

COMMUNITY LIVING PARRY SOUND

2021 - 2024

STRATEGIC PLAN

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"Community Living Parry Sound has a very talented team. The organization is pro-active and forward-thinking. They focus on learning to continuously improve the way they do business and provide support."

Community Partner

INTRODUCTION

Community Living Parry Sound (CLPS) is a not-for-profit organization that offers support to 200 children, youth, adults, and seniors with a developmental disability, and their families. The organization takes a 'community first' approach, which involves supporting people to live and experience all aspects of their lives in community. CLPS does this through partnerships, innovation, and education.

In January 2020 CLPS, with the assistance of People Minded Business Inc. (PMB), embarked on an inclusive strategic planning process with the intention of completing the plan by April 2020. The thorough information gathering went as planned throughout January and February and the 'situational analysis' was completed in March; however, with the emergence and rise of the COVID-19 pandemic, the strategic planning process was then paused. The organization's focus was on implementing new health and safety protocols to keep the people it supports and employees healthy and safe.

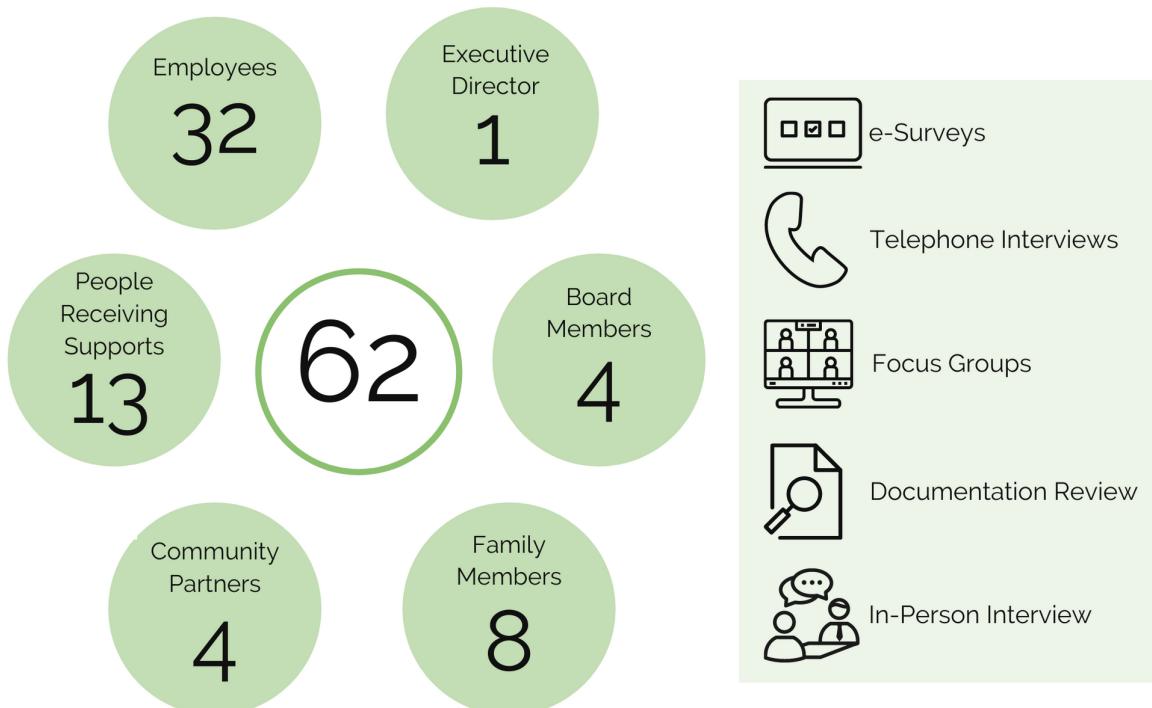
In September 2020, CLPS' Executive Director and Board of Directors decided to continue to move forward with the strategic planning process, as COVID precautions were well established and it was determined that moving forward with setting relevant priorities and goals for the organization was timely. With the lengthening of the pandemic, an additional step in the process was introduced – inviting CLPS employees to complete an e-survey about their 'COVID experience' thus far. Information from the survey would provide up-to-date contextual insights and ensure strategic priorities and goals are relevant.

On October 23, board members, the Executive Director, a person receiving supports, a family member, and a blend of managers and employees participated in a virtual one-day session strategic planning session. They reviewed information provided in the Situational Analysis and worked with the opportunities noted to establish strategic priorities and goals that will guide CLPS' work from 2021 to 2024.

INFORMATION GATHERING

People Minded Business (PMB), the consultancy facilitating the development of CLPS' strategic plan, gathered information from **62** key stakeholders (recognizing some staff participated in two separate surveys), and completed a review of documents. Stakeholders who provided input are noted below, as are the ways in which they participated:

- **13** People Receiving Supports & Services – at two focus group sessions. Three of these individuals also participated in individual interviews
- **8** Family Members – by individual telephone interview
- **4** Board Members – at an in-person focus group session
- The Executive Director – by an in-person interview and participation in focus group
- **32** Employees – e-survey #1 in February 2020 was completed by 23 employees, including managers who also participated in a focus group. E-survey #2 was completed by 32 employees in September 2020
- **4** Community Partners - by individual telephone interviews



SITUATIONAL ANALYSIS

PMB used the **T.O.A.S.T.** framework to complete the situational analysis. Questions and conversations with all key stakeholder groups focused on current & emerging **T**rends, associated **O**pportunities, CLPS' **A**ssets and **S**trengths, and issues CLPS should **T**ake note of when planning for its future.

A clear understanding of the internal and external environment within which CLPS currently operates surfaced, as did central messages and themes about what matters most to stakeholders about CLPS – in the present and looking ahead to the future. Analysis of information and insights formed the basis from which stakeholders determined strategic priorities and goals.

Trends

Noted are current and emerging trends that surfaced through the review of literature and internal documents, and information provided by stakeholders through interviews, focus groups and e-survey:

Employee Recruitment and Retention Challenges, and Dips in Employee Wellness

The developmental services sector is facing a province-wide challenge to both recruit and retain qualified staff. Fewer people are applying for available jobs and some employees are leaving for better paying work. Baby boomers are also retiring and people entering the workforce have different career expectations than their predecessors. As a result, the developmental services sector is seeing both a dip in the number of employees and their overall morale. The term “human resource crisis” is used in some articles and sector wide discussions to describe the current environment within which agencies are operating in.

Shift to ‘Fee for Service’ Funding

The provincial government continues to expand its fee-for-service funding model. People with developmental disabilities and their families now receive funds directly from the government to purchase services from organizations and a growing number of private providers. In response to this change, organizations are having to make changes to administrative systems and be responsive to a wide variety of purchaser's needs and requests. Organizations are also having to focus on and invest in marketing, as they are operating in a competitive environment where purchasers have choices and competitive advantages such as quality and cost matter.

Person-Directed Supports

With the shift to fee-for-service comes the expectation that organizations adopt a “person-directed” approach to service provision. This entails involving purchasers of service (people with a developmental disability and their families) in designing the supports they want to receive - asking them what they want and then delivering on the ‘ask’ in a timely way?

Community Inclusion and Community First Philosophy

How and where services are provided to people with developmental disabilities continues to evolve. The ‘community inclusion’ philosophy has been widely adopted over the past 20 years and has for the most part become the status quo. Some agencies are moving the philosophy further by taking a “community first” approach, which entails supporting people to engage with community members and services first and developing and providing additional services only when needed and when they are not available in community.

New uses for Technology

Technology is being used by organizations to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of business functions, such as communication systems, client management systems, human resources, and so on. Advancements in technology are also benefitting people who use services to be more independent, enhance communication, and connect socially, among other things. Funders and service providers hope to see growth in service capacity with this uptake in technology.

More People Experiencing Transitions

There is a growing number of people and families who are in need of supports and services associated with growing older, such as attending to medical needs, making changes to living arrangements, and planning and providing for end of life care. On the other end of the continuum are the needs of youth leaving the school system and entering the adult developmental services system. These youth and their families have different expectations than those that preceded them, and they are looking for customized supports.

Emphasis on Efficiencies

The current provincial government is stressing the need for agencies to actively pursue strategies to improve efficiencies. There is a general expectation that agencies provide the same or more supports for the same or less levels of funding.

Expanding Creative Partnerships

For the sake of effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability, agencies are developing new and expanding existing partnerships within the public and private sectors. Together, partners are jointly problem solving and increasingly sharing resources to address various challenges.

Need for Creative Fund Development

There is a level of financial precariousness associated with much reliance on direct funding dollars sourced by one government funder/Ministry. Agencies are challenged to find new and different sources of funding, and ways to raise funds.

Shortage of Affordable Housing

Housing is limited, and affordable housing for people falling in the middle- and lower-income ranges is scarce. There is a need for innovative housing solutions for many citizens, including people with developmental disabilities.

Demand for Respite / Short Break Services

Many people with developmental disabilities are living with their families well into adulthood, and they and their families are looking to purchase various forms of respite and short break supports.

What Matters Most to People Using Services

In keeping with CLPS' person-centered approach, key messages from the focus group sessions with people using services are provided.

CLPS provides supports to approximately 200 people with disabilities to build better lives in their community. Three people receiving supports participated in individual interviews, and twenty were invited to participate in two interactive focus group sessions. Thirteen people attended the group sessions and time was spent exploring the question: **"What matters most to you about the supports you receive through Community Living Parry Sound now and into the future?"** Their answers provided CLPS with insight into what the organization ought to keep doing and build-on moving forward. Participants answered the question through involvement in two engaging activities. A summary of findings from each activity is provided:

(i) What Community Living Parry Sound Means to Me Visually

Participants were asked to choose a picture card that captures what they value most about CLPS. Below is a snapshot of the cards chosen by the second group, and a sample of what participants had to say about the cards they picked.



"The **telephone** because I use my cell phone to make contact with my worker."

"I chose the **window** because they (CLPS) help me go outside & get me thinking outside of the box."

"The **eye** because me & the staff are always looking for new ideas."

The majority of people chose pictures that depict ways CLPS staff connect with them, provide support with finding work or volunteering, and help with acts of daily living, like grocery shopping, ordering prescriptions, doing laundry, etc.

(ii) From A-Z What Matters Most to Me

This activity involved participants generating a list of 26 things that matter most to them about the supports they receive now or would like to receive in the future through CLPS – each idea/thing beginning with a letter of the alphabet. People's answers fell into 3 categories:

- Social Connections & Time with Friends – People want more opportunities to be with friends. Many ideas surfaced, like a walking club, dances, and having their own wellness room. They stated, “we want to be with other people” & “we feel isolated.”
- Purposeful Activities – People clearly appreciate assistance with finding paid employment and volunteer opportunities.
- Stability in Staffing – A statement made by one woman captures the essence of why stable staffing matters most to people receiving supports: “Knowing my workers, and not always having new ones is needed to earn trust.”

Assets & Strengths

The organization's assets and strengths are central to the ongoing advancement and sustainability of Community Living Parry Sound. A number of core strengths surfaced during discussions with stakeholders - the most frequently cited are noted below:

- **Advocacy** – Many stakeholders commented on CLPS' strong voice and presence in support of people with disabilities.
- **Person-Centered Approach** – CLPS and its employees are recognized for having the people it supports and the quality of support provided to them as its primary focus.
- **Knowledgeable & Adaptable Approach** – One community partner's comment summed up many others: "CLPS is open to learning and change. They continually evolve the ways in which they deliver services."
- **Dedicated, Skilled, & Supportive Management and Staff** – All stakeholders view the employees as an organizational strength. One community partner described CLPS as having a "dream team."
- **Positive Profile & Reputation** – CLPS is said to be viewed positively both locally in Parry Sound and provincially among other agencies and community partners.

Take Note of...

Some issues were identified during the data gathering process, and another surfaced immediately afterward, that have the potential to impact the work of Community Living Parry Sound now and in the future:

- **COVID-19 Pandemic** – During the pandemic, developmental service organizations are focused on keeping people healthy and safe with a focus on following government guidelines on physical distancing and additional precautionary measures. There are many constraints on where and how people can access their communities. The short and long-term impacts caused by the pandemic are unknown at this time but are sure to have some lasting effects.
- **Increasing Demand for Passport Funded Supports** – An ever-increasing number of people in Parry Sound are receiving passport funds from the provincial government to purchase supports directly from organizations. CLPS has been challenged to keep up with the demand and some funds are being underutilized as a result.
- **Growth in Local Service Providers** – New businesses are being formed to provide fee-for-service supports to people with disabilities in Parry Sound. This is creating competitive pressures for CLPS.
- **Challenges in Providing Person-Directed Supports that Align with Community First Philosophy** – Most of the people supported by CLPS and their families who were involved in the strategic planning process, clearly stated a desire to have more social opportunities to connect with their friends from CLPS. They also suggested CLPS host social gatherings and events at the main office, but this was before the pandemic and would need revisiting once deemed safe. CLPS, like many other agencies in the sector, is challenged to honour person-directed supports when what people are asking for may not always align with a ‘community first philosophy’.

STRATEGIC GOALS AND PRIORITIES

On October 23, CLPS brought together a blended group of key stakeholders to review and work with opportunities that surfaced through the information gathering process. Together they identified the following five strategic priorities and related goals that will guide the direction and decisions made by CLPS over the next three years.

Strategic Priority - Excellence in Community Experiences

- Take a person-directed approach to supporting people in their communities
- Increase opportunities for people to socialize with new and stay connected with existing friends
- Keep supporting people to find employment, volunteer, and engage in other purposeful pursuits
- Provide just the right amount of support to all people

Strategic Priority - Consistent Staffing & Healthy Workplace Culture

- Provide people with consistent staffing by adopting new strategies for recruiting and retaining employees
- Address challenges with staff scheduling to align with providing person-directed supports
- Provide employees with professional development focused on:
 - Person-directed planning & supports
 - Being community connectors and advancing the ‘Community First’ approach
 - Facilitating mutually beneficial relationships with members of the business and service community
 - Supporting people who have, or are developing complex needs, and those who are experiencing the effects of transitions
 - Valuing and applying professional development
- Establish a healthy workplace culture across the organization

Strategic Priority - Purposeful Use of Technology

- Focus on expanding the role technology plays in the lives of people to learn, communicate, and socialize
- Support people in developing their skillsets, confidence, and comfort using technology
- Balance virtual supports and in-person supports, to be responsive to people’s individual wants and needs

Strategic Priority - Robust Network of Community Connections and Partners

- Keep forming new relationships to connect people with their community, to provide the organization and its employees with additional resources, and to be a resource to others
- Remain open to and act on opportunities to partner with other organizations to achieve organizational excellence

Strategic Priority - Agency of Choice

- Make marketing a central business function
- Publicize and promote CLPS activities and successes in ways that capture the attention and engage a wide-range of stakeholders
- Attract people looking for services and looking for employment
- Raise overall understanding and awareness of CLPS' work and achievements, and how to access support
- Measure progress and success through planned collection of data and metrics