



Strategic Plan 2023 to 2026

Revised November 2024

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LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The James Bay Community Project acknowledges that our work takes up space on the traditional lands of the Lekwungen Peoples—the Songhees, Esquimalt and WSANEC Nations—whose historical relationships with this land continue. In recognition of this, we respectfully look towards a future together as a connected and resilient community.

INTRODUCTION

James Bay Community Project (JBCP) is a neighborhood-based hub offering a wide range of family, community, and volunteer services. Although it is rooted in James Bay, JBCP extends its support to individuals across the Capital Regional District. Our programs and services are designed to foster connections and build resilience for people of all ages. JBCP provides opportunities for volunteerism and active participation in community life, working in close partnership with a variety of other agencies and organizations. As a non-profit society (James Bay Health and Community Services Society), JBCP is governed by a volunteer Board of Directors.

For nearly 50 years, JBCP has operated a variety of programs and services, reflecting the changing needs and interests of the community. Many of the community initiatives that were developed during this period have gone on to become independent organizations, such as the Neighbourhood Environment Association, James Bay Market, the Beacon newspaper, Birdcages Housing Society, and the Foundry (formerly the Victoria Youth Clinic).

James Bay Community Project is part of the Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses. As a neighbourhood-based service hub, we offer a continuum of services that are specific to the needs of the James Bay area. Our core services include early childhood development parenting education, parent and caregiver support; resource and referrals; meal programs; volunteer opportunities; seniors' programs; youth programs; as well as programs and services for the wider public.

Programs and Services

Family Programs:

Our Family Programs have supported children, youth and their families for over 35 years. We offer a wide range of groups as well as individual outreach support to youth and families. The Family Centre is a member of the BC Association of Family Resource Programs, an organization which has over 200 members in the province. Family Resource Programs are based on the belief that consistent positive parenting skills and healthy child-parent relationships are essential to healthy child development. Family Centre staff provide family support, play-based learning activities, parent education, as well as information and referrals to community resources. Our programs aim to support parents and their children in making positive connections which builds resilience, reduces stress and isolation and nurtures growth and development in the context of friendly, welcoming relationships and a caring community.

Colourful Minds Art Club:

This afterschool club, designed for youth ages 9-15, was launched in October 2024 to offer a supportive space for creative exploration while teaching emotional regulation and coping strategies. Snacks are provided.

Food Security:

We support many families with emergency food, thanks to donations from Cold Star Freight, the Gift of Good Food organized by Fernwood Community Centre, and the Thrifty Foods Rescue Program. We are also grateful to participate in the BC Farmers' Market Coupon Program, which provides bi-weekly vouchers for local families to purchase fresh, healthy food at the James Bay Market during the summer months. Furthermore, we are involved in the Women in Need Gift Certificate program, which helps families access second-hand clothing and household items. We have regularly raised funds to provide emergency grocery cards to some of our families and seniors.

Seniors Services:

Over this past year, we have continued to provide outreach services to around 75 active participants. This involves providing information and referral to our internal programs such as Better at Home (housekeeping program); Volunteer Driver program for medical and errand drives; Volunteer supports for community outings and visits; and referral to housing supports such as BC Housing Program Shelter Aid for Elderly Renters (SAFER), the Mustard Seed food bank, and transportation programs such as Handi Dart and taxi savers.

Many of our participants are at risk of social isolation, as they live alone at home. To help mitigate the serious health effects associated with isolation, we also offer a seniors' luncheon group. This provides an opportunity for individuals to connect, share a meal, and enjoy light entertainment in a social setting. For many, this luncheon becomes the foundation for ongoing friendships, with participants often meeting outside of the group to continue building their social connections.

Better At Home:

Capital City Volunteers and the James Bay Community Project continue to partner in the delivery of the Victoria and Oak Bay Better at Home program (BAH). Our dedicated team of staff, volunteers and contractors support hundreds of seniors living in Victoria to maintain their independence and to continue living independently in their own homes. Also on our behalf, the committed staff and volunteers at Oak Bay Volunteer Services diligently support participants who are residents of Oak Bay. The Victoria and Oak Bay BAH program recognizes that older adults, seniors and elders are an important and growing part of our community. To assist seniors to continue to play an active role in their communities, we provide a range of services that are supplemental to and work with other services in the community. Our staff, volunteers and contractors support seniors to live independently in their homes and stay connected to their communities.

PLANNING CONTEXT

The following factors will affect both the planning context and shape the overall goals and strategies for JBCP going forward:

- Ongoing population growth, driven by both migration from other provinces and international immigration.
- Increasing ethnic and cultural diversity of families seeking support.
- Rising cost of living, inflation, and the limited affordable housing stock are impacting low-income families and seniors.
- Limited financial resources and increasing fiscal constraints within the non-profit sector.
- Dependence on government grants and heightened vulnerability to shifting government priorities.
- A decline in community grants and private donations, leading to a limited and challenging fundraising environment.
- A tight labor market continues to present challenges for hiring and retaining qualified staff.
- Ongoing difficulties in providing competitive salary and benefit packages in a tight funding environment.
- Effects on staff mental health and well-being due to increasing demand and the complexity of client needs.

Despite these challenges, the sector remains innovative and resilient. However, the ongoing impact of these issues is increasingly placing a burden on leadership as they strive to maintain adequate service levels and overall program effectiveness.

To tackle the complex issues facing the sector, organizational leaders recognize that to deliver effective and accessible services, they must build on successful initiatives, address existing challenges, and actively pursue new opportunities.

ORGANIZATIONAL CONTEXT

Strengths	Challenges	Opportunities
<p>Our People The success of the James Bay Community Project is driven by a dedicated team of staff and volunteers. Each day, with the support of approximately 150 volunteers, our staff demonstrate their unwavering commitment to our mission of "building resilience through connections."</p>	<p>Succession Planning The retirements of long-serving staff and Board members, along with staff turnover, present a risk of losing valuable program and organizational knowledge. Developing effective transition processes for senior staff and Board members will be crucial to ensuring continuity and supporting our ongoing success.</p>	<p>Leadership Transition A successful leadership transition will provide the stability needed to meet the growing and complex demands facing the organization. By mentoring staff into leadership roles, we can foster both individual growth and organizational development. Strengthening the existing staff team and enhancing the ability to attract and retain staff and Board members</p>
<p>Community Services and Reach JBCP offer programs that address the needs of the community while promoting autonomy, strength, and resiliency—without creating dependence. Supporting over 1,500 residents in James Bay and across Victoria, including individuals who may be isolated, ill, vulnerable, or low-income, ranging from the youngest infant to the wisest elder.</p>	<p>Consistent & Adequate Funding As the needs of community members grow more complex, funding has not kept pace with the current demands, let alone the future needs of the community. Staff are working at full capacity, and while the demand for services continues to increase, we lack the necessary funding to adequately address these program gaps.</p>	<p>Expanding Fundraising Efforts We must continue to strengthen and expand our fundraising efforts to enhance our financial stability and increase our capacity to grow programs and services that meet the evolving needs of the community. This will require continued investment in fundraising capacity and resources.</p>
<p>Visible Support Over the past year JBCP has received funding from the Ministry for Children & Family Development, the federal Community Action Program for Children (CAP-C), the Province of BC, the United Way of BC, Victoria Foundation and Island Health. Along with other community groups and service clubs, all of which allow us to continue to play a vital role in the community.</p>	<p>Expanding our Profile Like most non-profits, JBCP invests time and effort in raising its profile and increasing fundraising to sustain and ideally expand our services. The challenge lies in building awareness and understanding beyond our immediate supporters, reaching a broader community, potential donors, and the provincial government.</p>	<p>Enhanced Profile JBCP must continue to focus on building brand awareness and raising its profile to ensure successful fundraising efforts, while also enhancing the understanding among government and community funders of the critical role it plays, not only for the James Bay community but also for surrounding areas</p>
<p>Organizational Capacity JBCP has been delivering effective services to people in our region for 50 years. We have established strong funding relationships and have developed effective programs. Accountability, transparency, and responsible stewardship have always been core principles that guide our agency's work.</p>	<p>Limited Risk Management Our limited administrative infrastructure has created challenges in maintaining up-to-date systems as well as the serious risk associated with funding not keeping pace with increased expenses.</p>	<p>Operational Innovation By engaging with our partners and other experts, we can develop shared services that will help streamline our internal operations and maximize resources in areas such as finance, procurement, and other functions identified through this collaborative process.</p>

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

MISSION To build resilience through connections.

VISION A community of connected resilient people.

VALUES

Welcoming and Accessible – We commit to providing stigma free services and being a place where people can gather and connect with others.

Equity, Diversity and Inclusion – We value the diversity of the people and communities we serve and recognize and respect human differences and similarities.

Responsive and Adaptable – We commit to being responsive to the changing needs of individuals, families and communities.

Trustworthy and Transparent – We will build relationships based on trust and transparency and meeting people where they are at.

Collaborative – We commit to working together and understanding the value of partnerships.

Community Development/Capacity Building – We work with individuals and families through a strength-based approach that builds their capacity to address their own issues.

Neighbourhood Based – We work locally to identify what works best in each neighbourhood and to support residents to take positive actions in their neighbourhoods.

STRATEGIC PRIORITY AREAS

EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

INCREASED PROFILE AND FUND DEVELOPMENT

ENHANCED OPERATIONAL & FINANCIAL STABILITY

GOALS AND STRATEGIES

EFFECTIVE PROGRAMS AND SERVICES

Goal 1: Continue to deliver effective programs and services for children, youth, families and seniors within James Bay and beyond.

Strategies:

- Continue to meet the needs of children and families by working to increase access to family program support and services.
- Ensure consistent and effective programs that meet the identified needs of children and families.
- Continue to meet the needs of seniors in our community through innovative programs and partnerships.
- Explore innovative partnerships to enhance programming options and access for children, families and seniors.
- Continue to maintain and where possible grow the role of volunteer support across programs.

Goal 2: Continue to build relationships with government and other funders to better understand the role JBCP plays in addressing community issues.

Strategies:

- Continue to play a leadership role in the Coalition of Neighbourhood Houses and their government advocacy activities.
- Continue to support Family Resource Programs of BC and their continued education efforts with the Ministry of Children and Family Development.

INCREASED PROFILE AND FUND DEVELOPMENT

Goal 1: Continue to build awareness and profile of JBCP and link this to fundraising efforts.

Strategies:

- Work with the Board and other volunteers to deliver a short compelling statement about JBCP mission and community impact.
- Ensure timely and accessible impact stories are shared on social media, with donors, and the broader community.

Goal 2: Build long term fundraising capacity through enhanced fundraising skills and expertise

Strategies:

- Continue to acquire the resources to support fundraising expertise.

- Ensure that communications, marketing and profile building activities are aligned with and support fundraising efforts.
- Expand the use of the donor database management system to streamline fundraising activities.
- Clearly track and report on fundraising activities, including but not limited to: # of donors, # of new donors, average size of gift, increase in donor dollars year over year, net new dollars, etc.

Goal 3: Develop targeted and achievable fundraising strategies that recognize the internal capacity/resources available.

Strategies:

- Further develop the donor base through stewarding current donors and engaging new donors.
- Explore developing an endowment fund to support financial support and stability.
- Implement the 50th Anniversary Fundraising Campaign.
- Use the ‘case for support’ to engage new individual and corporate donors.
- Work with the Board to determine the long-term plan/capacity of further fundraising efforts, including events and other campaigns (including the return on investment of fundraising events and related activities).

ENHANCED OPERATIONAL & FINANCIAL STABILITY

Goal 1: Finalize a plan for the JBCP property/building.

Strategies:

- Secure funding to hire external contractors for each phase of the building renewal process.
- Assess options for building renewal including sale of existing property, renovation, and redevelopment with or without housing for low- to moderate income seniors.
- Undertake concept planning, feasibility studies, business plan and financing strategies to implement the selected option.

Goal 2: Enhance operational effectiveness by improving risk management, HR practices, technology, and information management.

Strategies:

- Ensure that JBCP has robust risk management policies and practices.
- Develop staff recruitment and retention practices that build stability by using HR standards and innovative approaches to staff support.
- Review the staff structure and capacity to ensure optimal use of resources and staff skills.
- Support the Executive Director to enhance reporting on achievement on strategic priorities.