – Mid-Term

The sector in which True North operates has always been characterized, in one form or another, by labour force challenges – challenging but rewarding work and even more so because of COVID. Fortunately, True North has been able to fill all our vacancies with well qualified and mostly local candidates. The work environment is a positive one with many opportunities for education and growth. We will have to continue to develop our image and reality as an employer of choice. This includes always evaluating and assessing our salary and benefit structure, evaluating our organizational structure, proactively planning for succession, and looking to enhance training and development opportunities for our staff.

Balancing Development & Achievement

The multi-year approach developed by True North seeks to balance development of a robust Strategic Plan with the ability to deliver on the commitments contained therein. This directly relates to a courageous assessment of available resources and the overall capacity available to the organization over the life of the Strategic Plan. True North recognizes that there are number of important initiatives that could be attended to in the next five (5) years and must make difficult decisions to prioritize those within the context of limited resources.

Balancing Measurement & Action

Execution on the strategic plan will be supported by identifying, establishing, and evaluating progress against a concise set of metrics and milestones.

As our service delivery evolves, and the need to be accountable for the funds we receive from both provincial and federal governments, we find that we must respond to ever-increasing expectations as to what and how we measure performance. We want to continue to ensure that such processes do not become an end in themselves but rather support the value we bring in terms of care and support to those

we serve. The measures, metrics, and milestones that we create must not become an overwhelming burden to staff trying to deliver and improve on the care and services being monitored.

True North will continue to use and develop a set of core measures and metrics for each of its strategic priorities and associated initiatives. The fundamental basis upon which these metrics will be selected is related to whether changes in those metrics – either positive or negative – drive change in the plans, actions, or behaviours of True North.



2.0 STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS FOR 2022-2027 – THE PATH FORWARD

True North – building on its strengths and successes in 2021 and prior years and conscious of its challenges and opportunities – will focus its efforts and attention on the following core areas going forward:

- 1) Governance
- 2) People
- 3) Service Programming
- 4) Quality Branding
 Infrastructure
- 5) Growth Service Offerings
 Community Development
- 6) Finance Funding

All our initiatives – currently planned/anticipated or required in response to a changing operating environment - will be guided by these strategic imperatives.

We view these priorities as fundamentally and inseparably connected. Programming decisions and choices will be impacted by staffing capacity, funding, client varied needs, physical constraints of the current location.

For many years True North has provided support to clients through telephone counselling (24-hour line) and a safe place to stay when in crisis. Living communally, sharing a bathroom & kitchen is often difficult for many and understandable given that they are dealing with so much. Our current mandate is to provide safe living accommodations for 30 days and there is an opportunity for our Outreach team to continue working with clients, if they stay in the community's we service. Often however, many of our clients and their families must relocate outside of their community due to the lack of affordable housing and/or safe housing. This creates a deterrent for many to remove themselves from abusive relationships.

Staff who choose to work in this sector are dedicated. During recent focus groups they have provided feedback that they understand salaries in the non-profit sector are low and that we find it difficult to

compete with other employers such as Alberta Health Services. What we can provide is the chance to grow their skills through the many learning opportunities available, to work in a supportive culture. Opportunities exist to review the benefits in particular the ability to provide a pension and health wellness account.

In terms of community involvement and working with other agencies, from the stakeholder feed back there is an opportunity for True North to enhance these relationships for the betterment of all.

During COVID True North Society has lost ground in terms of providing ongoing community education to create an awareness of violence and the impact on the individual and families. In person events have been minimal. This has created increased emphasis on using social media and the shelter's website to create the needed outreach to the community we service, locating us on social media is currently difficult.

For True North to align with other non-profit agencies the CEO position title will be changed to Executive Director.



2.1 Governance

Primary Accountability:	Executive Director & Board Chair
Key Responsibility:	Executive Director Board
Consulted/Engaged:	Executive Director, Board Members, Other Non-profits
Informed:	Community Partners Funding & Service Partners

We are committed to strong governance practices as a foundation for organizational success. As our Board of Directors supports us in setting the strategic direction and ensuring accountability, we must establish a governance framework meant to provide system of rules, practices, policies and processes to guide how the organization is directed, managed, and controlled.

- Focus in the next 5 years will to be ensure a strong board including the infrastructure for orientation, succession, and governance. Having these in place will ensure continuity and success of the organization.

Within this area of focus, True North is working towards achieving the following targeted outcomes:

Targeted Outcomes	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish and maintain a governance structure and policies that meets the evolving needs of True North, ensuring clear responsibilities and effective oversight. • Review and develop a structure for the Board to meet the needs of True North, including committee structures. • Create processes for Board accountability, including performance evaluation mechanisms and ongoing leadership assessments. • Establish a culture of collaboration and transparency between Board members, leadership, and staff to support decision-making. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Governance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Governance policies reviewed and updated annually. ○ Completion of an internal governance structure audit every 2 years, with recommendations implemented. • Board Structure <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Committees established on the Board with Board members assigned to relevant committees within first 90 days of joining.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Develop a mandatory governance training program for all Board members to build their understanding of the mission, vision, core values, and strategic objectives, with a focus on trauma-informed care and inclusion.● Ensure a comprehensive board development plan with a focus on succession planning to ensure continuity and effective governance. There is some redundancy built into the positions to ensure smooth transitions and operations.● Establish a Foundation with a governance structure that focuses on fundraising, managing capital assets, and investments to secure long-term sustainability. Ensure the Foundation has governance policies, board structure, accountability mechanisms, a training component, and strategic alignment with True North’s operational Board. The independent Board of Directors is focused on maximizing resource generation and investment oversight. | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Board Evaluations<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Completion of a formal board performance evaluation process annually along with action plans.○ Annual leadership review completed for the Executive Director along with action plan.● Collaboration/Communication<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Board Members will attend at least one True North event per year.● Training Completion Rate<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 100% of Board members complete mandatory governance training within 6 months of joining the board.○ Scores of 90% or higher on post-training assessments measuring understanding of the mission, vision, core values, and trauma-informed care.● Succession Plan Implementation<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Board positions with an identified and documented succession plan (target 100%).○ Average time to fill Board vacancies of 3 months or less.● Development of Foundation<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Board of Directors for the Foundation established within 6 months.○ Development of Board Charter and governance policies within 6 months of forming. |
|--|--|

- Return on investments meeting or exceeding benchmarks set by the Foundation's financial strategy.
- 100% of Foundation Board Members complete orientation and governance training, within 6 months of joining.
- Establish formal quarterly reporting mechanisms between the Foundation's and True North's Boards.

**Specific Operational Initiatives
(Tactical Plans)**

- **Governance Review**
 - Conduct a comprehensive review of the current governance structure and Board committee roles to ensure alignment with strategic priorities.
 - Develop or update a Board Charter and governance policies (ex. Conflict of Interest, Role Descriptions, etc.) to ensure they remain relevant and reflect effective governance practices.
 - Develop and maintain a Board Handbook that outlines roles, responsibilities, and expectations for Board Members.
 - Organize an annual workshop to review and update the governance framework, ensuring alignment with organizational growth and changes.
- **Board Structure**
 - Conduct a bi-annual review of Board committees to assess their effectiveness, relevance, and alignment with strategic goals. Adjust committees as needed to reflect priorities.
 - Develop or update Charter for each committee, outlining roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority.
 - Assess the composition of each committee to ensure diversity in skills, experience, and perspectives.
 - Develop and implement metrics to evaluate the performance of each committee on an annual basis, with action plans for improvement.

- **Board Accountability**
 - Implement an annual self-assessment and peer review process for Board Members to reflect on contributions, provide constructive feedback, identify areas for improvement, and determine alignment with expectations.
 - Conduct evaluations of Executive Director, at least annually.
- **Collaboration and Communication**
 - Organize board-leadership meetings focused on collaboration, building relationships, and improving decision-making processes between the Board, Leadership, and Staff.
 - Board Members attend at least one TN event per year.
- **Governance Training**
 - Develop a formal onboarding and training program that covers the mission, vision, values, strategic objectives, and core governance principles, with specialized modules on trauma-informed care and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI).
 - Implement a mandatory onboarding program for all new Board Members that includes governance framework, strategic priorities, and True North Mission, Vision, and Values.
 - Require all Board Members to participate in an annual governance refresher course.
 - After each training session, conduct post-training assessments to evaluate understanding.
 - Introduce a guest speaker series where external experts on trauma-informed care, inclusion, and governance best practices share insights with the Board.
- **Succession Planning**
 - Develop and formalize a Board succession planning policy that outlines the process for identifying and transitioning new board members.
 - Actively identify potential candidates with the necessary skills, experience, and values alignment in advance of vacancies.
 - Develop a redundancy plan for Board and key leadership roles, ensuring that multiple Board Members and members of management/supervision are prepared to step into key positions if necessary.
 - Conduct an annual skills assessment of the Board to identify gaps in expertise and ensure that succession planning addresses those needs.

- **Foundation**

- Develop governance structure and Board committee roles to ensure alignment with strategic priorities. Develop guidelines on overlapping board membership between True North and the Foundation.
- Develop a Board Charter and governance policies (ex. Conflict of Interest, Role Descriptions, etc.) to reflect effective governance practices.
- Develop a Board Handbook that outlines roles, responsibilities, and expectations for Board Members.
- Identify and recruit Board members with expertise in fundraising, financial management, and investments to establish a balanced skill set on the Foundation Board.
- Develop a comprehensive financial strategy for the Foundation, including annual fundraising targets, capital campaigns, and investment portfolio management.
 - Will require a Finance and Investment committee within the Foundation Board to oversee capital management, endowment policies, and financial reporting standards.
- Develop and implement metrics to evaluate the performance of the Foundation on an annual basis, with action plans for improvement.
- Schedule meetings between the Foundation and True North Boards to ensure alignment of strategic goals.

2.2 People & Culture

Primary Accountability:	Executive Director
Key Responsibility:	Executive Director
Consulted/Engaged:	Executive Director, Board Members, Staff
Informed:	Community Partners Funding & Service Partners

Our People Strategy is a strategic framework for supporting our mission, vision, core values, and strategic priorities. We are focused on aligning the People Strategy with our broader objectives to ensure that we have an engaged, motivated, and high-performing team capable of meeting the evolving needs of our diverse workforce and community.

- Having a highly engaged workforce is the key to success of True North. Engaged staff demonstrate discretionary effort to help the organization grow and develop. This will be achieved through role clarity, talent management and development plans.

Within this area of focus, True North is working towards achieving the following targeted outcomes:

Targeted Outcomes	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieve high staff engagement, reflecting a highly motivated and committed workforce. ● Ensure employees have clear, up-to-date job descriptions aligned with the mission, vision, core values, and strategic goals. ● Implement individualized development plans for staff, specific to their professional growth and aligned with organizational needs. ● Establish and maintain an inclusive workplace culture, as measured by a minimum of 80% on an annual survey, of staff feeling that True North promotes an environment of belonging and inclusion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employees reporting an engagement score of 75% or higher on the annual employee engagement survey. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 85 percent participation rate in survey. ○ Target reduction of 10% in voluntary turnover year-over-year. ● Job Descriptions <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated job descriptions, with a target of 100% completion within the review cycle. ○ 80% of employees reporting satisfaction with their role clarity in the annual engagement survey. ● Individualized Development Plans

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop a strong, collaborative relationship with the newly formed union to ensure open communication, resolve conflicts proactively, and maintain a positive, productive work environment for all employees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Employees with completed, active development plans, targeting 100% of staff. ○ Employees reporting high satisfaction with their development opportunities, with a target of 80% or higher in annual surveys. ● Inclusive Workplace Culture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Staff reporting of feeling a sense of belonging and inclusion in the annual engagement survey, with a target of 80% or higher. ● Union-Management Relations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Conduct an annual satisfaction survey with union representatives, targeting at least 80% satisfaction with the communication, collaboration, and grievance resolution processes.
---	--

**Specific Operational Initiatives
(Tactical Plans)**

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Employee Engagement <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Implement regular Engagement Surveys for employees to assess their level of engagement, identify their pain points, and identify opportunities for improvement. ○ Measure employee engagement and determine baseline metrics that can be tracked over a three (3) year period. ○ Develop an action plan after each annual survey based on employee feedback. ○ Conduct regular training for leaders on employee engagement, including effective communication, feedback, and team-building strategies. ○ Improving the onboarding process will help new hires feel valued and increase the likelihood for long-term success. Develop a comprehensive, structured, and supportive onboarding program that guides new team members through their first six months.

- Organize regular team-building activities, both formal and informal, to strengthen relationships, collaboration, and improve communication.
- Job Descriptions
 - Establish an annual review process for updating job descriptions to reflect evolving roles, responsibilities, and alignment with the mission, vision, and values.
 - Conduct regular audits to ensure that every employee has an up-to-date job description that aligns with their current role, responsibilities, and organizational goals.
- Individual Development Plans
 - Work with each employee to create an individualized development plan that outlines specific professional growth opportunities.
 - Offer access to training, workshops, and mentorship programs that support the professional growth outlined in individual development plans.
 - Include career development discussions as part of annual performance reviews, where employees and managers can review progress, set new goals, and update development plans.
- Inclusive Workplace Culture
 - Implement mandatory DEI training for all employees, focusing on creating an inclusive work environment, promoting understanding, and reducing unconscious bias.
 - Create ERGs that offer safe spaces for employees from diverse backgrounds to share experiences, provide support, and contribute ideas for inclusion.
 - Revise hiring practices to ensure diversity in candidate pools and reduce bias in the recruitment and selection processes.
 - Train leaders on inclusive management practices.
- Union/Labour Relations
 - Establish a Union-Management Partnership Program to establish open communication and collaboration between union leaders and management.
 - Regular meetings between union representatives and senior management to discuss ongoing concerns, upcoming changes, and improvements in the workplace.
 - Organize joint training sessions on conflict resolution and communication strategies to ensure that both parties understand their roles and responsibilities in maintaining a positive work environment.
 - Create a communication plan that includes regular updates to union members about key organizational changes, policies, and developments.

2.3 Service: Programming

Primary Accountability:	Executive Director
Key Responsibility:	Delegated - Leadership Team
Consulted/Engaged:	Staff Clients Communities in our area of service
Informed:	Government (funding, reports, accountability)

True North currently provides comprehensive programming for both clients who reside in the shelter and those who require support in the community we service. To stay relevant to those we service we must review the programming and process at least annually to ensure client current and future needs are being met. Specific attention will focus on how clients access the shelter and if there are other methods that will be effective. Reasons why clients may not access the shelter when in need will be reviewed to ensure our residential services meet the client needs.

Working with other organizations and ensuring integration is a key to success both on a macro and micro level. True North will ensure opportunities to collaborate are sought out and resources used as effectively as possible. Expansion to other communities is required to further our mission and vision. True North will look to strength current relationships and forge new ones.

We will always be mindful of the many diverse cultures we service and will seek to always provide inclusive programming. True North recently hired an Indigenous Liaison Worker further development of this role is required, initial work will be to meet the needs of clients with an indigenous. Specific attention will be to forge a partnership with Siksika.

A vision of the team is to work with post secondary institutions to partner with learners.

Within this area of focus, True North is working towards achieving the following targeted outcomes:

Targeted Outcomes	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Programming will stay relevant; an annual review of programs will be carried out to ensure client current and future needs are met. ● True North will continue to be an inclusive shelter. Opportunities to increase diversity and inclusion will be pursued. ● True North will develop a working relationship with Siksika. ● Identify and address barriers to shelter access, ensuring that clients who seek shelter services are able to access them. ● Develop and implement an Indigenous Support Program, with a focus on providing holistic, culturally appropriate services to Indigenous clients. ● Establish a formal partnership with the Siksika Nation within the next 12 months to collaboratively develop culturally relevant programming and services, particularly for Indigenous clients seeking shelter and community support. ● Develop partnerships with post-secondary institutions within 18 months to create internship, research, and training opportunities for students in social work, psychology, and related fields, thereby enhancing the capacity of True North’s programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Annual program assessments completed. ● Messaging incorporate service for clients. ● Identify if funds are available. ● Client satisfaction survey. ● Employee engagement survey. ● Programs reviewed annually to ensure they meet current and future client needs, with a target of 100% review completion by year-end. ● Clients who report feeling respected and included, with a target of 90% satisfaction in annual diversity and inclusion surveys. ● Diversity Training participation of staff completing annual diversity and inclusion training, with a target of 100% participation. ● Increase in shelter occupancy rates. Increase in percentage of clients who report that they were able to access shelter services without barriers. ● Complete the development and launch of an Indigenous Support Program within 12 months, as measured by program implementation milestones. ● Achieve Siksika Nation partnership milestones, including the establishment of a joint committee, within the first 6 months of the partnership. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increase in the number of programs or initiatives jointly developed with the Siksika Nation, with a target of at least 2 culturally relevant programs implemented within 12 months. ○ Positive feedback from the Siksika Nation and Indigenous clients regarding the

	<p>collaboration, with a target of 85% satisfaction in partnership evaluations.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish partnerships with at least 2 post-secondary institutions within 18 months, as measured by formal agreements. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Number of students participating in internships, research projects, or training opportunities annually, with a target of at least 10 students per year. ○ Students who report that their experience with True North contributed to their academic and professional development, with a target of 90% satisfaction.
--	---

**Specific Operational Initiatives
(Tactical Plans)**

- Website design to include better access for clients.
- Assess the feasibility and implement text and/or messaging for clients
- Needs assessment completed – current, future, plans to grow, communities/ services (Outreach)
- Develop a plan to accommodate pets and present a plan for implementation.
- Implement a trauma counselling service and/or partnership
- Public Educator funding to be identified and subsequently hired
- Streamline paperwork and processes to be more staff and client friendly
- Programming Relevance and Annual Review
 - Conducting an annual review of all shelter and community programs to assess their effectiveness, client satisfaction, and alignment with future needs.
 - Implement a continuous client feedback system, including surveys and interviews, to gather input on current programs and identify areas for improvement.
 - Host an annual internal workshop with staff to discuss emerging trends, best practices, and new ideas for enhancing program delivery and meeting future client needs.

- Inclusivity
 - Research and mandate annual diversity and inclusion training for all staff, ensuring staff are equipped to provide culturally competent services to diverse client groups.
- Prepare, develop and launch Men’s programming in community to engage male identifying groups in positive conversations about healthy masculinity, healthy relationships, domestic violence and risk.
- Indigenous Support Program Development
 - Implement an Indigenous cultural training program for all staff, including workshops on the history, traditions, and challenges faced by Indigenous communities.
 - Integrate traditional healing practices (e.g., ceremonies, smudging, elder support) into the Indigenous Support Program to provide culturally relevant and holistic care.
 - Collaborate with Indigenous leaders and service providers to develop programs that address specific needs such as mental health, substance abuse, and housing.
- Partnership with Siksika Nation
 - Draft and sign a formal partnership agreement with the Siksika Nation to outline goals, responsibilities, and a shared vision for collaboration.
 - Develop a joint service delivery model with Siksika Chiefs, where both parties contribute resources and expertise to improve service accessibility for Indigenous clients.
 - Host cultural awareness events or open houses in collaboration with the Siksika Nation to strengthen relationships between True North and Indigenous communities.
- Partnerships with Post-Secondary Institutions
 - Partner with post-secondary institutions, such as Bow Valley and Old Sun College, to create internship and field placement opportunities for students studying social work, psychology, and related fields. Ensure a clear mentorship structure is in place.
 - Collaborate on research projects, such as the Service Delivery Needs Assessment, that study the effectiveness of shelter programs, community outreach, and client outcomes.
 - Invite guest lectures and seminars to True North staff on topics like trauma-informed care, client management, and innovative programming strategies.

2.4 Quality: Infrastructure

Primary Accountability:	Executive Director Board
Key Responsibility:	Administrative Manager
Consulted/Engaged:	Clients Staff Other Shelters
Informed:	Funders – Provincial and Federal Governments Insurer Staff First Responders

True North has been in its current building since 2002, keeping the building in good working order and modernized to better service the needs of our clients and staff in a home like setting is key goal. We must seek to utilize the space in as an efficient manner as possible that meets the needs of all including maximizing storage, light & heat efficiency, and accessibility. Living and working in a communal setting is often quite difficult, privacy is a key priority where it can be achieved including space for clients to decompress, reducing the sharing of bathroom facilities.

Within this area of focus, True North is working towards achieving the following targeted outcomes:

Targeted Outcomes	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The True North building will be well maintained, and infrastructure kept up to date. • The building will be maintained to maximize efficiency – heating, electrical and storage. • The building will have a more homelike and less institutional ambiance. • Where possible the building will be accessible for those with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preventative maintenance program created and monitored. • Storage system in place/completed and used & maintained. • Energy audit completion and results. • Cost of service delivery monitored & opportunities for reduction identified. (e.g., become more energy efficient, reduce utilization of energy)

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Optimize the use of available space to better meet the needs of clients and staff, with a focus on maximizing storage, increasing accessibility, and ensuring a comfortable, home-like setting. ● Ensure the building is fully accessible to all clients, including those with mobility challenges, by implementing modifications such as ramps, wider doorways, and accessible bathrooms. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Measure the percentage increase in available storage space, with a target of a 20% improvement within 2 years. ● Conduct an annual space utilization audit to assess how efficiently each area of the building is being used, with a goal of optimizing at least 90% of available space. ● Reduction in heating and lighting costs, with a target of a 15% decrease in energy expenses over the next 2 years. ● Building that meets full accessibility standards, with a target of 100% compliance within 18 months.
---	---

**Specific Operational Initiatives
(Tactical Plans)**

- Update the preventative maintenance program and then maintain
- Systems for storage implemented
- Environmental policy developed
- Energy/systems efficiency audit
 - Check gas/electrical plan
- Accessibility plan audit
- Review electrical room for water damage risk & implement preventive upgrades.
- Conduct a space audit and identifying underutilized areas that can be repurposed for storage or additional office space.
- Conduct a full energy audit of the building to identify inefficiencies in lighting, heating, and insulation. Use the audit results to create an energy efficiency plan with measurable goals.
- Partner with an accessibility consultant to conduct an audit of the building’s current accessibility features and develop an action plan to address gaps, including ramps, handrails, and accessible bathrooms.
- Apply for government grants or non-profit funding dedicated to improving accessibility in public buildings, using the funds to make necessary upgrades.

2.5 Quality: Branding

Primary Accountability:	Executive Director
Key Responsibility:	Communications
Consulted/Engaged:	Board Community Stakeholders Leadership Staff Clients
Informed:	ACWS Community Stakeholders Funder – Provincial Government Founders Other Shelters

Accessing our services can often be challenging for clients, the community and those wishing to donate. The name “Wheatland” in “Wheatland Crisis Society” is currently used by many different organizations making it difficult for those who want to contact us. There is often confusion with some of the other non-profit organization with similar names or access on the web. Since COVID and the inability to attend events in person, the ability to maintain an awareness and name recognition in the community has been limited to online presence only. Furthermore, True North provides more than crisis support the name no longer reflects the multitude of services we currently provide and want to grow into in the future. It is time in our development to rename and rebrand to take us forward and accessible for our clients, the community and make donors.

Within the rebranding a new logo will be sought as the current logo does not represent the clients, we currently service. In the effort to live our values this will need to be redeveloped.

Within this area of focus, True North is working towards achieving the following targeted outcomes:

Targeted Outcomes	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A name and communication plan that will meet the needs of our clients, staff, donors, the community. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community surveys • Development and implementation of a communications plan including rebranding.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Name recognition in the community and with partners • Broader understanding of who True North serves and what type of services are available. • New name that resonates with clients/staff and community. • Reflects aspirations • Reflects our philosophy • Ease in communication • Internally owned 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brand launch/relaunch • New name/logo achieved • Pre & Post Social Media analytics • Complaints or compliments from stakeholders
<p>Specific Operational Initiatives (Tactical Plans)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Achieve grant funding to implement a new brand including, focus groups to choose the name. • Engage consultants/expertise as required • New website to be developed • Subcommittee struck to direct the work • Communications plan to be developed including rebranding strategy, logo, media launch, social media strategy • Build and Secure a Donor portfolio and update and review annually to ensure positive community collaboration and relationships. • Change management effort to support 	

2.6 Growth: Community Development

Primary Accountability:	Executive Director
Key Responsibility:	Delegate to Leadership Public Educator Board Ambassadors for TRUE NORTH
Consulted/Engaged:	Stakeholders Community Partners
Informed:	All

Given that True North has a relatively small operating budget and clear mandate many of our clients require additional supports to be successful with their journey it is necessary to partner with other organizations through formal and informal partnerships. Increased collaboration will extend our reach to assist with all clients and all ages and reduce duplication of service so ensure that public dollars are utilized most efficiently. Furthermore, increasing our partnerships within the communities, we service will increase awareness of domestic violence and provide name recognition when fundraising.

Within this area of focus, True North is working towards achieving the following targeted outcomes:

Targeted Outcomes	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Improved relations (and image) in community ● Increased collaboration ● Partnerships with community (i.e., service) ● Less duplication of services in community ● Fundraising growth and success 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Milestone dates ● What is initiated out of collaborative efforts ● # of community development contacts ● # of clients that are served through common/collaborative efforts ● # of articles/posts (communications)
Specific Operational Initiatives (Tactical Plans)	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Awareness campaign/efforts ● Increase Public Education (following a plan) ● Fundraising – Gala ● Evaluation of community services/committees that True North is a part of 	

2.7 Growth: Expansion

Primary Accountability:	Board Chair Executive Director
Key Responsibility:	Board Chair Board Executive Director
Consulted/Engaged:	Government Funders Political Leaders Leadership Clients Staff Community partners Other communities
Informed:	Government Funders Community

Shortly after True North was built and operational funding for a 21-day crisis stay was received it was realized that many of our clients required additional support in terms of accommodation and wrap around services. In all reality 3 weeks is a very short time to set up finances, locate accommodation and ensure safety while at the same time trying to begin their recovery. Options are limited for clients (singles and families) to stay in our community, low-income housing is limited, and if available attaining a one-year lease is difficult. Currently clients are required to leave the community to access what is known as second stage housing. Second stage housing removes all the challenges and sets the client up for success. There is a shortage of Second Stage and low-income housing throughout the province. The vision of a second stage has been part of True North for several years however too date success has not been achieved. There have been several false attempts which learnings can be identified. Partnering with others in our community to bring the vision to reality is ideal.

Within this area of focus, True North is working towards achieving the following targeted outcomes:

Targeted Outcomes	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Expansion achieved <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 2nd Stage housing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Meet key target dates. ● Business Plan milestones and metrics.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Apartments ○ Low-income ● Partnerships with other local communities, such as The Town of Strathmore, Langdon, Chestermere, and Wheatland County. ● Build or acquire additional offsite space. ● Energy Efficiency in new building. ● Explore possible partnerships with local foundations to expand funding opportunities, share resources, and establish collaborative programs. ● Explore partnerships with private sector entities, such as CGC and De Havilland, to co-develop housing projects, leveraging private investment and expertise to accelerate the construction of second-stage, affordable, and low-income housing units. ● Obtain all necessary permits and approvals for the construction of a new facility that meets expansion goals, ensuring compliance with municipal regulations. ● Secure Funding for Affordable Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Secure funding and community partnerships to build affordable housing units within the next 3 years. ● Reduce Client Relocation Out of Community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduce the percentage of those needing to leave the community for second-stage or 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Formal partnerships established with a minimum of three foundations by end of 2025. ● Secure two private enterprise partnerships for housing development projects by end of 2025, with signed agreements on financial or in-kind contributions. ● Building permit secured by March 2025, meeting compliance requirements. ● Second Stage/Affordable Housing <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Total project funding secured, with a target of 100% by the end of year 3. ● Construction Milestones Met <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Construction milestones met on time (e.g., land purchase, permits secured, construction start, project completion). ● Date when second stage and affordable housing becomes operational, with a target of full operations by the end of year 3. ● Relocation Reduction <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Percentage decrease in clients relocating outside the community for second-stage or low-income housing, with a target reduction of 50% within 3 years.
--	---

<p>low-income housing within 3 years.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Achieve construction milestones, with the project fully operational by the end of the target date. 	
<p>Specific Operational Initiatives (Tactical Plans)</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Feasibility study initiated in 4th quarter of 2021/22 ● Identify potential partners – CGC, De Havilland. ● Consider utilizing a consultant to support this process. ● Feasibility study encompasses the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Demand ○ Nature of service ○ Business case ○ Set priorities ○ CMHC criteria assessed/met by Feb 2022 ○ Site selected ○ Architectural design ○ Establish project timeline ● Firm up committee structure to guide project ● Identify and engage potential Foundation partners by organizing joint meetings, networking events, and grant application workshops to secure multi-year funding agreements and collaborative support programs. ● Conduct outreach to construction firms, real estate developers, and local businesses to develop mutually beneficial housing initiatives, outlining incentives and potential impact on the community. ● ED to oversee the permit application process, including engagement with municipal officials, zoning review, and complete the architectural planning to ensure timely submission and approval of the building permit. ● Form a project planning committee to oversee the expansion project, including second-stage housing, apartments, and low-income housing, ensuring alignment with community needs and organizational capacity. 	

- Create contingency plans to address potential delays or challenges in the construction process, ensuring flexibility in meeting the operational target date.
- Complete the process to develop designs for second-stage housing and low-income apartments that meet the needs of diverse populations, ensuring design approval within 12 months.
- Develop a long-term affordable housing strategy that includes finalizing plans for land, securing permits, and finalizing designs for low-income housing units.
- Conduct an energy efficiency audit during the planning phase to identify cost-effective ways to integrate energy-saving technologies and sustainability practices into the building design.
- Adopt green building standards, ensuring that the new housing units meet or exceed environmental efficiency guidelines.
- Incorporate renewable energy sources (ex. solar panels, energy-efficient heating and cooling systems) into the building plans, reducing long-term operational costs.
- Apply for AB and Federal Government grants and incentives aimed at promoting energy efficiency in new construction, ensuring a portion of funding is dedicated to sustainability initiatives.
- Engage a qualified contractor through a competitive bidding process. Review bids to ensure quality work at a reasonable cost. Select vendors for materials, furnishings, and equipment with a focus on sustainability and cost-efficiency.

2.8 Finance: Funding

Primary Accountability:	Board Fundraising Committee Executive Director
Key Responsibility:	Finance and Audit Committee
Consulted/Engaged:	
Informed:	Government Funder

True North is beginning a phase to expand its capacity and impact through the construction of a new facility that will provide second stage and affordable housing for vulnerable individuals and families in our community. To bring this vision to life, we are launching a comprehensive fundraising campaign with a goal of raising \$25 million over the next several years. This funding will be critical in covering the construction costs of the new facility, ensuring that we can meet the growing demand for safe, supportive housing. Through strategic partnerships, community engagement, and a diverse range of fundraising efforts, we aim to build a state-of-the-art facility that offers stability, healing, and long-term success for our clients. This project will not only enhance our ability to serve those in need but also solidify True North’s role as a leader in addressing the housing crisis in our region.

Current operational funding is provided from the Province of Alberta, with increased costs of salaries and expenses the ability of this funding to meet our needs is reduced every year. Through the years, True North has been creative at using the dollars available to ensure the services are provided to our clients. Furthermore, the goal to grow and achieve our growth strategy will take considerable fundraising.

Within this area of focus, True North is working towards achieving the following targeted outcomes:

Targeted Outcomes	Metrics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sufficient and continuing \$ support. • Operational reserve fund established. • Reduce reliance on government funding. • Alternative funding sources identified. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milestone dates adhered to/achieved. • Budgets completed and adhered to/achieved. • Track the cumulative total amount raised toward the \$30M goal, with monthly and quarterly

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Successfully develop and launch an annual Fundraising plan to support with operational costs. ● Develop and implement a comprehensive capital campaign strategy, including community outreach, partnerships, and large-scale fundraising events. ● Explore potential income from leasing or selling the existing facility and other assets. ● Ensure sustainable funding for operational costs, with a particular focus on covering the annual operational budget and reducing the reliance on government funding. ● Establish a secure line of credit to provide financial flexibility for capital expenditures, such as the building permit, and to cover any unforeseen operational costs, ensuring that the organization has accessible funding for strategic and emergency needs. 	<p>reporting to ensure progress aligns with the campaign timeline.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Fundraising Sources <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Measure the percentage of funds raised from different sources (ex. individual donors, corporate sponsorships, grants, events). ○ Diversify funding sources, with a goal of 30% from individual donors, 40% from corporate partnerships, 15% from grants, and 15% from fundraising events. ○ Achieve a donor retention rate of at least 60% annually. ○ Develop a number of strategic partnerships with local businesses, foundations, and community organizations formed to support the capital campaign. Secure at least 5 high-profile partnerships over the next 3 years. ○ Grant Applications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Submit at least 10 grant applications annually, with a success rate of at least 50%. ○ High level of engagement at large-scale fundraising events, such as gala dinners, charity auctions, and community fundraisers. Host at least 2 large-scale events per year, with attendance of 150+ at each event. ○ Increase in public awareness and campaign visibility as measured by media mentions, social media engagement (likes,
--	--

shares, comments), and website traffic.

Achieve a 20% increase in media mentions and a 30% increase in social media engagement over the duration of the campaign.

- Volunteers recruited and retained to support fundraising events and outreach efforts.
 - Recruit at least 50 active volunteers in year 2 and increase volunteer participation by 20% each subsequent year.
- Explore Potential Income from Leasing or Selling the Existing Facility and Other Assets
 - Completion of property appraisals for the existing facility and other assets to determine potential leasing or sale value.
 - Complete appraisals within 6 months of campaign launch.
- Sustainable Funding for Operational Costs
 - Annual Operating Budget Coverage - annual operational budget covered through non-governmental funding sources.
 - Cover 100% of the annual budget through a mix of fundraising and earned income, with a goal to reduce government reliance by 5% annually.
 - Build an operational reserve fund equal to at least 6 months of operational expenses within 3 years.
- Secured Financing

- Obtain an approved line of credit by the end of 2024, sufficient to cover 100% of the building permit cost and provide an operational buffer.

**Specific Operational Initiatives
(Tactical Plans)**

- Development of a fundraising plan to support growth & Piggyback on launch of rebrand to support fundraising
- Get clarity on restricted funds and their utilization
- Pay scales and benefits reviewed and salary grids established (Quarter 2021/22)
- Reserve fund study
- Contingency fund established
- Explore the opportunity to hire a full-time fundraiser to support the vision of TRUE NORTH.
- Continue the setup of the True North Foundation for Fundraising dollars to reside.
- Plan and launch a multi-phase capital campaign that includes goal setting, segmentation, and targeted outreach to individual donors, corporate sponsors, and foundations.
- Form a diverse capital campaign committee that includes Board Members, community leaders, and major donors to guide the campaign and ensure accountability.
- Develop a campaign brand, slogan, and marketing materials to create a unified message. Distribute branded materials through print, digital, and social media platforms.
- Identify and engage potential major donors (\$50K or more) through personalized outreach, including meetings with leadership, special events, and exclusive donor recognition opportunities.
- Create sponsorship packages that outline benefits for corporate partners, such as naming rights, event sponsorship, and media recognition. Engage local businesses and national corporations.
- Build partnerships with local organizations and housing advocates to create collaborative fundraising events and campaigns. Leverage partnerships to expand the campaign’s reach.
- Establish a strategy to identify and apply for grants from local, provincial, and federal sources. Prioritize applications for large-scale capital projects and operational sustainability.
- Host high-profile fundraising events, such as gala dinners, charity auctions, and corporate breakfasts, to engage donors and raise awareness. Utilize these events to showcase the vision for the new facility.

- Launch an online crowdfunding campaign and engage with social media to attract small and mid-size donations from a broader audience. Use storytelling and client testimonials to highlight the impact of donations.
- Conduct a professional appraisal of the existing facility and other assets to determine market value for sale or lease. Perform market research to identify potential buyers or tenants.
- Explore the feasibility of leasing the existing facility. Assess potential rental income, tenant demand, and costs associated with maintaining the building for lease.
- Create an operational reserve fund by setting aside a percentage of donations, grants, and income from asset sales to ensure long-term sustainability. Aim to build a reserve equal to at least 6 months of operational expenses.
- Engage with financial institutions to assess credit options, negotiate terms that align with financial strategy, and ensure the credit line supports both short-term cash flow needs and long-term sustainability. Implement a financial management plan for utilizing and repaying the line of credit.

SUMMARY

True North has determined that our strategic focus for the next five (5) years will encompass the following core areas of focus:

True North – building on its strengths and successes in 2021 and prior years and conscious of its challenges and opportunities – will focus its efforts and attention on the following core areas going forward:

1. Governance
2. People
3. Programming
4. Branding
5. Infrastructure
6. Growth
7. Community Development
8. Finance/Funding

All our initiatives – currently planned/anticipated or required in response to a changing operating environment - will be guided by these strategic imperatives. While the list of priorities may seem daunting, True North understands that several individual initiatives will help move forward more than one strategic direction (e.g., branding decisions will overlap with growth and fundraising goals). This is critically required to ensure we leverage our limited resources not the least of which is the intellectual capacity of our Board members, leaders, staff, and volunteers.

Together we will continue to live up to our Mission, strive for our preferred Vision, and deliver based on the Values we espouse.

