



**Evergreen**  
Youth & Family Services  
*Strengthening Youth. Preserving Families.*

# **STRATEGIC PLAN**

## **2021-2024**

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*Mission: Evergreen Youth & Family Services is a community based organization committed to strengthening youth and preserving families with an emphasis on those living in northern Minnesota.*

In June of 2020 Evergreen Youth & Family Services Leadership partnered with Enterprise Minnesota to develop a comprehensive Strategic Plan extending from 2021 to 2024 and beyond. This process included several strategy planning sessions that involved leadership, staff and key stakeholders.

Stakeholder surveys from clients, staff, leadership, the board, the community, and donors helped to inform the development of key strategic initiatives which shaped a multi-year plan to position Evergreen Youth & Family Services to keep pace with the evolving needs of clients and our agency.

During the process several important assets were developed that not only helped to identify the priorities and assist in evaluating our current programs and practices, but serve as beneficial tools that will be crucial in identifying priorities that align with our values and mission for many years to come.

It is important to note that several priorities carried over from prior strategic plans where opportunities for improvements still exist. In particular, increasing revenue streams through non-grant sources and addressing organizational capacity by developing more effective processes and investing in organizational development have been identified in at least two of the prior plans, and remain notable points in the proposed plan.

In recent years, staff turnover in key roles, administrative capacity, along with financial vulnerability has inherently forced our organization to focus more on short-term, crisis-based decisions rather than making gains in long-term, mission focused planning and programming updates. Further, the lack of complete systems (comprehensive onboarding plans, staff cross-training, succession planning for staff, staff development, etc.) have caused gaps in valuable time and resources when turnover has occurred.

This plan addresses the vulnerabilities and leverages our strengths as we set out to increase our financial viability and further develop the infrastructure of our organization, ensuring Evergreen Youth & Family Services can continue to serve our community well into the future.

#### Key Initiatives:

- **Financial Sustainability**
- **Organizational Development**
- **High Quality Service Delivery**
- **Enhance Communication (internal/external)**
- **Streamline Programs and Administrative Processes**

#### Anticipated Outcomes:

- **Decrease in agency vulnerability relating to financial status**
- **Faster turnaround with onboarding, resulting with well trained, professional staff**
- **Increased delivery of high-quality services**
- **Increase in staff participation, brand awareness, and donor pool**
- **More administrative time to invest in agency development, strategic initiatives, and**
- **Increase of staff time to deliver services because processes have been streamlined**

By involving the staff, including follow up and consultations with Enterprise MN, and adapting our board agenda to reflect progress toward each initiative we are extending ownership of this plan beyond the Management Team. Throughout the life of the plan, we hope you will join us in both implementation and celebration of successes along the way.

Sincerely,



Jana Wolff, Executive Director

# Summary of Key Discoveries & Findings

# Key Discoveries and Findings

## Strengths

- Evergreen is positively impacting the community
- Committed, passionate and overutilized staff

## Opportunities

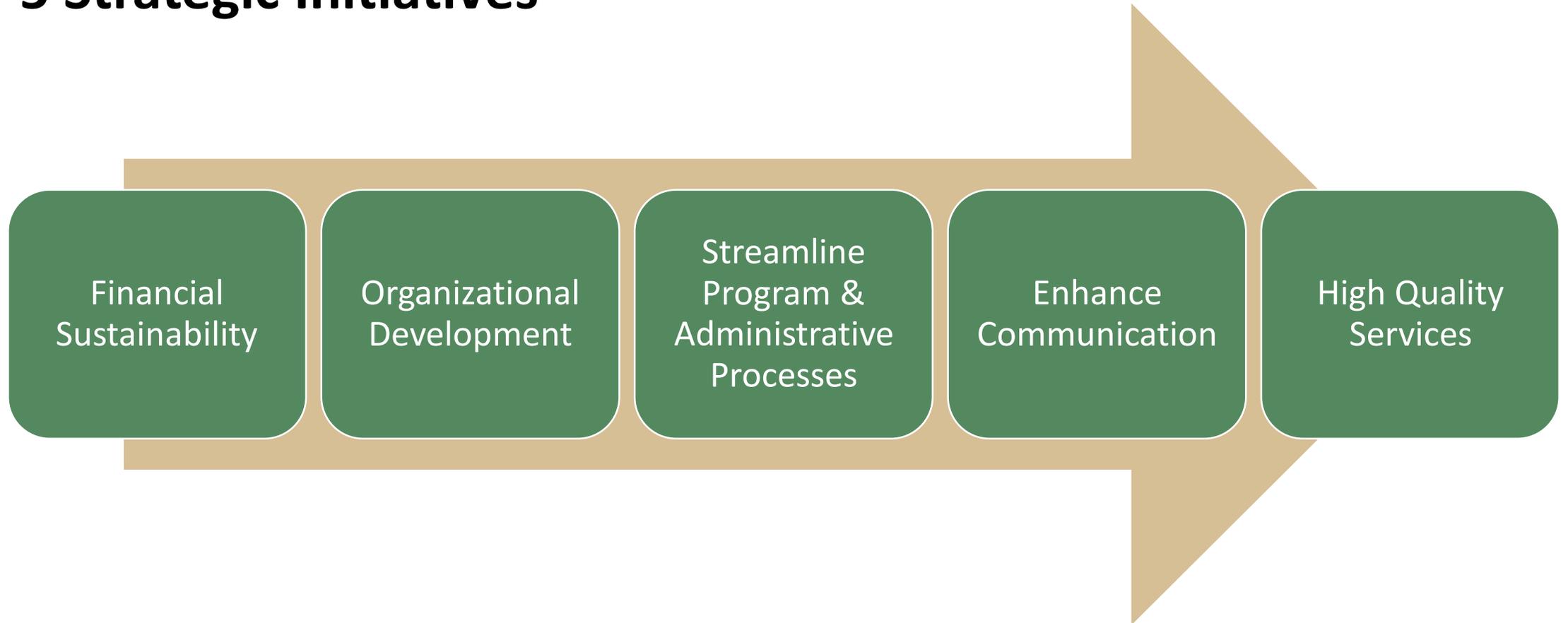
- Administrative burden is high across the organization
- Process improvement and process alignment
- Clarify/Focus on the mission and ensure services are aligned
- Invest in staff fundamental and functional skill development
- Decrease reliance on grant funding

# Strategic Initiatives

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Mission: Evergreen Youth & Family Services is a community-based organization committed to strengthening youth and preserving families with an emphasis on those living in Northern Minnesota.

## 5 Strategic Initiatives



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# Financial Sustainability

## Definition

The ability to support current operations, while also creating reserve so we can support operations.

This is necessary to strengthen and stabilize Evergreen's sustainability of current operations without disruptions in services.

## Example Programs / Actions

- Developing non-grant revenue streams
- Being selective and having established processes/systems for grant selection, pursuit, phase out

## Current Progress Financial Sustainability

- **Direct Mail Appeal** – increase from one per year to up to three per year
  - 147 new donors in 2020
  - 2 Mailings annual, 1 email appeal
- **Other fundraising**
  - Meal fundraisers (partnerships with local restaurants)
- **Further Development of Gala**
  - Expansion of programming and participation
  - Development of committee
- **Exploring Other Opportunities**
  - Housing Support/Stabilization (billable service)

# Organizational Development

## Definition

A science-based process that helps organizations build capacity to change and achieve greater effectiveness by developing, improving, and reinforcing strategies, structures, and processes.

## Actions

- Document staff knowledge (retain)
- Develop comprehensive onboarding processes
- Team building / interagency collaboration
- Provide internal staff support/consultation
- Crosstrain and succession planning
- Create opportunities for staff to develop in current roles
- Ongoing professional skills development

## Current Progress – Organizational Development

- Beginning to identify proxy's for every key functions and cross-train staff
  - 2 staff for each key function
  - Some positions will have more than one proxy - based on duties
- Onboarding manuals for new roles and key leadership positions
  - Plan to develop board manuals and discussion succession plans
- Professional Trainings scheduled for 2021 (all staff and administrative staff)
- Succession planning
  - Key Leadership planning June 2021, annually thereafter

# Streamline Program & Administrative Processes

## Definition

The use of tools, systems, processes and trainings to streamline workflow to reduce redundancies and be more efficient.

## Example Programs / Actions

- Agency Wide Database for client data
- Completion and evaluation of all program manuals
- Comprehensive training check list for all staff
- Evaluation of processes to eliminate redundancies

## Expected Outcomes – Service Delivery

- Staff have more time to spend with clients
- Less time spent on reporting/data gathering
- Staff will be well trained and confident in their roles and expectations
- Clients will get better service delivery
- Staff retention

## Expected Outcomes – Administrative

- More time for administrative staff training
- More time for financial analysis
- More time to think strategically and plan for future
- More time to pursue unrestricted revenue opportunities
- Retention of key roles

## Current Progress - Streamline Program & Administrative Processes

- Safe Harbor Program Manual – June 2020
- Mental Health Program Manual - underway, eta April 2021
- Independent Living Skills & Successful Transition to Adulthood for youth Manuals – started 9/2020 (ETA: March 2021)
- Youth Leadership Council – started June 2020 (ETA: April/May 2021)
- Street Outreach – revision in process
- Program Team reviews bi-annually for continual development
- Project Tracker (track current issues/initiatives and status)
  - Assist with accountability
  - Ensure tracking progress and identifying gaps along the way

# Enhance Communication

## Definition

Intentional and informative communications and marketing to develop awareness, increase engagement, promote collaboration and build trust both internally and externally.

## Example Programs / Actions

- Marketing
- Brand awareness/outreach
- Employment recognition (positive reputation)
- Internal / external communications (newsletters, updates, impact reports, etc.)

## Current Progress – Enhance Communication

- BSU Marketing Class Project 2020
- Estimates for **marketing**\* that includes:
  - Website re-design and content evaluation/update
  - Professional Development of 4-6 videos
  - Search engine optimization
  - Radio Ads (MPR, PBC, PBB, RP Broadcasting)
  - Online marketing
- Donor Pool expansion
- Staff participation/engagement with board
- More frequent communications across agency: updates, board reports, management team notes
- Project Tracker

*\*requires capital/designated budget so will start small and develop as able*

# High Quality Service Delivery

## Definition

Meeting or exceeding customer expectations and outcome expectations that support our mission of “strengthening youth and preserving families”.

To accomplish this, we will identify community partners and internal cross-program collaboration, while also looking for continual improvement opportunities, so we can effectively meet client needs.

## Example Programs / Actions

- Program integration and/or cross support
- Collaborative partnerships
- Meeting changing needs of client

## Current Progress – High Quality Service Delivery

Identifying opportunities to better coordinate with external agencies

- Bi-Cap
- Support Within Reach
- Northwoods Battered Women's Shelter
- BSU

Development of relationships with other agencies we can refer clients

- Housing Matters
- Life House, Duluth
- Village of Hope (Rent Wise Program)
- Community Resource Connections
- Northwest Indian Community Development Center