



STRATEGIC PLAN

2022-2026

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Zero Ceiling has continually evolved over the last 25 years to ensure we meet the needs of young adults facing homelessness in our communities.

In the last five years, we have grown rapidly. We now operate our own supportive housing, have expanded our supportive employment program to work with over a dozen local employers, and provide comprehensive 24/7 support to young people in our programs, with a focus on mental wellness. Today, we are an established, experienced organization with a strong and effective team.



This Strategic Plan provides a framework for ensuring that Zero Ceiling is sustainable and progressive, inside and out. It speaks not just to our programs and services, but to human resources, financial practices, fund development, partnerships, community building, and advocacy.

The plan was developed by our staff and Board in a reflective process, with input from program participants and alumni. It integrates their experience, expertise, and perspectives with best practices within the social justice and social service sectors. The four Strategic Pillars and related priorities will guide our decision-making for the next five years. This plan is not a static document: rather, we will continually reflect on its relevance and shift our focus and priorities as needed to best serve our mission.

VISION

Reduce youth homelessness and transform lives.

MISSION

To provide young people experiencing homelessness with supportive housing, employment, professional support, life skills, and outdoor adventure that empowers them to live healthy and independent lives.

ABOUT ZERO CEILING

We are a social service non-profit committed to ending youth homelessness in BC. We create a supportive, stable, safe environment where young people can focus on personal growth. Strong, positive relationships are at the heart of everything we do. We work towards equity and social justice for young people who have been discriminated against, excluded, and oppressed.

We operate in the mountain resort now known as Whistler on the shared, unceded territories of the Skwxwú7mesh (Squamish) and Lil'wat7úl (Lil'wat) Nations. Our programs serve youth and young adults facing homelessness in the Sea to Sky Corridor and Metro Vancouver, many of whom are Indigenous. We acknowledge the lasting and ongoing impact of colonization on Indigenous communities and are committed to decolonizing our practices and programs.



OUR GUIDING PRINCIPLES

To achieve our vision of ending youth homelessness, we must be guided by shared values that empower us to make good decisions in every aspect of our work. These Guiding Principles provide direction for Zero Ceiling and our community on decisions large and small, now and in a future we can't yet imagine.



Cherishing Uniqueness

At the centre of what guides us sits the Individual — their needs, their dreams, their purpose. We see and honour the inherent value of every single person, as they are, and respect that the young people we serve have experienced trauma in unknowable ways that require us to hear and act with unconditional empathy and love.

Rooted in Relationship, Grounded in Community

Well-being comes from the strength of the relationships and the community we build. Every Individual deserves to be embraced by a community that includes family — earned, chosen, inherited — supporters, services, and partners. We are surrounded by community, just as we are the community that surrounds others.

Interconnection: “The People and the Land are One”

The First Peoples of this land know that we are not outside of nature. The people, water, animals, mountains, and stars are part of the land, and therefore part of us. It is with this understanding that we connect with nature and all it teaches: balance, harmony, and interconnection. We are privileged to learn from the First Peoples of this land and support their right to self-determination, truth, and justice.

Relentless Courage to Challenge

We will not falter in our drive for justice, equity, decolonization, and inclusion. We advocate for a world where the systems of power do not create homelessness and exclusion for our society’s most vulnerable. Our courage to challenge starts with ourselves. Through relentless self-reflection, we push ourselves and our community to evolve so we create a world without youth homelessness.

STRATEGIC PILLARS

1 Our programming is grounded in best practices to continually meet the needs of our participants

We are informed by progress and research in the sector. We learn from our partners. We actively seek feedback from the youth we serve and evolve our wrap-around services in response to changing needs. We have a culture of self-reflection, so we continually improve. We understand our work as social justice. We engage in collaborative advocacy to end homelessness.

Our Priorities 2022-26

- 1 Build simple and effective systems and resources to deliver our programming.
- 2 Establish a youth advisory council to incorporate and empower youth voice in programming decisions.
- 3 Offer Indigenous cultural programming that connects young people with their past, present, and future cultural identities.
- 4 Monitor and evaluate the success of our programming, and adapt when necessary.
- 5 Stabilize our housing model and develop a housing strategy.
- 6 Articulate a clear understanding of the need for our services and our service model.

2 Our organizational culture is progressive inside and out.

We have a holistic view of our work. We operate with integrity and consistency and prioritize supporting our staff and volunteer wellness and development to carry out our mission. Our culture is alive in everything we do and say, internally and externally. We hold ourselves accountable to upholding our culture and values.

Our Priorities 2022-26

1 Integrate our Guiding Principles throughout all facets of our organization

2 Prioritize supporting our staff team and volunteers.

3 Deepen our commitment to anti-racism, decolonization and justice in all its forms. This is foundational to our work.

4 Add capacity to our programming in measured, thoughtful increments.



3 Our organizational sustainability is based on strong, diverse relationships and effective systems

We have strong organizational management. We strive to be progressive in our development work and advocate for positive change in how funding is distributed in our sector. Our approach to development is grounded in our values and focuses on organizational sustainability. We focus on strong, lasting relationships.

Our Priorities 2022-26

1 We have strong, effective financial systems in place

2 We engage in thoughtful financial planning in preparation for increases in service capacity and housing provision.

3 We develop diverse funding relationships as the key to sustainability.

4 We develop simple, effective operational systems, including HR systems and succession planning.





4 Our story is compelling and rooted in our values

Our story will inspire others to join our mission and more generally work towards a more just society. We have a clear articulation of our mission, our culture, our story and our model.

Our Priorities 2022-26

- 1 Our story is grounded in our commitment to anti-racism, decolonization, and justice.
- 2 We build our communications strategy to effectively tell our story.
- 3 As we evolve, our story remains dynamic and evolves with us.
- 4 Learnings from our Research and Innovation project will inform our storytelling.



Thank you to our program participants, alumni, staff, and Board of Directors who gave their time, energy, and perspectives to shape the next five years at Zero Ceiling.

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