

YMCA OF THE NORTH SHORE

SHAPING OUR FUTURE









OUR MISSION

OUR Y WELCOMES ALL. WE STRENGTHEN COMMUNITIES, **EDUCATE AND NURTURE** CHILDREN, AND PROMOTE HEALTHY LIVING IN SPIRIT, MIND, AND BODY!

A MESSAGE FROM OUR CEO AND STRATEGY COMMITTEE CHAIR

Since 1858, our YMCA has stood resilient and time-tested as a trusted community leader. To remain relevant for over 165 years requires more than passion and vision; it demands strategy. Now, we embark on the next chapter of our YMCA's strategic journey as stewards of this organization and its remarkable ability to meet the evolving needs of our communities.

Recognizing the unprecedented impact of the past few years, our Y's mission is more vital than ever before. Welcoming, educating, nurturing, community, connectivity, and health have taken on new meanings, yet they remain core to our efforts. We face new challenges, but we stand strongly equipped to tackle them. Our volunteer and staff leadership are resolute in their effort to remain a beacon of positivity, possibility, and opportunity for those we serve.

Our strategy is not merely a plan; it's a declaration of the experience we want people to have, our resolve to shatter barriers to engagement, redefine the boundaries of health, and forge a profound unity that only an organization like the Y can inspire. Through these efforts, we aim not just to make a difference but to create a ripple effect of positive change that reverberates far beyond the communities we serve.

We cannot do it alone. Our YMCA is made up of dozens of Board Members, hundreds of employees, thousands of donors, and tens of thousands of members. To be our best, we need to engage everyone in our strategy. This includes the invaluable partnerships we have with our community partners who are vested in the same outcomes. When we are all aligned, we can achieve anything.

We invite you to read this strategy, share your feedback with Y professionals and volunteers, and consider how you can help. Thank you for your interest and belief in our Y's mission, vision, values, and strategy.

Your partners in impact, Chris Lovasco, President & CEO YMCA of the North Shore

Judy Gimik, Strategy Committee Chair YMCA of the North Shore

STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

Eliminating Barriers to Engagement for Everyone

Innovating Staff Development and Training

Closing the Gap Between Dollars Given and Dollars Raised

Creating Recruitment Pipelines for Staff, Donors, and Volunteers







PURPOSE & PROCESS

Our Y has undergone an extensive strategic planning process to shape the future of its services and impact. The progression from initial brainstorming sessions to engaging the Strategy Committee and subsequently the full Board of Directors showcases a thorough approach to refining and building upon ideas.

We began in 2022 by identifying seven areas of focus, Affordable Housing, Aquatics, Childcare, Facilities, Membership, Summer Camp, and Mental Wellness— which represent key pillars for the YMCA of the North Shore's future endeavors. We then conducted a comprehensive evaluation of internal strengths and weaknesses along with external opportunities and threats. The Strategy Committee organized summer workshops to gather further insights from staff, volunteer leaders, and field experts. Taken together, our strategic planning process reflects a proactive approach to ensuring a well-informed strategy from a wide variety of perspectives.

Based on the gathered information, the crafting of high-level ambition statements and strategic themes for each area of focus reflects our commitment to moving forward toward 2030 thoughtfully and deliberately.



STRATEGY COMMITTEE

Alysha Monfette, Staff
Chris Lovasco, Staff
Christopher Hemsey, Board Member
Gerald MacKillop, Staff
Jeanne Lambkin, Board Member
Jeff Loeb, Board Member
Judy Gimik, Board Member
Karen Lucas, Board Member
Marge Cregg, Staff
Scott Beyer, Ad Hoc Member
Stephen Barrand, Board Member
Steven Kapfhammer, Board Member

COMMUNITY NEEDS

Adapting to the needs of our communities has always been foundational to our core values and strategic focus. Today, these needs are evolving at a pace where demand for vital programs and services is challenging our capacity to meet those needs. Strategy 2030 marks our bold commitment to addressing these pressing concerns through deliberate and measurable actions in key focus areas, including:

- AFFORDABLE HOUSING: A 10-year waitlist for our Affordable Housing units.
- QUALITY CHILDCARE: Hundreds of working families with infants to preschoolers are on waitlists at our YMCA.
- INCREASED COST OF LIVING: Demand for financial assistance is outpacing fundraising by over \$1 million.
- LIMITED GEOGRAPHIC REACH: 30% of our communities lack access to a full-service YMCA facility.
- STAFFING SHORTAGES: Unprecedented labor challenges in direct service fields, such as aquatics, camp, child care, and sports are limiting access to 1,000+ children to important opportunities that support their overall well-being.
- WATER SAFETY: Drowning is the leading cause of unintentional injury deaths for children ages 1-4 and is 160 times greater for children on the autism spectrum.
- MENTAL WELLNESS: An increase in reported mental health challenges has created an 8–10 week waiting period for those in need of critical services as well as the stigma associated with mental health.

OUR RESPONSE TO COMMUNITY NEEDS

With the unwavering support of our key stakeholders, the YMCA of the North Shore is better positioned than ever before to meet these most pressing challenges that our communities are facing now and into the future. We have prioritized our efforts to maximize our capacity to create sustainable and lasting results.

- Innovate approaches and expand new opportunities for increased development of affordable housing and licensed childcare offerings.
- Reimagine talent recruitment and retention while creating a new pipeline of service-oriented professionals by recognizing their societal importance.
- Leverage competitive advantages as a large-scale, well-rounded, and holistic organization capable of lifelong meaningful engagement and relationship development for all ages.
- Maintain modern and accessible facilities with welcoming programs that reflect and respond to evolving changes in each community.
- Strive to proactively eliminate barriers that limit access to anyone who could benefit from Y programs and services.
- Create a shared understanding of mental health that aligns it with physical and mental wellness to support the elimination of negative stigmas and promote greater empathy and access.
- Grow the impact and mission of the Y by pursuing and seeking out community partners and collaborators that complement and enhance the scope of services we provide.
- Ensure the mission and vision of the Y are stewarded by future generations of Staff, Donors, and Volunteers.

OUR PURPOSE: OPPORTUNITY, HOPE, UNITY

The YMCA of the North Shore is committed to creating lasting change by providing opportunities to be together, educating and nurturing children, creating safe spaces, ensuring equitable access, and providing a sense of purpose while empowering our communities to find their greatest sense of total wellness. With a 175-year history of adapting to meet the needs of each generation, the Y is steadfast in continuing its commitment to meet the challenges of today and the future.

Areas of Focus	Our Commitments
Championing Affordable Housing	Our Y is committed to the development of increased quality of affordable housing and ensuring residents are provided with supportive services that enhance their well-being. Our Y will utilize our experience to bolster the national Y movement to destigmatize and promote affordable housing development.
Educating and Nurturing Children	Our Y is committed to supporting children's educational success through advocacy, innovative curriculum, and strong partnerships with educational institutions, school districts, and municipal government. We will be leaders in innovating the development of an expanded childcare-based workforce.
Teaching Vital Swim Safety Skills	Our Y is committed to elevating the safety and accessibility of our aquatic centers. We will be the recognized leaders in water safety, learning to swim, water-based fitness, and competitive swimming. We will become the choice employer for aquatic professionals.
Creating Lifelong Summer Memories	Our Y is committed to providing a positive alternative to risky behaviors and social isolation for children. We will build on our 100-year legacy of creating summer camp experiences that provide a lifetime of cherished memories, leadership development, and friendships for our campers and staff.
Strengthening Community Wellbeing	Our Y is committed to eliminating all barriers that limit membership growth and vitality by adapting to the evolving needs of our members. We will be recognized as a place of unity, community, and wellness for all.
Creating a Path to Mental Wellness	Building upon the YMCA's commitment to healthy living in spirit, mind, and body, we are embarking on a renewed effort to further support the mental wellness needs of our communities. Mental wellness is essential for everyone to navigate the day-to-day challenges of life and live to their fullest potential and we are committed to integrating this work into all we do. By adding experienced mental wellness leadership to the YMCA and through our relationships with clinical professionals and philanthropic supporters our Y will be known as much for mental wellness support as it is for physical wellness.
Not Just a Place, a Purpose	Our Y is committed to ensuring our facilities are relevant, adaptable, and aligned with the needs of each local community. We will inspire philanthropic support and elevate operational margins in order to advance our universal

accessibility and environmental responsibility.

CHAMPIONING AFFORDABLE HOUSING



AREA OF FOCUS: HOUSING

The building blocks of our objectives and key results.



Resident Experience and Quality

- Develop resident feedback tools
- Partner with state and federal agencies
- Monitor market and community needs



Enhance Quality of Life

- Provide residents with opportunities to save resources and transition into traditional housing
- Access to the resources that help strengthen their overall well-being
- Expand partnerships to assist our residents with vital resources such as food, financial literacy, technology literacy, and other services



Expansion into New Communities

- Engage and inspire municipal leaders in new communities to expand affordable housing
- Identify new locations and opportunities to expand YMCA affordable housing in the community



Commitment to Education and Awareness

- Develop a comprehensive case statement for donors that showcases the impact of Y affordable housing
- Develop a comprehensive giving program to ensure we supplement the operational challenges associated with affordable housing with philanthropic resources



People and Organization

- Hire resident services coordinators at each Y affordable housing location to build and strengthen the community
- Invest to develop staff, innovate housing programs, and maintain facilities to provide accessible and safe living environments

\$86,613

Annual household income needed to afford a two-bedroom rental home at HUD's Fair Market Rent.

(National Low Income Housing Coalition)

EDUCATING AND NURTURING CHILDREN



AREA OF FOCUS: CHILD CARE

The building blocks of our objectives and key results.



Experience and Quality

- Elevate our marketing resources to transition our branding from early learning and school-age care to YMCA Education highlighting the continuity of care provided by our Y
- Maximize the value of YMCA education through the current and new enrichment opportunities that set us apart from other providers
- Offer leading-edge curriculum considered by regulatory agencies as supporting innovation and challenging the needs of future learners



Community Engagement

- Be recognized as a partner and outlet for parents/caregivers and children facing daily mental wellness challenges while partnering with providers to enhance support and training in our licensed care
- Strengthen and expand our partnerships with local school districts to further our reach, create more impact, and provide year-round support
- Partner and collaborate with the Massachusetts
 Alliance of YMCAs, elected officials, and regulatory
 agencies to ensure early education and school-aged
 care remain a priority for future funding and
 advocacy



People and Organization

- Enhance the experience for our educators by piloting new and non-traditional benefits for fulltime teachers
- Study and consider the sustainability and financial impact of tuition reimbursement and payment for staff who commit to teaching for our Y for five years
- Pursue partnerships with local colleges and universities in developing more educators through learning labs, teaching locations, and experiential learning sites in our education-based programs



Facilities and Equipment

- Ensure our Y's early learning centers are considered modern, inclusive, and safe
- Deploy equipment and learning tools that are modern in order to support today's diverse learners into the future

103,140

Number of children in our state that do not have access to child care. (childcaregap.org)

TEACHING VITAL SWIM SAFETY SKILLS



AREA OF FOCUS: AQUATICS

The building blocks of our objectives and key results.



Experience and Quality

- Develop a sustainable model that creates lifelong swimmers at the Y
- Dominate the parent/child swim market and be recognized as "the place" for parents looking to teach their child(ren) the critical life skills of swimming and water safety
- Be the leader in water safety for children and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorder and similar neurological diversities
- Incorporate a measure of how many kids learn to swim in our aquatics metrics
- Offer a superior competitive swim experience, including masters level swimming
- Innovate and explore new opportunities for aqua fitness



People and Organization

- Our YMCA is the "employer of choice" for those looking for a career in aquatics
- We will design and implement a robust aquatics workforce development program
- Enhance support through programs to inspire and incentivize staff to become certified as lifeguards as well as developing and implementing "deck monitor" roles



Facilities and Equipment

- YMCA pools will be the safest pools due to the integration of electronic drowning prevention systems to augment highly skilled, trained, and experienced lifeguards
- Natatoriums will evolve from "boxes of water" to destinations that meet a variety of community needs and market expectations
- Outdoor pool spaces will no longer be seasonal attractions but will operate year-round creating more access and opportunity for those looking to swim, exercise, or spend quality time with their family



Community Engagement

- Recognized by community leaders and officials as the community's aquatics resource outside of the Y
- Ensure every child who graduates from elementary school in our primary service area has the opportunity to learn how to swim before graduating from middle school
- Ensure intentional outreach plans for underserved populations where cultural barriers exist

88% Reduction

in the risk of drowning in children ages 1-4 when they participate in formal swim lessons.

(National Library of Medicine)

CREATING LIFELONG SUMMER MEMORIES



AREA OF FOCUS: CAMP

The building blocks of our objectives and key results.



Experience and Quality

- YMCA summer camp will be the summer camp of choice for all community members regardless of ability to pay
- Camps will provide campers with the opportunity to explore and try new things, make friendships, gain confidence and build self-esteem, gain a sense of belonging, and learn important lifelong skills



People and Organization

- Coach staff through YMCA core values, to deliver legendary camp experiences to diverse camper populations
- Employ dedicated year-round camp leadership focused on the quality, safety, and strategic expansion of camp programming
- Develop and retain a strong and seasoned pipeline of experienced staff by incentivizing our most talented camp counselors to return each year
- Provide highly effective training(s) and expert resources for camp staff tied to promoting and supporting the mental well-being of our campers and staff under 18



Community Engagement

- Raise the funds needed to keep our promise to provide every child with a Y summer camp experience, regardless of their ability to pay
- Ensure each community has a summer camp experience that feels local and inclusive of the towns and cities it serves
- Our camps will serve as entry points for many children and families to become part of our Y, and through concerted efforts, will be retained as part of our continuity and care and program services
- Build the necessary relationships with community organizations to support the holistic needs of children such as food provision, medical support, safety intervention, and camp supplies
- Strive to serve the unique needs of children with neurological divergencies, physical disabilities, or social-emotional challenges and advocate for those who need services beyond our Y's ability to provide appropriate care
- Partner with our state governments and advocate for maximizing state vouchers and contracts to support families in need

6 hours a day

is the average time spent on technology by children ages 8-12. Summer camp is shown to reduce screen time and boost physical and mental wellness.

(Youthfirst.org)

STRENGTHENING COMMUNITY WELLBEING



AREA OF FOCUS: MEMBERSHIP

The building blocks of our objectives and key results.



Membership Accessibility

- Prioritize equal access for all, providing easy, dignified accommodations for those with financial, physical, and intellectual barriers
- Use our scale and reputation to expand both our physical presence and primary service area so we can serve more people and have a deeper impact
- Offer comprehensive programs, activities, and services that support the whole person (spirit, mind, and body) either directly or through collaboration with other community partners



Membership Innovation and Perception

- Create tools to give front-line leaders and teams near real-time insights and recommended actions to meet or exceed our membership satisfaction goals
- Innovate and add new programs, services, and facilities to remain relevant and meet the changing needs and expectations of our members



Meeting Members Needs

- Regularly enhance local Y facilities and services to remain relevant and keep pace with changing expectations and standards for membership experience through fitness, recreation, aquatics, and community gathering spaces
- Leverage our virtual fitness/lifestyle program, Y360, and other virtual tools as a virtual resource so our Y can be with our members wherever they are to support their physical and mental wellness

63% & 58%

of men and women, respectively, in the United States report feeling lonely and lacking a sense of belonging.

(National Library of Medicine)

ONEDOOR A PATH TO MENTAL WELLNESS



AREA OF FOCUS: MENTAL WELLNESS

The building blocks of our objectives and key results.



Reducing Stigma and Building Awareness

- Encourage the use of respectful, person-centered, and clearly defined language around mental wellness, mental health, and mental illness at the Y
- Provide Y staff with ongoing education and training opportunities to elevate the importance of mental wellness for all
- Engage notable speakers with lived experiences who can openly share their mental health challenges and wellness journeys with the community



People and Organization

- · Train appropriate staff in Mental Health First Aid
- Provide quality training and ongoing consultation to childcare and summer camp staff to elevate their level of confidence and mastery in skills to nurture and educate children who face emotional and/or behavioral challenges
- Support staff mental wellness by encouraging healthy work-home balance, professional self-care practices and by facilitating access to treatment if needed



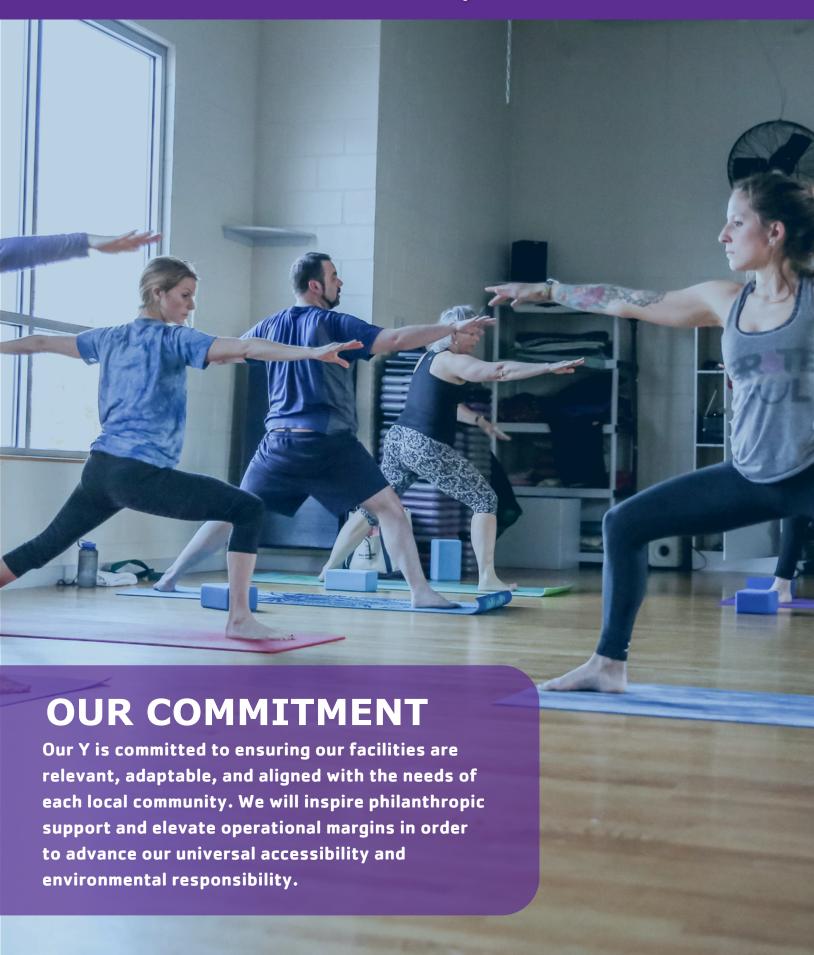
Meeting Community Needs

- Hire skilled mental wellness staff to support our children and families in licensed childcare and summer camp
- Facilitate faster connections between program participants and mental health professionals, as and when necessary
- Partner and collaborate with external organizations to expand our reach and expertise to support the individual mental wellness journeys of our community members
- Work towards integrating a mental wellness lens into every service we offer
- Offer mental wellness groups that meet the needs of our communities
- Enhance and expand our repertoire of mind-body class offerings

150 Minutes

is the number of minutes of moderate exercise each week the World Health Organization advises for better mental well-being.

NOT JUST A PLACE, A PURPOSE



AREA OF FOCUS: FACILITIES

The building blocks of our objectives and key results.



Experience and Quality

- Our facilities will not only be ADA compliant, but they will feel welcoming and accessible to those with mobility limitations and challenges
- Facilities are modern, adaptable to change, and reflective of the wants and needs of our members and community
- Systems and equipment will be fully functional with limited interruption to members, childcare families, and camp families
- Leverage and properly utilize the land we own, not just buildings



People and Organization

- Reimagine a staffing structure that meets the needs of our future Y facilities and that is reflective of the geographic scope and diversity in our real estate portfolio
- Align with proven experts as partners/consultants to supplement our team and provide expertise in specialized areas
- Incorporate new software and operating systems to streamline requests, monitoring, and day-to-day management of our facility portfolio
- Move forward with learnings from past facilitybased efforts to limit long-term challenges and system/facility failures



Facilities and Equipment

- Be a leader in advocating and creating multimodal access to our facilities as part of an overall goal of sustainability
- Build with quality, prioritize care, investment, creativity, durability, sustainability, and adaptability
- Develop locker room facilities that meet the needs of our members, ensuring equity and safety
- Invest in emerging and proven technologies to keep our pools safe with drowning prevention systems
- Develop a capital investment strategy that is unique to childcare, housing, camp, and traditional Y operations to ensure our facilities are garnering the proper investments on a scheduled cycle
- Proactively plan for changes in demographics, needs, and uses

1,000,000 sq. ft.

of space is owned and/or operated by the YMCA of the North Shore, across over 100 buildings and properties!



MEASURING OUR IMPACT

Our choice to set our sights on 2030 has two purposes. First to shift focus from day-to-day concerns to encourage bolder ideas and next to provide a sufficient window to develop our strategy implementation capabilities. A strategy is only as good as its implementation. We intend to use the time to 2030 to deliver our strategic commitments and make strategy implementation a core capability.

We will enhance current strengths in project management by adopting approaches and tools to facilitate the delivery of a common strategy, with solutions that meet the unique needs of diverse stakeholders. We will integrate strategy into our operations to enhance the impact of our initiatives with greater clarity, consistency, and collaboration. Strategy 2030 will be actionable, measurable, and sustainable; it will not be relegated to a virtual bookshelf or become a time capsule relic for future Y staff and volunteer leaders to discover.

In 2024, we will identify initiatives and activities to advance our 2030 Strategy through the use of a well-regarded approach, Objectives, and Key Results (OKR). We will specify what we want to accomplish (Objectives) within a particular time frame along our journey to 2030 and indicate how those objectives will be met (Results). An initial set of OKRs will be developed across the Areas of Focus described in this strategy.



OUR VISION

WHEREALL CHILDREN ADULTS AND FAMILIES ARE HEALTHY, CONFIDENT, AND CONNECTED.

ASSOCIATION LEADERSHIP

Chris Lovasco, President & CEO
Pete Avila, Vice President of Facilities
Ranjeev Benjamin, Executive Director of Mental Wellness
Marge Cregg, Chief Advancement Officer
David Goodwin, Executive Director of Housing
Rebecca Imperiali, Vice President of Charitable Giving
Gerald MacKillop, Chief Operations Officer
Cyndi Marchand, Executive Director of Education
Mari Matt, Chief Human Resources Officer
Kevin McCarthy, EVP & Chief Financial Officer
Jamie McGrath, Vice President of Project Management
Alysha Monfette, Chief Marketing Officer
Darlene Moulton, Vice President of Risk Management
Lisa Sungy, Vice President of Administration

Scott Todaro, Vice President of Information Technology

LOCAL YMCA EXECUTIVE LEADERSHIP

Erina McWilliam-Lopez, Executive Director, Cape Ann YMCA
Tim Flaherty, Executive Director Greater Beverly YMCA
Tracy Fuller, Executive Director, Haverhill YMCA
Chris Bevilacqua, Executive Director, Ipswich Family YMCA
Brian Flynn, Executive Director, Lynch/van Otterloo YMCA
Barbara Gallagher, Executive Director, Plaistow Community YMCA
Charity Lezama, Executive Director, Salem YMCA

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Heidi Sedky

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