

Strategic Plan 2016-2020

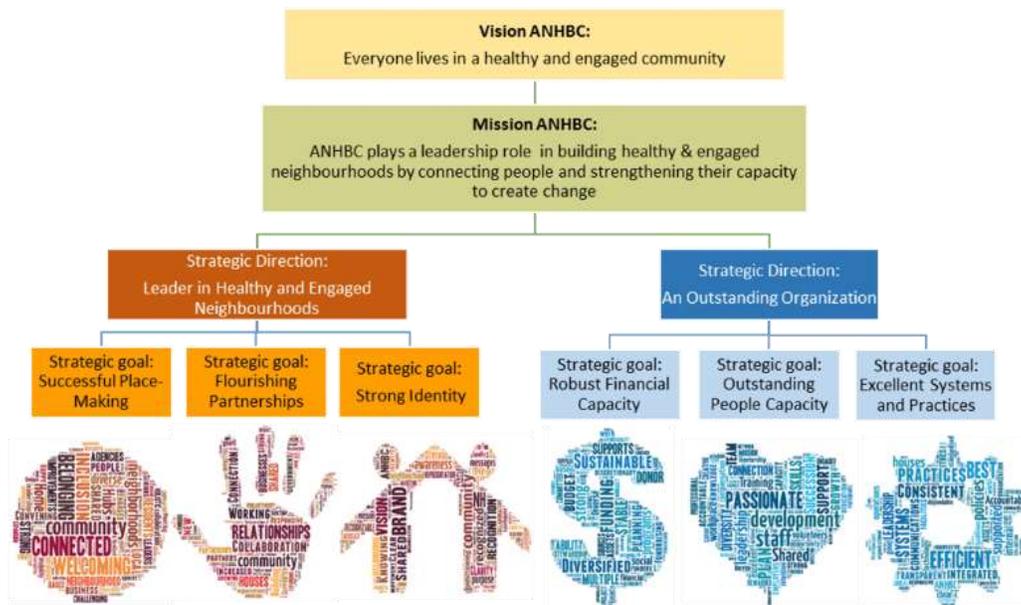


ASSOCIATION OF
**NEIGHBOURHOOD
HOUSES BC**

ANHBC Strategic Framework 2016-2020

Vision: Everyone lives in a healthy and engaged community.

Mission: ANHBC plays a leadership role in building healthy and engaged neighbourhoods by connecting people and strengthening their capacity to create change.



Strategic direction: Leader in healthy and engaged neighbourhoods

-  **Strategic goal 1: Successful placemaking:** A community where residents belong and grow as leaders
-  **Strategic goal 2: Flourishing partnerships:** Collaboration within and outside ANHBC to support our goals
-  **Strategic goal 3: Strong identity:** Strong brand, valued in the community and in the movement

Strategic direction: An outstanding organization

-  **Strategic goal 4: Robust financial capacity:** Stable, diversified funding and mission-driven spending
-  **Strategic goal 5: Outstanding people capacity:** Supporting passionate staff and volunteers to grow
-  **Strategic goal 6: Excellent systems and practices:** Efficient infrastructure and standardized, effective processes

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Introduction to ANHBC

The Association of Neighbourhood Houses BC (ANHBC) is a charitable non-profit organization that delivers community-based social services and focusses on the development of strong neighbourhoods. ANHBC operates seven neighbourhood houses and one outdoor camp in Metro Vancouver.

- Alexandra Neighbourhood House
- Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House
- Frog Hollow Neighbourhood House
- Gordon Neighbourhood House
- Kitsilano Neighbourhood House
- Mount Pleasant Neighbourhood House
- Sasamat Outdoor Centre
- South Vancouver Neighbourhood House

As of June 2016 there is also one associate member, Kootenay Family Place in Castlegar, BC. The associate member is not an active participant in this plan.

History

ANHBC has a long history of working with neighbours and neighbourhoods in the Lower Mainland of British Columbia. The non-profit society that is the predecessor of ANHBC was originally incorporated in 1894 and since then has run a hospital, an orphanage, a fresh-air camp and has evolved to its present form operating seven neighbourhood houses and an outdoor camp in Metro Vancouver.

ANHBC is part of the neighbourhood and settlement house movement that has its beginnings in 19th century England. In the mid-1880s, Toynbee Hall was established in London to address growing industrial poverty, especially to respond to the needs of rural people who moved to the city to find work and immigrants fleeing persecution in continental Europe. These migrant people were often very vulnerable, leaving behind their communities, families and everything that was familiar to them.

The neighbourhood and settlement house movement is credited with establishing public recreation programs, the first day nurseries for working parents, English as a second language and adult literacy classes as well as the profession of social work. Today neighbourhood houses are hubs for local community development activities and for programs and services that address local needs; there are thousands of neighbourhood houses in more than thirty countries around the world.

The original Alexandra Neighbourhood House began as a women's and children's hospital, which opened in 1891 at 7th Avenue and Pine Street in the Kitsilano neighbourhood of Vancouver. The hospital operated for three years, but closed as it was difficult to attract doctors to work at the location. In 1894, the hospital was converted to an orphanage formed under the Alexandra Community Activities Society (Alexandra Society). The Alexandra Society, which ultimately became ANHBC, was one of the first charitable societies in British Columbia. The Alexandra Fresh Air Camp officially opened at Crescent Beach, Surrey, in 1918.

In the 1930s, as orphanages across Canada were replaced by foster homes, the orphanage was closed. In 1938 the first full-fledged neighbourhood house in British Columbia, Alexandra Neighbourhood House, was officially established at the 7th and Pine site. It was an active neighbourhood centre open to all families, with services ranging from preschool daycare to seniors drop-in programs. It was also used as a youth hostel from 1969 to 1971.

The success of the Alexandra House led to the opening of Gordon House in the West End in 1942, and Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House joined the Alexandra Society in 1963. In 1966, with three active neighbourhood houses in operation, the Alexandra Society changed its name to the Neighbourhood Services Association. The name change included a renewed emphasis on community development that resulted in a number of new neighbourhood houses forming in Vancouver.

In 1975, the original Alexandra House at 7th and Pine was destroyed by fire. The property was sold and the monies were used to establish the Alexandra Foundation for Neighbourhood Houses, which continues to this day to encourage the development of the neighbourhood house movement in British Columbia by supporting finite projects of neighbourhood houses or championing the start-up phase for new neighbourhood houses.

Through the middle decades of the 20th century other sites were incorporated into the organization: Gordon Neighbourhood House in 1942, Cedar Cottage Neighbourhood House in 1955, an outdoor camp (later to become Sasamat Outdoor Centre) c. 1968, the new Alexandra Neighbourhood House in Crescent Beach in 1973, Kitsilano Neighbourhood House in 1974, South Vancouver Neighbourhood House in 1976, and Mount Pleasant and Frog Hollow Neighbourhood Houses in 1977. Other neighbourhood house and community initiatives were supported through this period and into the early 2000s, including the Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House, which now operates as an independent organization.

During the past decade ANHBC has continued to grow in size and scope. We now operate in 50 sites in the region. In 2016-2017 we will offer 1000 licenced childcare spaces and serve more than 60,000 individual neighbours. We have an annual operating budget of \$20 million and employ over 600 people, including 175 on a full-time basis. We are blessed with the support of more than 1500 volunteers providing 50,000 hours of service to ANHBC and our neighbourhoods.

ANHBC is linked to a larger network of neighbourhood houses in Metro Vancouver that includes Burnaby Neighbourhood House, Collingwood Neighbourhood House, Downtown Eastside Neighbourhood House, Kiwassa Neighbourhood House, Little Mountain Neighbourhood House, North Shore Neighbourhood House, and Oak Avenue Neighbourhood Hub. These organizations operate as separate legal entities but partnerships and collaborations frequently develop within the network.

Scope

This strategic plan addresses the full scope of ANHBC. It is built on the foundations of an earlier plan (approved in 2010 for the period 2010 – 2013). The process of developing the plan was guided by a committee of the ANHBC Board of Directors which included senior staff. The content of the plan was developed through a series of consultations that included 26 staff members and 37 volunteers.

As we describe in the closing section, [Linking Strategies](#), the plan provides an overarching framework that links with the work of the individual houses, camp and departments within ANHBC. It is designed to enrich and support the work of all parts of our organization and to build the leadership and effectiveness of ANHBC so we can achieve our vision of everyone living in a healthy and engaged community.

Strategies, goals, targets and measures

Strategic Direction: Leader in healthy and engaged neighbourhoods



Successful placemaking



Flourishing partnerships



Strong identity

This strategic direction includes the three strategic goals that have an external orientation. Together these goals reveal the public or external face of the organization and describe what we aspire to in the coming years - to be recognized as a frontrunner in creating neighbourhoods where residents belong and can grow as leaders and to support this work through strategic collaboration within and outside the organization.

Placemaking (see an explanation of the term [below](#)) is at the heart of ANHBC's purpose and drives our work. Most of the programs and services that are offered by ANHBC fall within this strategic goal. All other strategic goals, even those under the strategic direction "An Outstanding Organization", support our strategy of placemaking. Without successful placemaking, we will not be able to move closer to our envisioned future where everyone lives in a healthy and engaged community.

Strategic Goal 1: Successful placemaking

- Outcome 1.1: Resilient communities

Strategic Goal 2: Flourishing partnerships

- Outcome 2.1: Strategic alliances
- Outcome 2.2: Local community networks
- Outcome 2.3: Knowledge sharing

Strategic Goal 3: Strong identity

- Outcome 3.1: Leader in the neighbourhood house movement
- Outcome 3.2: Recognized and trusted brand

reconciliation”³ and that recognizing the impact of past injustices against First Nations and Indigenous people is a critical step in creating that legacy. Incorporating this principle into our approach to welcoming and integrating newcomers will strengthen our ability to move forward and become successful place-makers in a “place” where the territory has not been ceded to Canada.

Activities

1. Develop an organization-wide framework designed to promote community resiliency. This can be used to guide decisions about program development.
2. Develop and deliver excellent supports, programs and services that are responsive to local needs and culture, are grounded in evidence and expertise, are designed to build local resiliency, and are effective in achieving their planned outcomes.
3. Explore, together with local First Nations and Aboriginal organizations, what it means to operate on un-ceded territory and what appropriate ways there are to incorporate this into the work of the ANHBC. Develop an action plan.
4. Develop a strategy for expanding ANHBC operated social housing.

³ Reconciliation Canada (2016). Retrieved from <http://reconciliationcanada.ca/staging/about-2/history-and-background/background/> February 24, 2016.



Strategic Goal 2: Flourishing partnerships

Collaboration within and outside ANHBC to support our goals

Outcome 2.1: Strategic alliances

Developing successful partnerships takes time and resources and should be undertaken purposefully. The most successful partnerships are reciprocal, have a clear objective and are based on respect. There are many opportunities for developing strategic alliances. We have identified alliances with other neighbourhood houses in our region as a priority. During the consultation phase for this plan, it became clear that there is a desire for stronger internal collaboration and “partnerships” among ANHBC’s neighbourhood houses and the outdoor camp as well.

Activities

5. Map current alliances and conduct an organizational analysis to identify where we can benefit from new external partnerships. Develop strategy to strengthen and expand partnerships.
6. Identify areas where internal collaboration can be improved.

Outcome 2.2: Local community networks

The existence of local networks supports the development of resilient communities and is a key element of placemaking. It is ANHBC’s role to build strength and capacity at that local level. Community networks play an essential role in this.

Activities

7. Analyze the existing local community networks and the current systems for their development and support. Develop strategy to support network building.

Outcome 2.3: Knowledge sharing and learning

Sharing knowledge is a key pathway to developing partnerships and alliances and will help build the identity and reputation of ANHBC. By sharing knowledge, we build our leadership position. It is important that we choose and share knowledge that is of high quality and supports our identity. We also need the technical systems in place to share knowledge and encourage mutual learning. This is further discussed in the section [Strategic Goal 6: Excellent systems and practices](#).

Activities

8. Develop a practice for vetting and sharing knowledge.
9. Identify our knowledge gaps and develop a strategy for filling them.
10. Review ANHBC's performance as a "learning organization". Make plans to improve.

Strategic Direction: An outstanding organization.



Robust financial capacity



Outstanding people capacity



Excellent systems and practices

This second strategic direction includes the three strategic goals that have an internal orientation: **Robust financial capacity; outstanding people capacity; and excellent systems and practices.** Together these goals work to make sure ANHBC has the finances, the people and the systems in place to perform our work in an excellent manner.

Strategic Goal 4: Robust financial capacity

- Outcome 4.1: Diversified funding
- Outcome 4.2: Financial management plan

Strategic Goal 5: Outstanding people capacity

- Outcome 5.1: Engaged workforce
- Outcome 5.2: Diverse workforce
- Outcome 5.3: Culture of accountability

Strategic Goal 6: Excellent systems and practices

- Outcome 6.1: Knowledge sharing platform
- Outcome 6.2: Facilities that meet the community and organizational needs
- Outcome 6.3: Consistency in policies and practices among the neighbourhood houses



Strategic Goal 5: Outstanding people capacity

Supporting passionate staff and volunteers to grow

People are the heart of an organization. At ANHBC we envision an organization where staff and volunteers feel connected, engaged and nurtured, and where their wisdom and passion is recognized and supported. We value diversity in our workforce and seek to foster a culture of accountability. The following outcomes have been identified.

Outcome 5.1: Engaged workforce

Engaged employees and volunteers perform better, are more innovative, tend to stay longer and experience better health⁴. People are more engaged when they feel they do meaningful work, can express their ideas and feel supported. Trustworthy, approachable and open managers who clearly communicate ANHBC's vision, who are seen to work effectively to achieve our mission and who help employees understand their role, are crucial to employee engagement.

Activities:

19. Analyze the current policies, practices and training strategies to ensure they support the development of an engaged workforce, including both staff and volunteers. Adjust if needed.
20. Identify staff resources and develop opportunities for staff to share their expertise.
21. Review managers' capacities and skills and ensure the appropriate professional opportunities are provided.
22. Recruit so that our employees reflect the diversity of our communities.
23. Establish pathways that support qualified employees to move into leadership roles.

Outcome 5.2: Diverse workforce

ANHBC has a diverse workforce but diversity is not perceived to be equivalent at all levels in the organization; people feel that there is less diversity at the senior levels of the organization among both staff and volunteers. For example, a survey of all neighbourhood houses in Metro Vancouver (not only ANHBC) conducted in 2012 – 2013 showed that 51% of neighbourhood house employees were Canadian

⁴ Alfes, K., Truss, C., Soanne, E. C., Rees, C., Gatenby, M. (2010). Creating an engaged workforce: Findings from the Kingston employee engagement consortium project. Retrieved from http://www.cipd.co.uk/binaries/creating-an-engaged-workforce_2010.pdf

born, compared with 73% of board members.⁵ Other dimensions of diversity among our staff (such as gender, sexual orientation/identity, differently abled, socio-economic backgrounds, ethnicity and cultural background) have not been analyzed but are expressly valued in our organization.

Activities:

24. Analyze the current policies, practices, and training and recruitment strategies to ensure they help create a culture that encourages diversity.

25. Develop practices that encourage people to grow and advance within the organization and establish pathways that move talented employees from diverse backgrounds into leadership roles.

Outcome 5.3: Culture of accountability

Creating a culture of accountability is closely linked to the creation of an engaged workforce. People who supervise staff play a key role. They are not only responsible for clearly communicating expectations, measuring progress and providing timely feedback, they also need to set an example in their approach to their own work. A culture of accountability requires openness, honesty, opportunities for continuous learning, and an environment where people are encouraged to take risks and learn from their mistakes.

Activities:

26. Analyze ANHBC's organizational culture and look for indicators of accountability. Identify barriers and provide training to managers and leaders where needed.

⁵ Yan, M. C. (2013). Neighbourhood Houses in Metro Vancouver Clearinghouse Summary Report. Retrieved from <http://nhvproject.ca/wp-content/uploads/2013/12/Clearing-House-Report-30Nov13.pdf> February 26, 2016.

Activities:

29. Develop strategic facilities and capital assets plan(s) for all ANHBC facilities.

Outcome 6.3: Consistency in policies and practices among the neighbourhood houses

The organization's desire to have more consistency among the policies and practices used in the neighbourhood houses will support [Strategic Goal 3: Strong identity](#). Although through consistency there is great potential to improve organizational performance, a balance needs to be found between uniformity and unique local flavour.

Activities:

30. Analyze the organization's existing policies and practices. Identify areas that are suitable for conformity and areas that require local policies and practices. Harmonize organization-wide policies and practices when needed.

Linking Commitments and Strategies

Each of the ANHBC houses and the outdoor camp has a commitment to consult with and be guided by its own local reference group or neighbourhood. This commitment is essential to our work as leaders in building healthy, engaged neighbourhoods. As of the development of this plan, the outdoor camp and each neighbourhood house has a local strategic plan.

ANHBC as a whole has an obligation to set strategic direction and to develop systems and practices that support the work of each of its parts. This obligation is essential to creating an outstanding organization that can bring our mission to life, and this plan is another step towards that goal. Throughout, we actively pursue a healthy balance between the needs of ANHBC as a whole and the needs of the individual parts. This can be, and historically has been, challenging for us. But if this strategic plan is to achieve its purpose, it is essential to strive for that balance and to use the tension that results in a creative, positive way.

It is not expected (or even desirable) for each local plan to be in lock-step with the ANHBC organizational strategic plan. Over time we imagine that each local strategic plan will be seen to be more clearly aligned with the overarching strategic directions of ANHBC. Correspondingly, ANHBC's organization-wide plan will become more finely-tuned and inclusive of the needs and aspirations of each of the neighbourhoods and of camping and outdoor leadership.

Diversity makes us stronger - as it is for the tiniest bacterial colony to the global biosphere, so it is for ANHBC. We go forward together!