

ADVANCE 2021 - 2022

Moving forward with purpose



**YMCA of
Northern Alberta**

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► THRIVING WITH PURPOSE

Advance 2021-2022 is a working and evolving strategic plan that outlines the priorities and key initiatives that will guide YMCA of Northern Alberta over the next two fiscal years, 2021 and 2022. It serves as a bridge from our current strategic plan, Transforming Our Communities, which is set to expire at the end of 2021, and considers the unique challenges and opportunities facing Albertans and our YMCA.

The immense and continuing impact of the COVID-19 global pandemic and racial, political and social movements that began in 2020 could not be predicted. The pandemic has created a “perfect storm,” presenting as a health and economic crisis resulting in a social cohesion crisis. Understanding this dynamic and actively rising to meet challenges and opportunities is critical to our ability to navigate the issues of today and tomorrow and to create a positive impact on the lives of individuals, families and communities.

This strategy lays the groundwork to ensure YMCA of Northern Alberta can not only survive the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic, but also creates urgency to find new ways to thrive as an association, ensuring financial health and maximum community impact.

► OUR MISSION, VISION AND VALUES

YMCA of Northern Alberta has a history that spans 114 years. We have supported communities through many global shaping events in the past: world wars, economic depression and social movements. Our YMCA’s commitment to helping communities, families and individuals of all ages to connect, belong and thrive has not wavered.

We believe people and communities need the YMCA and all that we offer and stand for, now more than ever.

MISSION: We create life-enhancing opportunities for the growth and development of all people in spirit, mind and body.

VISION: Strong kids, healthy families, thriving communities.

VALUES: Respect, Honesty, Caring, Responsibility, Diversity & Social Inclusion

► GUIDING STATEMENT, PRINCIPLES AND ASSUMPTIONS

GUIDING STATEMENT:

Advance 2021-2022 provides focus for YMCA of Northern Alberta to deliver on our mission and vision, and stresses the urgency in which we must work to achieve financial sustainability for our YMCA and maximum impact for the communities we serve.

This plan balances the urgent and immediate actions needed to protect and preserve our YMCA and meet COVID-19 restrictions and guidelines mandated by all levels of government, while providing space and direction for new, innovative ways of thinking, serving the community and realizing the emerging opportunities presented by the changing landscape.

Ultimately, we must act quickly and boldly to create a sustainable and forward-focused operating model that considers and predicts the changing needs of Albertans, the health and safety of the YMCA community and the development of our employees and volunteers while elevating our position as a leading and top-of-mind charity and as a community service provider of choice in central and northern Alberta.

We, at YMCA of Northern Alberta, do not aim just to survive the COVID-19 pandemic - we will thrive.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Advance 2021-22 is...

INTEGRATED

This plan is structured to reflect an association-wide approach to program, membership and service delivery, operations and branding rather than separating initiatives, opportunities or communication into the traditional silos of individual operational areas (health, fitness and aquatics, childcare, community & housing initiatives and fund development). A united, resounding YMCA story and approach to community service is needed to be successful.

DYNAMIC & OPPORTUNISTIC

This plan is the continuation of current priorities and initiatives proven prior to and during the pandemic and requires us to explore new and transformational priorities and initiatives. In accepting the risk and distress imposed by the pandemic, we also see the opportunity. We are focused on acting quickly and boldly to protect resources and pursue new opportunities and partnerships revealed by the pandemic. The intention is that this plan will be assessed regularly and will evolve and flex just as our communities will continue to do so over the next two years and in the future.

PRIORITY SETTING

While keeping a flexible posture, this plan prioritizes what is most important among many important concerns. To this end, some priorities once considered important have been or may be abandoned while others have been accelerated. Advance 2021-2022 assumes the prudent management of priorities over the next two years and will position the association to advance a comprehensive plan and process going forward.



GUIDING PRINCIPLES:

Advance 2021-22 is not...

TACTICAL

This is a strategic-level plan highlighting directions and key initiatives for the YMCA over 2021, 2022 and beyond. Operational-level plans have been or will be created to direct the execution of the key initiatives included. YMCA Board of Directors will be informed of these operational-level plans and will become involved as appropriate.

DECISION-MAKING MATRIX

This plan does not include details of the decision-making process and matrix used by the Association. However, leadership recognizes the importance of a thorough decision-making process to ensure a careful balance of responsible decision making, quick action and innovative risk taking.

ASSUMPTIONS

YMCA of Northern Alberta must continue to work to understand our changing environment, be proactive in our planning and be ready to act regardless of uncertainty. Advance 2021-2022 was developed under the following assumptions:

- As a result of the economic impacts of COVID-19 the current YMCA operating model is in jeopardy and may not be financially sustainable. There is an urgent need to find short, medium and long-term solutions.
- There is, and will continue to be, an increase in acute social issues (such as mental health, unemployment, homelessness, poverty, etc.). At the same time, all levels of government will struggle financially, and fewer charities will survive, leading to gaps in support, services and programs.
- The availability of a COVID-19 vaccine to the general population in 2021 may enable slow economic recovery. However, Alberta will still be faced with the added pressures of the declining oil industry and significant levels of public debt. Strategies and initiatives will be considered to address both short-, mid- and long-term recovery efforts.
- Emerging variant strains of the COVID-19 virus may affect economic recovery and current methods of programming and service delivery.
- The YMCA's focus on community wellbeing and our family-focused value proposition is relevant and may increase in broad community appeal as people start to feel safe to connect once again.

ASSUMPTIONS CONTINUED...

- There is an opportunity to be aggressive in our service delivery model and our philanthropic case, to position ourselves as a significant contributor to the solutions to the many problems facing individuals and communities, alone, or in partnership with others. We will take an entrepreneurial approach to be fast to try new things and accept that failure will sometimes happen.
- YMCA values of inclusivity and diversity are as relevant today as they have ever been.
- There will be increased opportunity and benefit to partnerships within and across sectors.
- No area of our pre-2020 operations is untouched by the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some operational areas such as health, fitness and aquatics and out of school childcare are more severely affected than others, such as some of our community programs.

- We will need to continue to make difficult decisions. Recovery and emerging community need may result in the short-term or permanent closure of select programs, services or facilities to better utilize our human, financial and facility resources.
- Over the time span of this plan, Albertans will continue to demand digital and at-home solutions for engagement and consumption for both work and recreation. As well, tailored “to the consumer” options are desired.



► STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS, GOALS AND KEY INITIATIVES

The strategic directions, goals and key initiatives presented in Advance 2021-2022 are a mix of priorities and initiatives proven prior and during the pandemic, as well as new and transformational initiatives that will push our YMCA to make the greatest community impact and gain financial sustainability in the short- and long-term. It has been noted below which initiatives will be

actioned in the short-term (2021), mid-term (2022), or those that span 2021, 2022 and the long-term (2023 and beyond). Key initiatives will be continually assessed, evaluated, and prioritized to evolve and adapt to a dynamic and constantly changing environment.

1. BE ENTERPRISING TO CREATE MAXIMUM, POSITIVE IMPACT



We will be proactive and innovative to evolve our approach and delivery model to create positive change in the lives of individuals, families and communities.

Short-term (2021)	Mid-term (2022)	Long-term (beyond)	Key Initiatives
			Implement the 2021 annual plan that meets Government of Alberta COVID-19 restrictions and strives for operational and financial viability.
			Develop and implement a three-year operational plan for health, fitness and aquatics (our highest risk area) that presents and evaluates options; creates a vision for the future of membership, programs, services and facilities; and explores new ways to use, leverage and partner to increase community impact and financial sustainability. This includes potential changes to our membership model, program and service delivery within facilities and within community.

Short-term (2021)	Mid-term (2022)	Long-term (beyond)	Key Initiatives
			<p>Diversify and expand the reach of programs and services:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to establish a platform and create a plan for digital program and service delivery that integrates with our current system. • Explore opportunities to provide customized and/or “to the consumer” programs and services. • Create new or modified programs and services, and/or discontinue the delivery of some programs to respond to emerging and/or changed community needs.
			<p>Be evidence based: Seek emerging data, best practices and research. Continue to partner and invest in and/or support research to understand community needs and perceptions, explore new segments of the community to support or expand program and service delivery (i.e., mental health & wellbeing, employment, older adults, young entrepreneurs, new Canadians, etc.).</p>
			<p>Partner & collaborate:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build upon seek new relationships with governments, organizations and sectors (including the business sector to explore new opportunities that align with short-, medium- and long-term priorities. • Continue to explore partnership opportunities for facility operation and/or program and service delivery (ex: Edmonton Public Libraries child care, Winspear child care, Castle Downs Family YMCA, St.Albert, Spruce Grove).
			<p>Advocate all levels of government and sectors to be a player in community service opportunities (ex: COVID-19 vaccine distribution, Pan-Canadian Child Care system, not-for-profit sector).</p>










2. BOLDLY AFFIRM OUR STORY AND COMMUNITY IMPACT

We will demonstrate and communicate our impact on the lives of individuals, families and communities and why it matters—so everyone can support (recognize, participate in, donate or volunteer) the achievement of our vision.

Short-term (2021)	Mid-term (2022)	Long-term (beyond)	Key Initiatives
			<p>Develop and implement a three-year Funds Development plan to grow our donor and partner base to maximize community impact. The plan will include but will not be limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Continue to grow sponsorship partnerships and capabilities including partnership with brands with aligned values.• Leverage grants, contracts and sponsorship for the delivery of programs and services which will also assist in covering operational and administrative costs.• Develop and implement a major gifts plan• Re-imagine YMCA events and find new ways to engage and connect with the YMCA community, donors, sponsors and partners.
			<p>Re-imagine the YMCA story (brand and case for support) to make an emotional appeal that highlights the full community impact of the YMCA and resonates with internal and external stakeholders and the broader community, and then, tell that story broadly.</p>
			<p>Marketing & Communications:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Create annual and quarterly marketing plans and campaigns to support all programs, services, memberships, facilities and fundraising in all regions.• Enhance internal communications and launch a YMCA Intranet.• Provide communications support for emerging issues, crises and change management needs.

3. CULTIVATE A CULTURE OF LEADERSHIP, INCLUSION AND DIVERSITY

We will work to accurately represent the communities we serve and work together to develop and support our staff and volunteers to build healthy communities.

Short-term (2021)	Mid-term (2022)	Long-term (beyond)	Key Initiatives
			Launch a leadership development plan that supports the skills and strengths of leaders at all levels to meet the direction of the association.
			<p>Create and implement a plan to ensure the Board and executive leadership team are working effectively, collaboratively and nimbly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Re-establish accurate and prompt financial and program reporting. • Establish a timely and effective response plan based on performance. • Develop monthly reporting of key metrics which includes key risk and organizational impacts and solutions. • Ensure time and space for the discussion of new and emerging issues, ideas, plans and opportunities.
			Continue to review and implement association-wide restructuring and reorganization.
			<p>Develop and implement a three-year People & Culture strategy that includes, but is not limited to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Volunteer plan • Diversity and social inclusion plan

► OUTCOMES

Advance 2021-2022 views the strategic directions of 2017-2021 through a current and pragmatic lens, respecting the efforts of the past and acknowledging how our communities, province and globe have changed since the pandemic began in 2020 and how they will continue to change.

Building on our 114-year legacy of helping people connect and belong and communities thrive, this plan bridges the YMCA we are today with the YMCA that we need to be in the future and affirm the urgency in which re-imagining must occur.

We are committed to being bold to meet the fast-changing and emerging needs of the communities we serve, while also laying a solid foundation to achieve immediate financial viability and long-term sustainability for YMCA of Northern Alberta.

Our goal is to measure our progress on a monthly and quarterly basis (as results allow) to ensure we can respond, adjust and direct our efforts and energies to areas that provide the greatest community impact, secure our organization on the road of financial sustainability, and nurture and protect our employees and volunteers.

