



Community Living Sarnia Lambton Strategic Plan 2021-2025

1. Overview and Background

Community Living Sarnia Lambton (CLSL) is a well-respected and effective non-profit organization which supports individuals with intellectual disabilities in the Sarnia-Lambton area.

CLSL last updated its strategic plan in 2017. This report documents work done by the Board and management staff of CLSL to update or “refresh” its strategic plan during the August 2021 through November 2021 period. It was a challenge to undertake this work given the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Much has been accomplished in updating the framework which will guide CLSL through the next few years. All activities were carried out via a series of Zoom workshops and through the use of other virtual methods.

This plan provides:

Clarity and Agreement regarding Organizational Identity - An understanding of the impact that CLSL wants to have

- In particular, the scope and purpose of the organization’s work building a more inclusive and sustainable community
- **A 3–4-year plan which serves as framework for:**
 - making decisions and setting priorities regarding investment of energy and resources; creating focus, and reducing the risk of being spread too thin
 - strategic communications, public education and relationship management
 - creating annual operating plans

2. CLSL – Beneficiaries, Mission and Values

Beneficiaries- What Good Does CLSL do and for Whom?

People with Intellectual Disabilities

- Creates possibilities for independence and “living a good life”
- Identifies personal gifts and goals
- Helps build skills and abilities
- Provides opportunities and choice
- Builds self-esteem and personal dignity
- Provides meaningful jobs that have a living wage
- Helps find creative solutions to meeting support needs (both planned and in crisis situations)
- Provides opportunities and support to form and sustain relationships
- Provides assistance in maintaining personal safety and security; risk management
- Provides support and encouragement; acting as allies and advocates
- Creates opportunities for natural supports

Families and Caregivers

- Security for supported individuals – peace of mind for families
- Connections - development of peer and personal networks; links to support
- Help in finding creative solutions to meeting support needs (both planned and in crisis situations)

Broader Community

- Influences values – model and encourage inclusion
- More welcoming, inclusive community – benefits everyone; enhances reputation of community
- Generates economic activity - CLSL is large employer, and consumer of goods and services

Other social benefit organizations

- Resource sharing
- Collaboration and partnerships
- Contribution to planning and development of other organizations

Employers

- Provides good employees
- Experience of knowing individuals with disabilities has an impact on lives of employers and their staff

Students

- Relationships with individuals with disabilities influence personal and professional development and values

CLSL's Mission and Values

Mission - Community Living Sarnia-Lambton is dedicated to enriching the lives of people with an intellectual and/or other disability and their families by providing supports and services that promote individual choice and life goal achievement.

Values: To fulfill our mission, we focus upon the following values to guide us:

- Courtesy, dignity, respect and consideration for all people
- Independence and opportunity for growth
- Respect for Individual Rights and Choice
- Community Inclusion
- Flexible and adaptable support services
- Accountability
- Teamwork
- Community Partnerships and Collaboration
- Environmental Stewardship
- Stronger relationships with Indigenous people

Identity Statement Effective strategic choices are rooted in a firm understanding of 'who we are' as an organization. An Identity Statement is an honest description of an organization at a moment in time. It incorporates critical defining elements of an organization related to mission, business model and organizational strengths. Working together to articulate and agree on this Identity Statement is a precursor to strategy development.

An initial version of CLSL's Identity Statement follows

CLSL Identity Statement v.1 (December 2021)

Mission: enriching the lives of people with an intellectual and/or other disability and their families by providing supports and services that promote individual choice and life goal achievement.

Geographic Scope - Sarnia - Lambton

Beneficiaries Primary beneficiaries are adults with developmental disabilities. Families, caregivers and supporters are secondary beneficiaries.

Impact

Adults with developmental disabilities in need of community supports experience: safety, security and personal well-being; community involvement and opportunities to contribute to community vitality; relationships; learning and development of capabilities; choice and self-determination; reduced barriers to inclusion and increased acceptance.

The capacity of caregivers and families to be supportive is nurtured and sustained.

We will achieve impact through services and supports which provide the opportunity for:

- Families to increase their capacity to support and assist their family member
- Individuals to establish natural support networks
- Individuals to prepare for and obtain competitive employment or self-employment
- Individuals to develop skills through structured learning opportunities and social recreation programming
- Individuals to experience safety and security and opportunities to engage in community life through a range of supportive housing (residential) opportunities

Competitive Advantages:

- Experienced and well-trained staff
- Experience and training in supporting individuals with complex needs
- Capacity to provide supports on a fee for service basis
- Well-managed - established policies and practices; good risk management
- Good reputation with other community providers, Ontario Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, and with people supported (trusted, family satisfaction)
- Ability to source and successfully access grant funds for projects and seasonal employees
- Ability and willingness to respond quickly and capably to complex needs for services

We are Sustainable Through:

- Recruiting and sustaining an adequate complement of competent, caring and committed staff
- Building and sustaining relationships/networks in the broader community
- Disciplined approach to management
- Ability to measure impact, learn from experience and to change
- Engaging the support of the community
- Diversifying sources of funding
- Individualized, responsive and cost-effective supports and services
- Adaptation of services to accommodate limitations of Covid 19

3. Taking Stock - Issues and Big Questions Facing CLSL

Eight strategic issues were identified through:

- **Environmental Scanning**- a review of CLSL's internal environment (its strengths and limitations) and external environment (the opportunities and threats that the organization needs to consider)
- **Discussion** of what factors might inhibit attainment of the organization's Vision 2025 and its ability to have an impact
- **Analysis and synthesis** - grouping or clustering of similar ideas to create themes, and identification of some "big strategic questions" that will need to be discussed and which will require an adaptive response on an ongoing basis

I. Promotion, Marketing and Resource Development

- How do we develop a strong brand as an organization as a means of:
 - Increasing awareness of CLSL (promotion) and the "cause(s)" we support (public education and attitudinal change)?
 - Resource Development - Increasing community investment and material support (time, talent and treasure) in our work?

II. Community Engagement

- How can we practically engage people with intellectual disabilities and their supporters in shaping our directions and our work?
- How do we build relationships with families and caregivers and support them? This includes a concern for both families of people already served by CLSL and those who are eligible for CLSL's services but not served.

III. Collaboration, Collective Impact and Strategic Restructuring ¹

- What relationships will support our vision and help build an inclusive community?
- How are we willing to change, share and collaborate to achieve the impact we want?
- Should we consider "strategic restructuring" proactively?

IV. Human Resources and Development of Organizational Capacity

- How can we recruit and sustain the proper number of employees with the right capabilities and mindset/attitudes (Recruitment and Talent Management)?
- What organizational culture, structure and organizational practices will be required to respond to community demands/needs and, potentially, the need to work in collaboration with other organizations?
- How can we support, develop and sustain leadership within our organization (Board and staff)? How will CLSL support a potential transition in the ED role? (Succession Planning and transition management) How will we support "Board Building" and development?

V. Organizational and Mission Sustainability - How do we:

- Provide adequate services, while maintaining financial stability?
- Improve quality of life for both presently supported individuals and other people who have intellectual disabilities who are not presently being served by CLSL?

¹ Strategic restructuring is a term increasingly used to refer to a **broad continuum of options for organizational partnerships**, including but not limited to mergers, asset transfers, joint ventures, administrative or back-office consolidations, joint programs, parent-subsidiary structures, and fiscal sponsorships.

VI. How can we respond to increasing demand for:

- Individualized and fee for service support
- Supporting individuals and families with increasingly complex and challenging requirements
- Service provision in a potentially competitive environment

VII. How can we create/support the creation of greater opportunities for people to live in (affordable) homes of their choosing with adequate and personalized supports?

- Availability of affordable housing
- Support of Indigenous persons
- Reducing congregate living and its limitations on choice and autonomy

VIII. How can we operate in an increasingly socially responsible way? Three broad opportunities have been identified.

- **Indigenous Reconciliation:** How do we establish and maintain stronger, mutually respectful relationships with Indigenous people and First Nations Communities?
- **Supporting diversity and inclusion:** How do we apply fair and just treatment of all and remove barriers to address historic and current disadvantages for under-represented and marginalized groups?
- **Be known/recognized as a leader in environmental stewardship:** How can we hasten the decarbonization of society and jump-start low-carbon and circular economy innovations through this decision?

Section 4 - What Does the Future look like? ... Where are we headed?

A vision statement provides an organization with a picture of what it wants the future to look like. Aside from being aspirational, the Vision can provide a basis for defining goals and performance measures. Using the Vision to help “create the future” will cause choices to be made about priorities and tactics. Inevitably, some of what “sounded good” in a workshop will change due to practical realities and the introduction of new views and voices into the dialogue.

Aspirational Vision “That all persons live in a state of dignity, share in all elements of living in the community, and have the opportunity to participate effectively.”

Note: This “aspirational” vision is shared by members of the Community Living Ontario federation. It connects CLSL to a Provincial and National movement.

Vision 2025 was created by participants in CLSL’s strategic planning process. It was created with:

- a local context in mind.
- shared hopes for what CLSL can become and the impact it can have.

4.2. Summary *By 2025, CLSL:*

- *is providing more Person-Centred support*
- *is responsive to individuals with fee for service arrangements (e.g., Passports)*
- *has made a wider range of Housing and Living Arrangements available*
- *is recognized as a leader in local Employment supports /labour market development*
- *engages the community in our work and in supporting inclusion*
- *is supporting individuals from diverse cultures and has grown stronger relationships with First Nations Communities in particular*
- *is a greener agency*
- *has earned a reputation as an employer of choice in Sarnia-Lambton and has a positive organizational culture*
- *continues to have effective leadership, governance and management*
- *has increased partnerships and inter-organizational collaboration*

What Does Success Look Like in 2025?

Statements in “What does success look like?” are intended to identify the impact that we want to achieve through strategic directions and action plans. They provide a starting point for goals.

- **Sought out as a place to work, grow and learn**
- **Organizational Capacity** Organizational structures and processes support both increased efficiency AND creativity/effectiveness
- **Greater Capacity for productive community engagement - promotion, marketing and fundraising**
- **Community is more welcoming and comfortable with folks with disabilities**
- **More People Living as community members /neighbours**
- **More supported individuals have meaningful jobs and a living wage**
- **Reduced carbon footprint, and known for our efforts and achievements**

Section 5- Strategic Directions and Action Plans

CLSL is cognizant that because of the impact of Covid-19 and the impending “modernization” of Ontario’s Developmental Services and Employment Supports Systems, the organization will need to navigate in an ever-changing environment.

The organization’s overall strategy for sustainability and for growing its impact has several features:

- Build on organizational strengths and successful approaches to employment, transitional planning and community participation supports. This includes further evolving how services and supports are provided in response to challenges imposed by COVID-19.
- Improve capacity to learn from experience and demonstrate value (impact) for investment.
- Improve capacity for sound business planning (and decision making) in relation to existing services and potential new ventures. CLSL will be cautious in “scaling up” the volume of services in response to government initiatives so that expansions do not erode principles or the quality of services, continue to develop organizational infrastructure and a healthy organizational culture.
- Continue to invest in partnerships and participation in networks where such participation is aligned with the impact that CLSL wants to have and the organization’s sustainability.
- Continue to seek diversified sources of revenue, and in particular, limit dependence on any one Government revenue stream.

CLSL Strategic Directions 2021- 2025

CLSL has defined six broad strategic directions to shape its work in the next four years. In each case, the starting point is to build on strengths and the organization’s capacity for learning and innovation. This section first provides a summary of CLSL’s strategic directions and then a more detailed look at the formative work done to create action plans for each of these strategic directions.

IMPROVED Personal OUTCOMES Through SUPPORTS AND SERVICES		Contribute to a more Welcoming and Sustainable and Socially Responsible community	
Improved Outcomes for individuals currently supported through person - centred approaches and expanded supportive housing options	Increased Reach and Impact: More people get assistance via “just enough support” approach and inter-organizational collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Greener CLSL Advocacy and Public Education to support inclusion /diversity Collaboration to increase affordable housing Establish and maintain a stronger mutually respectful relationship with Indigenous people and their First Nations Communities 	
Build CLSL’s Capacity and Capability			
Continue to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Strengthen Human Resources nurture a positive organizational culture build a “leaderful organization” 	Develop a strong organizational brand and capacity for <ul style="list-style-type: none"> promotion, resource development public education 	Use technology to support organizational effectiveness, communications, and person-centred support	Sustainable, purposeful collaboration and Strategic Relationships/ Partnerships

CLSL is a social benefit organization. Clearly, the identity of CLSL and its Mission focus the organization’s work on the inclusion of individuals with disabilities, and their supporters in the life of the community. That said, CLSL’s work happens in the context of broader social, economic and environmental issues. As such, the organization needs to discern its (leadership) role as an agent of community development and as a corporate citizen.

Strategic Directions

These six Directions are of equal importance, and the order does not reflect priority.

Direction # 1 Improved Personal Outcomes Through Supports and Services

FOCUS: Improve outcomes for persons currently supported and improve/increase reach-out to more persons in need of support.

CLSL will provide the right supports at the right time, by:

- Continually listening and gathering information (from respective stakeholders) and gaining a true understanding of people's wants, needs, desires.
- Exposing people to more options to help them discover what it is they really want.
- Ensuring supports are flexible and change / grow with the person as their needs and desires change over time.
- Offering a broader range of more individualized supports and services.
- Connecting people to community resources.

Success 2025

Housing will have broader and more individualized support options with respect to: person-centred planning; supporting and sustaining relationships; older individuals with disabilities

Housing will have more person-centred support and less congregation within its sites:

- Housing (via CLSL) will have developed stronger relationships / partnerships with local landlords / builders, and CLSL will have begun re-development of at least one of its currently owned properties.
- Host Home options will increase as funding options become available and as people express the desire for this living situation.
- Day Supports will have better individualized supports and less congregation within each of its sites, particularly Wawanosh Community First.
- Implementation of Person-Centred approaches within CLSL is entrenched, with training and development ongoing.

Key Results by March 2023

- **Housing** will have:
 - Developed and/or begun to implement on-going training for staff (as necessary i.e., SIL) about homelessness, transitional aged youth, mental health and addictions to better understand their needs.
 - Individualized Supportive Housing - More people will be living in situations which they choose.
 - Increase Host Homes within the community – target is 3 Host Homes by 2023.
- **Day supports (Community First)** will have:
 - Increased the number of hours people are engaged in the community during part of their week by 20%.
 - Examined supports and services offered by a minimum of 3-4 other agencies and assessed feasibility of incorporating same or similar options within our parameters.
 - Assessed need / process to continue with virtual supports after COVID.

- **Person-Centred Supports:**
 - 80% of Staff trained in Person-Centred Approaches and One Page Profiles
 - 75% of people supported have completed PCP reviews (of those who agree they want one)
 - 70% of everyone's PCP action items implemented, goals and aspirations achieved and/or actively being pursued
 - Annual Stakeholder Surveys – individuals supported, families, staff, donors show good to excellent results
 - Self evaluation of progress in the area of person-centred practices (such as Progress for Providers [[progressforprovidersmanagers2014web.pdf \(wordpress.com\)](#)]) shows improvement each year

Direction #2 Enable a Greener CLSL

FOCUS: Achieve a “greener” organization and contribute to a greener Sarnia-Lambton community.

Success 2025

- **“Green Enabling” organizational structures and polices are in place**
- **A culture has been established where “thinking green” takes precedence**
- **Green Day to Day Practices are “the way we do things around here”**
- **One electric van in the fleet by 2025**

Key Results by March 2023

CLSL has organizational “structures” to support environmental stewardship

- Green Policy and targets have been established
- A plan for each home/location and what makes sense for them and their specific situation
- Dealing with Green suppliers as much as possible
- A platform has been established to support sharing, learning and celebration of “green activities and accomplishments”

People are engaged in environmental stewardship activities (staff, volunteers, people supported and their families/supporters)

- Paper Light by 2023. Reduce paper use by 20%.
- Greening CLSL sub-committee (Green Team) is well established.
- Staff training is provided to support awareness and use of practical “green” practices.

Direction #3 Strengthen Human Resources

FOCUS: Strengthen CLSL's capacity to attract and support staff and volunteers who can work together to achieve the vision, and work in collaboration with other organizations to build a more welcoming, sustainable and healthy community.

Priorities

- Recruitment and retention – Place emphasis on increased outreach and connections with high schools, colleges and other agencies such as: Employment Ontario, Newcomer Centres and New Beginnings to enlarge recruitment talent pool.
- Create a benchmarks and measurement system to measure and evaluate HR practices.
- Create shared training tracking, revise training material and use consistent approach to training delivery.
- Create feedback system for increased development and new employee support.

- Focus on development, talent management and succession planning.

Success 2025

- Solid staffing program that seeks and secures a talent pool of vibrant, knowledgeable, caring people, who have shared organizational values of providing outstanding service to our clients and community
- Excellent retention /succession planning program to engage, motivate employees and prevent inefficiencies in staffing
- Alignment of HR practices to Developmental Services HR Strategy which are viewed as tested and best practices
- Services driven by evidence, evaluation of programs and outcomes
- Deeper collaboration with community partners to support CLSL programming and provide job opportunities for community members
- 2-way feedback/evaluation process to ensure new hires have the resources to perform and that all employees are given opportunities develop skills
- A workforce that reflects a person-centred culture, and increased diversity of employees

Key Results by March 2023

- Increase community outreach for greater applicant pool.
- Create measurement system by collaborating with other agencies who have measurement tools.
- Increase employee engagement and improve retention.
- Revise new hire orientation and training.
- Refresh employee training to be more people-centred and team oriented.
- Implement recognition approaches and Peer Support program.
- Develop succession plans for Board and management.

Direction # 4 Strengthen Communications, Marketing and Promotion - strong brand, advocacy, and public education

FOCUS: Strengthen Communications, Marketing and Promotions to Enhance CLSL Internally and Within the Community.

Priorities

- Brand identity and promotion of CLSL
- Resource Development – focus on recruitment of staff and recruitment of volunteers and Board members; acquisition of funds through grants and sponsorships
- Advocacy and public education to support a diverse, inclusive, and welcoming community – focus on access to affordable housing and employment

Success 2025

- Increase revenue to CLSL from more diverse sources (through Passports/individualized funding; sponsorships; grants).
- Establish more effective recruitment of staff (greater # of positions filed within a shorter time frame)
- Increase communication within the organization (interdepartmental sharing of info) and support for organizational initiatives – person-centred practices and “green” CLSL.
- Increase communication between organization and families.
- Expand workforce participation and access to affordable housing (evidence of inclusion).

Key Results by March 2023

- **Create Capacity** - Marketing and communications person hired; communications team created with representatives from across the organization.
 - Engagement of Board members as “ambassadors” in promotion, advocacy and interagency partnerships
 - Establish annual marketing budget per department
 - Include CLSL member in Journey to Belonging process
- **Marketing and Communications plan established** which supports/enables inclusivity within the community (focus on affordable housing and employment); staff recruitment; Board recruitment and “Green” CLSL
- **More visibility, more awareness within community** of what our work is, what we’re here for
 - additional social media platforms (i.e., YouTube), sharing success stories, showing inclusivity, diversity, increasing outreach on existing social media platforms
 - Using job posting platforms (i.e., Indeed) for employees to rate employers (approach employees with positive feedback to share their experiences), exit interview feedback
(Could this be accomplished in staff success stories? See above point)
- **Internal communications platforms** (communities of practice - COPs) created to support “Green” activities and person-centred practices. These COPs are: “connected” to external networks (e.g., Presence to Citizenship; environmental groups).

Direction #5 Enhance Use of Technology

FOCUS: Strengthen the use of technology to enhance organizational effectiveness; communication and promotion: the provision of supports to individuals.

Priorities

- Strategic approach and sustainable infrastructure - Focus on improving efficiency of support delivery, human resources and communications
- Assistive Technology – increasing availability of relatively inexpensive technologies to support both personal independence (activities of daily living) and safety and security. As part of person-centred support strategy, encourage individualized approaches which include a mix of direct support and assistive technology. This is a BIG potential area for capacity building.

Success 2025

- Improved Efficiency of HR Processes
 - Complete HRIS system to track employee details including training, performance management, disciplinary action
- Improved Administration and support move to Paperless Organization (green CLSL)
 - Enhanced use of online forms records management - Utilize online attendance forms to eliminate sign in sheets
- Improved Communication and Collaboration
 - internally through Teams, Survey Monkey, staff intranet site and externally through our website and social media
- More Effective Support and Better Outcomes for Individuals - Technology integrated and implemented (as/where appropriate) in personal plans

- Shared IT service needs and objectives have been identified and acted upon creating shared IT service efficiencies.

Key Results by 2023

- CLSL will have developed and implemented a sustainable Information Technology plan to assist in achieving the outcomes it intends to produce for the organization with a focus on improving efficiency of support delivery, human resources and communications, and for the individuals it serves.
- “Automate” Workplace Inspections – increase effectiveness as well as SAFETY
 - Source online forms management software for workplace inspections
- Policy Database - online database management software for Forms/Policies
- GEC Fully Operational
 - All programs / locations using GEC as their staff schedules
 - Use Telephony and timecards to eliminate the need for paper timesheets
- On-Line training more accessible - additional training sessions/programs to Surge Learning
- Establish partnership(s) to build capacity to effectively use technology (possible shared services agreement)
- On-line “communities of practice” established to support person-centered work and “Green CLSL” initiatives

Direction #6 Promote Sustainable and Purposeful Collaboration/Partnerships

FOCUS: Engage in collaboration/partnerships to support CLSL’s sustainability and the organization’s work in building a healthy and welcoming community.

Success 2025

Collaboration will support CLSL’s efforts in 5 areas:

Housing - Secure community-wide (Sarnia-Lambton) partnerships pertaining to affordable housing services and support.

- Actively involved and connected, as a community partner, with Sarnia Homeless Housing Initiative and County of Lambton Homeless Housing Initiative
- Community collaboration with community services and supports to support transient or transitional individuals with housing
- Working directly and offering support with individuals and families to engage in ongoing planning pertaining to current and future housing options, services, and supports

Person-Centred Work

- Collaborate with other Community Living organizations within Ontario through Presence to Citizenship initiative pertaining to housing supports and other services – consider best practices and innovation that will gain the support of funders.
- Build strong relationship with DSO.

More Welcoming and Sustainable Community

- Continue to be an active participant in local Social Services network initiative to **support inclusion and diversity**.
- **Green CLSL Environmental Stewardship** - Collaborate with neighbourhood associations and/or food security organizations. CLSL will be active in supporting 2-3 community gardens.

Indigenous people and First Nations Communities

- Establish and maintain a stronger mutually respectful relationship with Indigenous people and First Nations Communities that will better enable Community Living support for Indigenous persons with disabilities.

Technology

- Shared services agreement to support tech infrastructure for social services/health organizations