



STRATEGIC PLAN

2021- 2024

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THE PLANNING PROCESS

This document is a result of a series of planning meetings that initially began in September 2021. At this time, Kim Lyster facilitated a two-day Strategic Planning session that included Directors, Board Members, Managers, and staff. The information in this document, gathered at these two-day planning sessions, and with additional feedback collected from staff, individuals supported, families and other stakeholders, completes this operational Strategic Plan. After the initial two-days, the Management team worked to organize and establish initiatives and improvement goals for the next three years. This Strategic Plan will guide our actions through 2025 and serve as a useful background document to introduce new staff and Board Members to Lifetime Networks.



WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE DO

Introduction

Lifetime Networks is a not-for-profit organization based in Victoria, British Columbia providing services and supports to individuals with diversabilities. At Lifetime Networks, we understand the importance of relationships. We listen and meet individuals where they are. It is the agency's aim to work with each individual to achieve their goals, whatever they may be, in inclusive, safe, welcoming settings.

Organization History

Five families started Lifetime Networks in 1998. These families had children with developmental disabilities and wanted an answer to the question 'what will happen to my child when I pass away?'

At Lifetime, we understand the importance of friendship as being one of the cornerstones to a fulfilling life. Connecting with people and making friends can be very difficult, in fact sometimes almost impossible! Through Personal Support Networks we develop and maintain lasting friendships: true reciprocal unpaid relationships.

Lifetime Networks also offers informal networks and further supports through other opportunities.

We, as an agency, strive to continue developing and providing a safe and inclusive space to everyone

and anyone who is part of the Lifetime family, especially for those we serve. We welcome everyone, regardless of diversability, race, ethnicity, cultural background, religion, gender or sexual orientation.

Vision, Mission, Values

Vision

We see a future where all people enjoy safe, happy, fulfilling lives.

Mission

We foster networks of friendship and support for people with divesabilities to enhance community.

Values

- Person, rather than program-centered planning.
- Commitment to maintain Networks for the lifetime of the person being supported.
- Accessibility to services with no eligibility restrictions.
- Respectfulness through recognition and celebration of the inherent worth ant autonomy of each person.
- Financial responsibility by working diligently to keep services and supports cost-effective and affordable.
- Belief in the importance of unpaid relationships.
- Community inclusion, participation and engagement.
- Intentional and purposeful growth.
- Autonomy from funding streams which could compromise our ability to advocate.



Legal Structure

Lifetime Networks is a registered charity under the name Greater Victoria Lifetime Networks Society and adheres to the terms of the Society Act – RSBC 1996.

Current Sources of Revenue

Lifetime Networks receives funds from multiple different avenues. In the most recent CSSEA Report (December 31, 2021), a report that captures compensation and employee turnover, it was identified that the majority of the agency's funding continues to be from Community Living British Columbia (CLBC). Below is the funding breakdown:

- 68.8% Community Living BC
- .6% Ministry of Children and Family Development
- 1.1% Gaming Grant
- 30% Other
 - Social enterprises
 - Fundraising
 - Other grants

Programs

Networks

Lifetime Networks was originally founded specifically to create Networks for individuals who are supported (focus person), which continue after family members pass away or are no longer able to provide care. The family or their estates pay for the Network. Networks are removed from government funding and last a lifetime, ensuring unpaid relationships and true friendships are the reality.

Networks are created for a specific individual with focused goals and activities that meet the individual's needs, interests and lifestyle.

Once formed, a Network includes a group of 3 or 4 friends who spend quality time one-on-one with the person at the center of the Network. Network friends may go to movies, out for dinner, to a concert, hang out at home; it is all about the friendship and support.

Each Network has a Facilitator to help make sure the friendships are going smoothly and to act as a mentor when necessary.

December 31, 2021, there were 28 Networks and 22 Network Facilitators. Networks are our foundation and remain the heart of the agency. It is the agency's core focus to maintain and expand the formal Networks Program.

Other Programs

In addition to Networks, Lifetime Networks offers other person centered programming. These programs are a fee-for-service model. Supports may be paid directly by the individual or family, through funding granted by Community Living British Columbia (CLBC), through bursaries the agency offers or subsidies provided through fundraising efforts by Lifetime Networks. These programs serve over 250 individuals.

As of 2021, the programs offered by Lifetime Networks were:

- *Networks*
- *Being a Citizen*
- *Best Buddies*
- *Community Engagement*
- *Dynamic Duos*
- *Employment Support*
- *L.I.F.E Based*
- *Namaste*
- *Outreach Support*
- *PODS*
- *Summer Inclusion Services*
- *Sessionals*
- *Theatre Troupe*
- *Respite*



Staff

December 31, 2021, Lifetime Networks had 124 regular staff, 30 casual staff, 4 Managers and 2 Directors. Three Managers oversee programs, the fourth Manager oversees Human Resources. All Managers report to the Executive Director. Additionally, we have a Finance Director who works closely with the Executive Director to meet the financial needs of the agency.

Volunteers

December 31, 2021 Lifetime Networks had a total of 101 Network Friends and 9 Volunteers. Network Friends and Volunteers are initially supported by the Volunteer Coordinator. Once placed in programs, they are supported by the Managers.

LIFETIME NETWORKS' UNIQUENESS

Lifetime Networks continues to be one of a kind in the sector, looking for the gaps in the community to offer programming that is desired. Instead of creating programming and putting people into it, we look to our individuals to build what they need at the time. There is a profound quote from the movie Field of Dreams, 'if you build it they will come'. At Lifetime we like to say, 'when they come, we will build it' (credit to Michael Mackereth- Program Coordinator). Two ways our uniqueness is highlighted is through our customization of programming and our attention to relationships. Below is a brief expansion on how we are unique.

Customization

- We say "yes"- opportunity, diversity, inclusivity
- adaptive, evolving, dedicated, flexible
- person-centered/driven
- Change agents

Relationships

- We are a family- we prize relationships
- Our focus is on the person- strength based
- Honor adult dignity and maturity
- Focus on connection, belonging, community, friendships

Lifetime Networks was founded on an individualized funding model and continues to be a leader in its delivery.

INDIVIDUALS SERVED

Why Choose Lifetime Networks

It is crucial Individuals and their family (caregivers) understand what to expect if they choose Lifetime Networks. Writing a paragraph would not adequately convey the benefits of the agency so we choose to look to our individuals and reference what they feel has been the benefit for them in their experience with Lifetime Networks.

I choose Lifetime Networks because:

- *I am heard.*
- *I belong.*
- *I am respected.*
- *I have fun.*
- *I am cared about.*
- *I know who I am.*
- *I feel safe here.*
- *I feel I matter here.*
- *I am able to live my life.*
- *I am able to live my dreams.*
- *I am able to make a contribution.*
- *They are sincere.*
- *They are solid, reliable, and trustworthy.*
- *They are diverse, inclusive.*
- *They are accessible."*

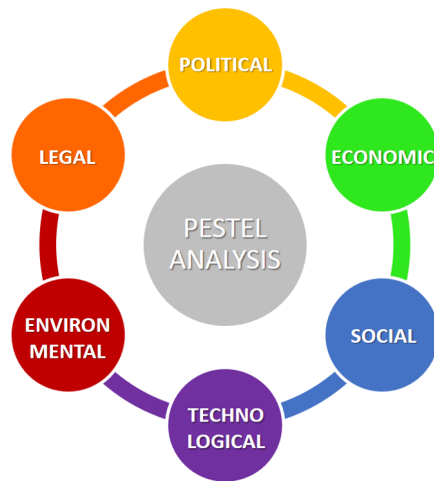


PESTEL FRAMEWORK

On the first day of the Strategic Planning session, Kim facilitated a conversation around the PESTEL framework. A PESTEL analysis is a strategic framework commonly used to evaluate the business environment in which a firm operates. Traditionally, the framework was referred to as a PEST analysis, which was an acronym for Political, Economic, Social and Technological; in more recent history, the framework was extended to include Environmental and Legal factors.

During this part of the session, Kim put up large pieces of paper with each factor and asked all the

participants to identify their thoughts on how these factors can be an opportunity or a threat to Lifetime Networks. Below is a synopsis, in point form, of those thoughts.



Political

Opportunity:

- Develop political allies around housing for our population.
- Look at Accessible Canada Act- Should we be the face?
- Room to grow in our government.
- Could we look at a group of individuals with diversabilities being part of government?
- Look to increase connection to our local MP and MLA.
- Systems collaboration.
- Connections to share ideas/resources with other associations like us.
- Inclusive environments movement- be the champions.
- Could we look to push the Green Party to continue inclusivity movement?

Threat:

- Funding from the government.
- Our work is not valued.
- The government claims they support minority groups.
- Politicians are only interested in being re-elected.
- Our individuals are not seen as positive contributing constituents,
- Gatekeeping between ministries.
- The government is holding us hostage as they pander to their union buddies.
- Social Services Round Table (SSRT) is not working,
- Wage gap.
- Policy framework.

Economic

Opportunity:

- Look to guarantee that every Network is funded (annuity) for 50 years.
- Pooling of community partners and resources.

- Look to fill the tourism/service sector by our individuals.
- Offer competitive wages, benefits- What can we do to compensate? Increase culture and staff involvement, increase professional development?
- Increase financial literacy for people supported.
- With our current healthy balance sheet, could we look to “top up” salaries that CLBC is “short-changing?”
- Look to increase accessibility to understand systems (i.e. PWD, housing, wages).

Threat:

- Access to affordable housing.
- Post COVID-19 economics.
- Subsidizing the government and CLBC due to differential pay- Are we just turning into a “low cost job shop” for CLBC.
- Access to affordable/covered medications.
- Costs of MCN supports and the individuals increased community support needs.

Social

Opportunity:

- Literacy.
- Health behaviors- managing expectation of families in regards to supports.
- Attitudes/awareness.
- Aging- families, persons served.
- Building community.
- Building trust.
- Increase community engagement.
- Built environments.
- Social Environments.
- Coping skills from COVID.

Threat:

- Transitions- history not forthcoming.
- Hard to access without other social support that respond.
- Lifetime is all the things to all people.
- Poverty- compensate.
- Trauma.
- Access to health services, psychiatric, doctors.
- Internet.
- Coping skills from COVID.
- Long-term viability.

Technological

Opportunity:

- Look at internet accessibility and information technology literacy.
- Look at plain language. Are our tools accessible to all?

- More education. More financial support to invest for efficiency. Allow focus to go back to our people.
- More thoughtful tutorials on technology.
- Invest in technology that doesn't rely on paper.
- Consolidate communication platforms (i.e. Outlook, text, Teams, Facebook, Discord, and Slack).
- Social Media.

Threat:

- Many individuals unable to manage or work with computers and/or cellphones.
- In general, technology can present as a barrier for staff.
- A barrier to services.
- Weaponized mis-and-dis-information campaigns.
- Social Media.

Environmental

Opportunity:

- Bottle collection.
- Composting and recycling.
- Clothes Drop program- program we are proud of.
- More space for programming, meetings, recreation.
- Healthy work environment (i.e. standing desks, quiet rooms, lunch room- gathering space).
- Looking at paperless options that provide accessibility to all and allow for a seamless transition.
- Keep rules clear (i.e. recycling) - make long-term plans to economic situations.
- Working with community partners around food waste.
- Strong relationships with bylaw.
- Incentives for hybrids.
- LED lights, energy efficient appliances- look for efficiencies within the renovation.

Threat:

- Focusing on Environmental Factors when there are many other agency issues (i.e. staff retention, programming, CC+D). Focusing on everything focuses on nothing.

Legal

Opportunity:

- More time spent learning, training and understanding at all levels. Could Orientation be a starting point to address this?
- Looking at our legal obligations. Are we do more than we should or could we be doing more?
- Understanding legal limits with services- understand and comply.
- Educate on the police act and the connection to or sector.
- Advocate and support individuals around their legal and human rights.

Threat:

- Providing services if vaccines become mandatory.
- Vaccination passport mandate and the technology needed to prove one has it.

- Finding a path between protecting the rights of the individual and the health of the many.

CORNAVIRUS DISEASE (COVID-19)

Coronavirus, also known as COVID-19, is an infectious disease that hit the world back in the early months of 2020. Conversation and precautions around the virus have become part of our day-to-day lives and continue to influence how we move forward at Lifetime Networks. With COVID weaved throughout the above PESTEL process, it is important to highlight the conversations we had at the two-day session with Kim.

The main theme the group came to with relevance to COVID-19 was awareness. How are we, as an agency, going to continue to be aware of the work environment that we are in? How are we going to continue to be aware and sensitive to the ongoing vulnerability others feel? By maintaining the programming options, systems and processes below we believe we will maintain awareness.

- Using Technology to increase access (trainings, communication, remote work, virtual meetings, virtual staff and/or individual events).
- Continuing to have staff take turns with cleaning to reduce risk of germs spreading.
- Continuing with Personal Days to allow flexibility for staff.
- Promoting a healthy work life balance for staff.
- Maintaining a hybrid model in programs to maximize our ability to cultivate relationships between our individuals.
- Continuing with the PODS model to allow smaller groups to connect in a safe way.

CONSIDERATIONS

Over the next three years, the leadership at Lifetime Networks commits to:

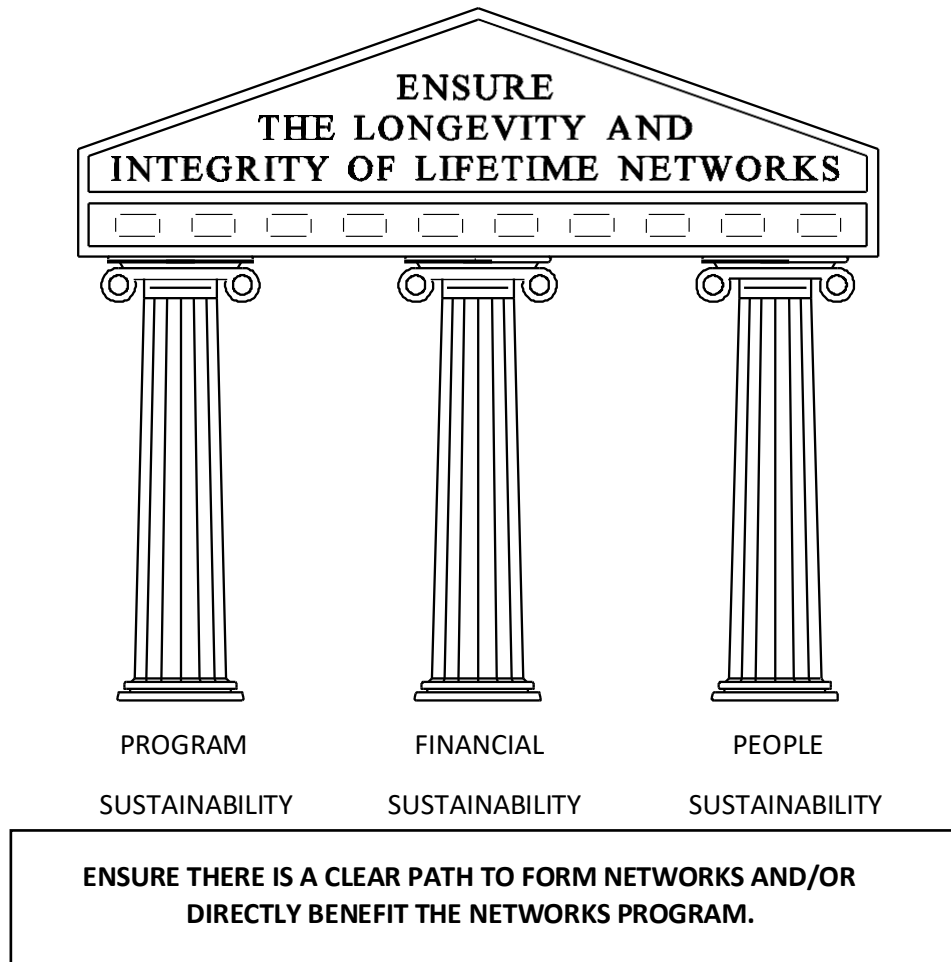
- Keeping the Networks program the 'beating heart' of the agency.
- Ensuring the individual is in the center driving their support/activities.
- Maintaining our family/relationship based culture.
- Maintaining high quality supports that do not compromise our values.
- Continuing to strive for financial autonomy through flexible sources of funding.
- Supporting staff to reduce burn out and compassion fatigue and increase a healthy work life balance.
- Succession planning.
- Being mindful of what programs/services we take on and if we can make a commitment for a lifetime.
- Advocating for social justice.

INITIATIVES AND IMPROVEMENT GOALS

As Lifetime Networks continues to flourish our primary goal remains the same:

To ensure the longevity and integrity of Lifetime Networks.

The Management team liked the pillar sketch from the 2014 Strategic Plan and decided to replicate it with the addition of a Foundation initiative to represent and highlight the Network's Program. Our foundation is what holds us up and supports the rest of our framework to be stable and successful.



Details of the supporting initiatives and improvement goals contained within each initiative are as follows:

Initiative A- Program Sustainability

Improvement Goal A1

Ensure all programs align with the vision, mission and values of Lifetime.

Actions:

- Each program will have a group exercise to define its North Star

- Continue to offer staff opportunities for involvement in developing best practices
- Directors, Managers have discussion about agency role in community development

Indicator(s) for Success:

- Program goals reflect LN vision: Natural Networks and program North Stars
- Agency role in community development and planning is defined
- Agency operates using best and next practices through CQI
- Agency continues to have the financial capacity to provide bursaries

Improvement Goal A2

Reinvest in self-advocacy development for participants.

Actions:

- Work with self advocates to re-design Ambassadors
- Support individuals to attend InclusionBC conferences and other opportunities for self-advocacy

Indicator(s) for Success:

- Self-Advocates have opportunities to engage in the wider community. Example: participation on the CLBC editorial board
- Training opportunities for staff and participants are happening regarding self-advocacy, informed choice and decision-making.
- The Ambassadors program is re-designed and has engaged self-advocates

Initiative B- Financial Sustainability

Improvement Goal B1

Maintain Financial Stability.

Actions:

- Re-establish Fundraising events
- Explore Planned Giving/Leave a Legacy
- Increase fees for Formal Networks
- Explore the Victoria Foundation regarding annuity fund for the Networks Program
- Explore fee(s) for our free programs

Indicator(s) for Success:

- There is 6 months operating cost in reserve within a formal investment strategy
- Lifetime Networks provides one funded formal Network
- Lifetime Networks provides bursaries for those who require them

Initiative C- People Sustainability

Improvement Goal C1

Community members want to work and have a career with Lifetime Networks.

Actions:

- Decrease eligibility period for benefits to 4 months
- Decrease benefit eligibility to 20 hours weekly
- Diversify advertisement of employment opportunities
- Implement new and innovative recruitment and retention strategies to enhance the working experience
 - Increase personal days
 - Give \$10 gift cards to recognize LN anniversary
 - Become a 'green' agency
 - Increase internal professional development opportunities
 - Increase staff connectedness opportunities.
- Speak with Canada Life rep to see the cost of increasing parameds dollar amount claimable.

Indicator(s) for Success:

- Decreased number of staff identifying burnout as a reason to leave or need time off
- Increased number of staff hitting employment milestones with the agency (5, 10, 15, 20 years)
- Network Facilitators remain for at least three years
- Effective onboarding, training, and record keeping across all programs
- Staff feel supported to create and maintain their work boundaries

Improvement Goal C2

Lifetime Networks effectively supports staff in times of agency growth and/or significant change.

Actions:

- Explore a variety of options to communicate with all staff
- Add a question(s) to the survey around communication styles (How do you prefer communication? How to you want to provide input to the agency? How do you manage change/possible risks?)

Indicator(s) of Success:

- Decreased number of staff reporting that they are feeling unsupported in moments of growth and change.

Initiative D- Ensure there is a clear path to form Networks and/or directly benefit the Networks Program.

Improvement Goal D1

Raise community awareness about our sector and Lifetime Networks.

Actions:

- Grow the Networks program:
 - Network Review meetings between Program Manager and ED
 - Facilitate more Network events and learning opportunities
 - Create an ad/video with founding families and original facilitators; give space for them to tell their stories)
- Share Lifetime story to elevate the value of the work we do
- Social media budget/allocate staff hours to storytelling

Indicator(s) for Success:

- Increased awareness, specifically about the Networks Program.

WHERE TO NOW

Over the next three years, the Management Team will work with the appropriate departments and committees to implement the goals. Lifetime Networks has seen strong and exciting growth. The plan is to continue that momentum to meet our vision of ensuring a ‘future where all people enjoy safe, happy, fulfilling lives’.