



COMMUNITY INTEGRATION SERVICES SOCIETY (CISS) STRATEGIC PLAN

2023 - 2028

CISS is grateful to provide services on the traditional, ancestral, and unceded territories of the Kwikwetlem, ṣxʷməθkʷə́yəməṭ təməxʷ (Musqueam), S'ólhTéméxw (Stó:lo), Stz'uminus, Skwxwú7mesh-ulh Temíxw (Squamish), sə́lilwətaṭ təməxʷ (Tsleil-Waututh) peoples.

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LETTER FROM CISS BOARD VICE CHAIR AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Community Integration Services Society (CISS) first opened its doors in 1990. 33 years later, our commitment to supporting people with developmental disabilities to take risks, develop skills, and foster genuine connections continues.

In late 2022, CISS began a process of listening and learning. Over several weeks, in partnership with an external facilitator, we engaged in more than 70 conversations with the people and families we support, our staff, leadership team, Board of Directors and community partners. We explored what people like about CISS, where they see opportunities for improvement and what their greatest aspirations are for the organization's future.

We are grateful to every person who gave their time and energy to the process as they helped us understand the priorities for the plan ahead. We learned that:

- The people we support want greater opportunities for growth, learning and connection.
- Our staff want a workplace where they feel included, safe, and valued, with plenty of opportunities for career growth.
- Across all groups, increased community partnerships are seen as an essential step in enhancing the ways we support people and families.

As we begin to implement this strategic plan, we are excited about the future of CISS. We look forward to continuing to support people with developmental disabilities in ways that are meaningful to them while, at the same time, fostering true inclusion and belonging for all.

Brandon Larson
Board Vice-Chair

Shari Mahar
Executive Director

RESEARCH FINDINGS

From October to November 2022, we engaged in over 70 conversations about the future of the organization. We also conducted a survey of CISS staff who were unable to make in-person sessions. We asked people what they like about the organization and where they see opportunities for improvement.

During these conversations, using an Appreciative Inquiry¹ lens, we explored several conversation topics, including:

- What works well at CISS?
- What are the opportunities for improvement?
- What are stakeholders' greatest aspirations for the organization, its impact, and its future?
- How should impact and progress be measured?

¹Appreciative Inquiry (AI) is a strength-based approach to change that focuses on what's working rather than what's not, and invites people to co-design the future of their organization and its goals. (Visit <https://www.centerforappreciativeinquiry.net> for more information on AI.)

“
Before COVID, I had a job...for 10 years, I would like to get another job because it is fun to work, make money and make friends.
”

CISS SUPPORTED INDIVIDUAL, OCTOBER 2022

“
The last two years have been very challenging in community living and the way (CISS has) persevered has been great.
”

FUNDER, NOVEMBER 2022

Over several weeks, key themes arose that have directly informed the strategic priorities of this plan, including:

- 01 Diversify CISS supports to best meet the needs of people and their families – including more opportunities for community connection, employment (“every person who wants a job, has a job”), and life skills training.
- 02 Build stronger community connections and relationships for the benefit of the people CISS supports.
- 03 Cultivate greater employee connection and well-being. Offer more training, emotional support, team building activities and enhance onboarding and retention strategies.
- 04 Grow a workplace culture of trust, support, and transparency.
- 05 Create an employment program for the people we support, including one of social enterprise.
- 06 Enhance and re-evaluate our Community Inclusion (CI) services (launch a CI think tank).
- 07 Ensure CISS is a place where people want to work – a respected, sought-after organization that supports an in-demand profession.
- 08 Enhance marketing and communications efforts to elevate awareness and engagement of CISS within the community and prospective partners.
- 09 Ensure services are diverse and responsive to support people and their changing interests.
- 10 Expand to offer services to other Lower Mainland communities.

A VISION IS AN ORGANIZATION'S NORTH STAR.



A vision is an organization's North Star.

As part of the strategic planning process, members of the CISS Board and leadership team gathered for a half-day planning session to review CISS's vision and mission statements. Participants looked at vision/mission statement best practices, shared their hopes for the people and families they support and looked at how to create a vision statement that is both clear and concise. By the end of the session, participants agreed on the following two statements:



CISS VISION:

True inclusion and belonging for all.



CISS MISSION:

At Community Integration Services Society, we support people with developmental disabilities through their different life stages to take risks, develop skills, make genuine connections, and live lives in ways that are meaningful to them, their families and the community.



STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Having reviewed the research, we've identified three strategic priorities to guide our work over the next five years. We've also carefully considered how these priorities will move us closer to our vision of true inclusion and belonging for all.



BROADEN & DIVERSIFY THE SUPPORTS WE OFFER.

CISS creates diverse supports that directly respond to the needs and interests of the people we support as they look to pursue opportunities for growth, learning and greater community connection.



ENHANCE WORKPLACE WELLNESS AND CONNECTION.

We cultivate a safe, inclusive and stable workplace where staff feel valued and have opportunities to learn, grow, thrive and connect.



INCREASE COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS.

We build strong and diverse community partnerships for the benefit of the people and families we support.

WITH GRATITUDE

We thank everyone who helped bring our strategic plan to life. You gave generously of your time, energy, and ideas. In the process, we learned so much about how we can best support people and families to experience true inclusion and belonging.