

Strategic Plan

2025 - 2026

Executive Summary

Chimo Community Services continues its unwavering commitment to guiding individuals and families through crisis, empowering them to achieve stability and transform their lives. Building on over forty years of dedicated service and strong foundational achievements, this plan outlines the focused strategic direction for Chimo. Informed by comprehensive organizational assessments and a deep understanding of evolving community needs and sector trends, this plan reinforces our core values of innovation, compassion, sustainability, transparency, inclusiveness, empowerment, collaboration, and community engagement.

We are committed to strengthening our foundational pillars 'a stable and diversified resource base, operational excellence, and integrated case management' while advancing our critical program areas. Key strategic priorities include expanding our vital housing initiatives as our primary focus, optimizing the synergy between our local crisis line and the national 988 hotline, rigorously enhancing administrative efficiency, and advocating for sustainable funding for essential programs like Family Law. Through these focused efforts, Chimo will continue to be a pillar of support, fostering empowered communities free from injustice, violence, and crisis.

1.0 Introduction

For over forty years, Chimo Community Services has been a beacon of hope and support, serving tens of thousands of individuals and families from all backgrounds within the Richmond community. Our enduring vision remains to foster empowered communities free from injustice, violence, and crisis. We prevent tragedies, save lives, strengthen communities, and connect people with needed resources, consistently making an incredible difference through the hard work and dedication of our staff and volunteers.

This Strategic Plan outlines Chimo's focused direction, serving as a vital guide for our Executive Director, managers, and staff, ensuring collaborative efforts are directed towards strengthening our core capabilities and advancing our program delivery. This plan represents a continuous evolution of our strategic journey, building upon the significant achievements and insights gained from our ongoing organizational assessments and environmental understanding. We are committed to leveraging our past successes and current strengths to further enhance our support for the community and our clients.

2.0 Our Strategic House: Guiding Principles and Pillars

At Chimo Community Services, our strategic value is derived from guiding people through crises by providing holistic, integrated services that create stability and change lives for the better. This core purpose drives the entire framework of our strategic plan, represented by our enduring 'Strategic House' model.

Our Core Values and Principles

Our commitment to excellence and impact is guided by the following principles, which underpin every action we take and every service we deliver:

- **Innovation:** Fostering a culture of continuous improvement, creative problem-solving, and embracing new technologies to enhance services and efficiency.
- **Compassion:** Providing empathetic, understanding, and supportive care to all individuals and families we serve.
- **Sustainability:** Committing to responsible practices that ensure the long-term viability of our organization and contribute positively to our community and environment.
- **Transparency:** Maintaining open, honest, and accountable communication with all clients, staff, and stakeholders regarding our operations and impact.
- **Inclusiveness & Diversity:** Ensuring programs and services are accessible and welcoming to all community members, celebrating differences, and fostering an environment where everyone feels valued and respected.
- **Empowerment:** Equipping individuals and the community with the skills, resources, and opportunities to strengthen their well-being and achieve their full potential.
- **Collaboration & Partnerships:** Actively seeking and nurturing strategic relationships with internal teams, community organizations, businesses, and funders to enhance collective impact and service delivery.
- **Community Engagement:** Actively involving and connecting with the community through various initiatives to build stronger ties, address local issues, and foster mutual support.

2.1 Committees

To assist in achieving our Vision, Chimo has established the following committees who report to the Board:

- Strategic Planning
- Governance
- Finance
- Capital Projects

3.0 Our Foundations: Pillars of Organizational Strength

Chimo's ability to deliver impactful programs rests upon robust foundational elements. We continuously strengthen these areas to ensure a resilient and effective organization.

3.1 Stable and Diversified Resource Base

Our Vision: We maintain a holistic funding platform, proactively developing and expanding opportunities across all funding modalities to ensure long-term sustainability and growth.

Current Strategic Focus & Objectives:

- **Enhance Funding Diversification:** Actively pursue and secure new funding sources, including expanding corporate sponsorships, launching targeted grant applications, and exploring viable social enterprise initiatives to reduce reliance on traditional funding streams.
- **Strengthen Donor and Partner Relationships:** Continuously cultivate and deepen relationships with current and past volunteers, business and community leaders, foundations, and corporate funding programs, ensuring consistent outreach and engagement.
- **Advocate for Sustainable Program Funding:** Proactively advocate for equitable and sustainable funding for critical services, particularly for programs like Family Law where delivery costs have increased significantly over time without corresponding resource adjustments. Engage with funders to highlight program impact and the imperative for aligned support.

3.2 Operational Excellence

Our Vision: We are a well-functioning, efficient, and mission-driven organization, where all policies, procedures, and processes align to our mission and support our 3 Pillars. We foster a supportive culture and workplace environment that enables management, employees, and volunteers to fulfill the requirements of their roles.

Current Strategic Focus & Objectives:

- **Optimize Administrative Efficiency and Resource Allocation:** Conduct a comprehensive review of administrative expenditures and resource allocation across all programs to ensure optimal efficiency and maximum impact. This involves analyzing administrative benchmarks and identifying areas for streamlined processes or strategic investment in administrative support where it demonstrably enhances program delivery and overall organizational health.
- **Advance Staff and Volunteer Empowerment:** Continue to foster a respectful and supportive work environment, ensuring all staff, managers, and volunteers are well-trained, know what is expected of them, and are empowered to fulfill their roles effectively. This includes ongoing refinement of performance management and feedback processes.
- **Embrace Technology for Enhanced Operations:** Leverage digital tools and new technologies to streamline internal processes, improve data management, and enhance overall operational efficiency, building on efforts to fine-tune record-keeping systems and implement integrated case management practices. This includes exploring digital literacy programs for staff and clients where beneficial.
- **Integrate Sustainable Practices:** Implement and review eco-friendly practices within daily operations, aligning with Chimo's commitment to broader sustainability and environmental stewardship.

3.3 Integrated Case Management

Our Vision: We provide seamless intake and ongoing monitoring of referral and service delivery across all internal and external programs, ensuring comprehensive and continuous client support until self-sufficiency is achieved.

Current Strategic Focus & Objectives:

- **Refine Client Journey & Monitoring:** Continuously refine the integrated case management process to ensure efficient identification of client needs at intake, timely referrals, and ongoing monitoring of client progress, service adjustments, and follow-up across all stages of support. This builds on the establishment of the new client database system (Nucleus) and addresses the need for dedicated intake capacity.
- **Enhance Data Utilization for Impact Reporting:** Optimize the utilization of our record-keeping system to facilitate seamless integrated case management practices and generate robust reports that meet funder requirements and inform continuous program improvement.

4.0 Our Programs: Delivering Holistic Impact

Chimo's programs are at the heart of our mission, providing direct support to individuals and families in their greatest times of need. We are committed to the ongoing growth and effectiveness of each program area.

4.1 Access to Housing

Our Vision: We provide a multifaceted housing support network, offering immediate assistance for domestic disputes, interim housing for those transitioning, and a robust housing referral program for individuals and families facing barriers to traditional rental accommodation.

Current Strategic Focus & Objectives:

- **Strategically Expand Housing Capacity:** Building on the success of Nova House and related initiatives, actively explore and assess viable models for expanding Chimo's housing capacity. Conducting feasibility studies, and establishing robust partnerships within the business community to create an inventory of affordable and safe housing options.
- **Enhance Housing Referral Network:** Continuously strengthen Chimo's role as a go-to referral service for affordable, safe housing, and providing wraparound services to support stable tenancies.

4.2 Access to Crisis Care

Our Vision: We support all who are experiencing difficulty meeting life's challenges, providing timely, multi-lingual, culturally sensitive intake and referral processes, and consistent, ongoing, high-quality care that supports individuals and families as they transition to stability.

Current Strategic Focus & Objectives:

- **Optimize Crisis Support Synergy:** Refine the synergy between Chimo's established local crisis line and the national 988 Suicide Crisis Helpline. This involves leveraging each service's unique strengths, ensuring seamless referral pathways, and maximizing accessible support for diverse distress calls within the Richmond community.
- **Diversify Holistic Support Programs:** Deepen and expand the scope of crisis care by incorporating comprehensive family support services (e.g., trauma counseling, parenting workshops) and exploring innovative therapeutic approaches (e.g., animal-assisted therapy).
- **Advance Community-Specific Empowerment Initiatives:** Continue to develop and implement youth empowerment initiatives focused on mentorship, skill-building, and leadership training, and expand multicultural integration programs including language classes, cultural exchange, and navigation support for newcomers.
- **Enhance Health and Wellness Offerings:** Broaden our holistic support to include expanded health and wellness programs, such as nutrition workshops, fitness classes, and mental health support groups, in collaboration with local health professionals.
- **Strengthen Volunteer Development and Feedback:** Continuously implement processes for feedback and mentoring for volunteers, ensuring the ongoing high quality and responsiveness of crisis care services.

4.3 Access to Justice

Our Vision: We offer a Legal Access Centre that provides a comprehensive suite of legal services for individuals with limited income, particularly in Family Law and Tenancy matters, ensuring seamless coordination between all service providers.

Current Strategic Focus & Objectives:

- **Strengthen Legal Advocacy and Support Services:** Building on the establishment and operation of the Legal Advocacy Clinic, Chimo continues to strengthen and expand its legal advocacy and support services, particularly for clients navigating complex immigration, housing, and employment legal issues. This includes exploring new legal partnerships and deepening existing collaborations.
- **Advocate for Program Resourcing:** Proactively advocate for sustainable and increased funding for the Family Law Program and other critical legal services, recognizing the significant increase in delivery costs and the program's vital role in the community.
- **Optimize Client-Focused Legal Pathways:** Continue to refine the intake process and integrated services model to ensure timely access to legal service providers, effective follow-up, and the continued exploration of client-focused website tools and self-serve components.

5.0 Next Steps and Conclusion

This Strategic Plan provides a clear and actionable direction for Chimo Community Services. The Executive Director and Managers will continue to collaboratively develop implementation deliverables, ensuring all levels of the organization are familiar with our strategic house, foundations, programs, and the goals we are committed to achieving.

Given the unwavering commitment and profound passion demonstrated by Chimo staff, managers, and volunteers, the Board of Directors has every confidence that the objectives outlined in this plan are achievable. By continually strengthening our strategic foundations and focusing on the growth and optimization of our programs, Chimo will maintain its competitive edge in the non-profit space and ensure its longevity.

Chimo has seen incredible success in service delivery over the last forty years. In this evolving environment, we continue to leverage past learnings and successes to ensure Chimo remains a vital pillar in the community for many years to come, steadfast in our mission to create empowered communities free from injustice, violence, and crisis.