



Clearwater Regional Family & Community Support Services (CRFCSS)

4-Year Strategic Plan

2024-2027

THE TOWN OF ROCKY MOUNTAIN HOUSE WISHES TO ACKNOWLEDGE THAT THE LAND ON WHICH WE GATHER IS TREATY 6 TERRITORY AND A TRADITIONAL MEETING GROUND AND HOME FOR MANY INDIGENOUS PEOPLES, INCLUDING THE BLACKFOOT, CREE, SAULTEAUX, STONEY AND MÉTIS.

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Clearwater Regional CRFCSS Board of Directors

Len Phillips – Town of Rocky Mountain House councillor
Phyllis McNutt – Member at-Large for Rocky Mountain House
Daryl Lougheed – Clearwater County Reeve
Neil Ratcliffe – Clearwater County councillor
Kim Ghostkeeper – Member at-Large for Clearwater County
Barbara Gibson – Village of Caroline councillor
Marjorie Peters – temporary Member at-Large for Caroline
Jennifer Andreas – Youth Board member
Allie Urbinsky, Youth Board Member

Clearwater Regional FCSS Team

Andrea Hardy, FCSS Manager
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Clearwater Regional FCSS

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2024-2027 Strategic Plan

Our Mission

Improving the wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities through supporting and developing preventative social initiatives within our region.

Our Vision

A thriving regional community supported by locally empowered social networks.

FCSS Philosophy

“The FCSS philosophy is based on a belief that self-help contributes to a sense of integrity, self-worth, and independence. The programs developed are intended to help individuals in their community to adopt healthy lifestyles, thereby improving the quality of life and building the capacity to prevent and/or deal with crisis situations should they arise.”

- *Alberta Children and Youth Services*

Organizational Description

FCSS is a regional partnership between the Town of Rocky Mountain House, Clearwater County, Village of Caroline, and the provincial government to implement the CRFCSS Program.

What is FCSS?

Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) is a unique 80/20 funding partnership between the Government of Alberta and participating municipalities or Métis Settlements. Provincially, the FCSS Program receives its mandate from the Family and Community Support Services Act and Regulation.

The Regulation sets out the service requirements that a municipality or Métis Settlement must meet to be eligible for funding. Section 2.1(1)(a) of the FCSS Regulation states: “Services under a program must be of a preventive nature that enhances the social well-being of individuals and families through promotion or intervention strategies provided at the earliest opportunity.” Section 2.1(2)(b) states: “Services under a program must do one or more of the following:

1. help people to develop independence, strengthen coping skills and become more resistant to crisis;
2. help people to develop an awareness of social needs;
3. help people to develop interpersonal and group skills which enhance constructive relationships among people;
4. help people and communities to assume responsibility for decisions and actions which affect them;
5. provide supports that help sustain people as active participants in the community.”

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These projects/services depend on community resources, often involving volunteers in management and delivery.

The FCSS philosophy is based on a belief that self-help contributes to a sense of integrity, self-worth, and independence. Programs developed are intended to help individuals in their community to adopt healthy lifestyles, thereby improving the quality of life and building the capacity to prevent and/or deal with crisis situations should they arise.

One of the key principles of the FCSS Program is local responsibility for priority setting and resource allocation. Within the parameters of the FCSS Act and Regulation, each municipality or Métis Settlement determines how the FCSS funding they receive should be allocated to best meet the needs of their community.

The CRFCSS Board and Team are committed to ensuring the provincial FCSS mandate benefits our community. This Strategic Plan reflects the unique needs of our community yet also aligns with provincial directions.

Our vision, mission, and goals can be achieved by working together. Through our collective efforts, we will enhance the quality of life of citizens within our region.

FCSS Program Priorities



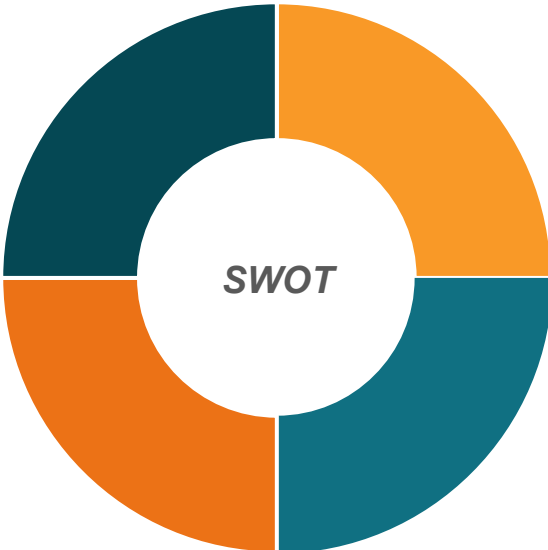
SWOT Analysis

STRENGTHS

- Strong core of committed people & volunteers (strong youth involvement)
- Geographic location and nature (mountains, rivers)
- Financial Security for 3 years (\$5 million increase from province for 2023-2025)
- Safe, accessible good location within community for all ages
- Growing community with amenities like spray park, pool trails (interprovincial migration from big cities)
- Program covers all ages

OPPORTUNITIES

- MLA advocacy and political advocacy
- Strategic Focus on youth
- Relatively affordable living (housing and lifestyle)
- Environmental focus on a green economy
- Strategic Indigenous relations and collaboration with other multicultural engagement
- Targeted diverse grant opportunities
- Development of highway infrastructure (Hwy 2 twinning)
- Development and implementation of marketing strategy
- Ability to deal with larger groups
- Ability to engage different age ranges – youth & adults
- Bid system for community grants



WEAKNESSES

- Lack of awareness and knowledge of FCSS & sometimes a last resort for clients
- Isolation due to work from home
- Higher cost of living
- Decrease in monetary donations for community events
- Missing some key demographic groups
- Small team – at their limit, beyond capacity and hard to say no to requests (risk of burnout).
- No single definition and view of what ‘community’ means
- Group collaborations are limited due to isolation.
- Lack of budget for FCSS programs

THREATS

- Lack of sustainable funding
- Lack of awareness and understanding of FCSS services
- Security
- Change in rural community “feeling”
- Societal changes and trends (social isolation, lack of interpersonal interaction)
- Shrinking community
- 80% of youth who leave rural communities never return to live in their home towns
- Development makes rural people nervous, and they end up leaving
- Hub concept “catchall model” is a threat
- Small team
- Less volunteer engagement

PEST Analysis

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POLITICAL

- New provincial government in power (NDP to Conservative)
- FCSS is impacted by 3 municipalities (Town, County, Village) – amalgamation of County and Village in process
- Provincial mandate for FCSS is set by province → given “priorities”
- Social issues are fast becoming municipal issues
- 20% of funds are received from municipal partners
- FCSS is a gap filler that is severely under-funded
- Governed Act & Regulation for FCSS
- Centralized decision making and control
- Federal government grants available
- There is a need for improved and better funding guidelines and distribution
- Indigenous relations improving within community
- Many disagreements against changes across all levels, municipal, regional, provincial, and federal

E

ECONOMIC

- Post-COVID recovery: hours cut at work, (loss of wages & savings)
- Cost of Living increases (inflation), creating a cost-of-living crisis. Employment and wages not increasing and keeping pace with inflation
- Consumer reduction in philanthropy and donations?
- Federal policy and initiative of 1.5M new immigrants in the next 2 years; Potentially, 100-200k to Calgary and Edmonton
- Core Industries (oil and gas) being squeezed and facing rapid changes due to policy and legislation (green economy)
- Rapid Tourism and economic development
- \$140k average salary (high incidence of millionaires in the CR), growing disparity between rich and poor
- Rural has less services than urban (Inflation and employment challenges creating social issues)
- Commercial vacancy rates up

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SOCIO-CULTURAL

- Average age is 35
- Hidden racism, that people don't realize exists or happens (Immigrants/New Canadians/Indigenous)
- Lack of understanding regarding gender identity and sexual diversity (e.g., trans)
- Immigration has increased
- Lack of communication, social skills
- "Cliques" – hard for new residents
- High percentage of Seniors within county (aging population, including aging volunteer population)
- Post COVID pandemic challenges such as: increased anxiety, anger, frustration, lack of trust in government, increased conspiracy theory, and online social media keyboard warriors
- Mental health and addictions crisis: (Rx pain medications among others)

T

TECHNOLOGICAL

- Communities feeling negative effects and fear of online technology for e.g., misinformation, social media consumption
- Increased use of technology has heightened concerns such as social isolation, fear, and anxiety across all ages especially seniors
- Youth are on social media a lot and are experiencing negative side effects
- Due to rural community some groups have minimal to no access to technology and online
- Pace of technology moves faster than people especially those within rural communities
- Hospitals and other key infrastructures are behind on technology
- Lack of awareness of tech advances across sectors
- Low IQ of tech and appetite for adoption amongst older adults
- Rural communities are lagging behind urban communities in terms of technology adoption.
- Online access to government benefits & services not available to everyone

Strategic Goals

Goal 1: CRFCSS will encourage and support diversity internally and in the community.

Goal 2: CRFCSS will enhance innovation in FCSS and throughout the region through process change and programming.

Goal 3: CRFCSS will maximize awareness about FCSS within the region.

Goal 4: CRFCSS will further collaborate with local partners to meet program priorities.

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Goal 1: CRFCSS will encourage and support diversity internally and in the community

Strategic Actions

Indicators of Success

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| <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Include new Canadians, minority groups, seniors, and youth in programs2. Coordinate cultural awareness activities – Filipino, refugee/newcomer Canadians3. Review CRFCSS Board composition and look for opportunities to better reflect the actual community composition4. Expand volunteer appreciation activities to increase attendance | <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Diversity of Program Participants2. Number of multicultural programs3. Diversity of Board Members4. Increased attendance from minority groups at volunteer appreciation events |
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Goal 2: CRFCSS will enhance innovation in FCSS and throughout the region through process change and programming

Strategic Actions

1. Set up outreach on a scheduled basis to each hamlet, village, etc.
2. Try new ways to attract program participants.
3. Invite bids.
4. Host programs in the West Country
5. Offer Adulting 101
6. Better utilize local facilities for youth programming.
7. Build regional stakeholder capacity around innovation and design tools.

Indicators of Success

1. Providing regular outreach in Caroline/County
2. Executing a campaign to attract new program participants.
3. Creating a new bid process to receive Funding Applications in key areas.
4. Utilizing the West Country for programming.
5. Offering Adulting 101 programming for youth.
6. Booking a variety of facilities for programming.
7. Offering innovation workshops.

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Goal 3: CRFCSS will maximize awareness about FCSS within the region

Strategic Actions

Indicators of Success

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| 1. Continue to communicate through strong social media presence | 1. Increased number of Subscribers and Followers on social media |
| 2. Organize awareness campaign on local radio for what CRFCSS is & offers | 2. Planning and delivering multiple awareness campaigns |
| 3. List CRFCSS services in local gathering places | 3. Distributing posters at key locations |
| 4. Ensure groups receiving funds advertise CRFCSS as part of receiving those funds | 4. Ensuring funded groups use FCSS branding (include in Funding Agreement) |
| 5. Manage ongoing communication to community about CRFCSS as a resource | 5. Promoting CRFCSS as an information resource |
| 6. Arrange campaign: “Call us before crisis hits” | 6. Advertising CRFCSS as a resource to prevent further crisis |
| 7. Celebrate and publish successes in community that exemplify CRFCSS vision | 7. Advertising successful CRFCSS stories |
| 8. Set up outreach on a scheduled basis to each hamlet, village, etc. | 8. Providing regular outreach in Caroline/County |

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Goal 4: CRFCSS will further collaborate with local partners to meet program priorities

Strategic Actions

Indicators of Success

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|---|---|
| 1. Collaborate with Business Community and Economic Development departments | 1. Collaborating with the business community |
| 2. Partner to provide services for youth | 2. Coordinating wraparound services for youth |
| 3. Meet with schools to determine youth needs and potential partnerships. | 3. Meetings with schools |
| 4. Coordinate youth art projects: paint Skate Park and create public sculptures and murals with art students | 4. Coordinating youth public art projects |
| 5. Partner with Library to offer LGBTQ2S+ education and awareness workshops. | 5. Partnering with the Public Libraries to promote diversity and inclusion |
| 6. Investigate possibility of regional transportation service | 6. Initiating regional transportation discussions with local and regional partners |
| 7. Providing workshops in high needs areas including youth, substance use, homelessness, and mental health. | 7. Collaborate with Behavioral Specialist at Rocky PCN and Dietitian to provide youth workshops |
| 8. Partner to address 5 provincial priorities (homelessness & housing, mental health & addictions, employment, family & sexual violence, and aging well in the community) | 8. Providing programming that focus on 5 provincial priorities. |

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CRFCSS Vision for 2030

The CRFCSS vision for 2030 is to be registered independent non-profit charity within the town of Clearwater. CRFCSS will be well known as a community pillar, great supportive place that is a one stop shop for high quality services for community members of all ages. CRFCSS will be fully supported with adequate core funding locally and provincially which will allow the team to expand and drive the strategic goals, mission and vision as outlined within the strategic plan. CRFCSS will have strong support locally with allies from diverse backgrounds, youth and adults working together to advocate and support social change to address local needs and deliver positive social impact.

Summary

This Strategic Plan will guide the efforts of those involved with CRFCSS over the next four years. Progress toward achieving these goals will be monitored on a quarterly basis and will be updated to reflect the changing needs of our community. Annual reviews of this document, along with the creation of annual Action Plans, will ensure that this Strategic Plan is a current document.

For more information, please contact Andrea Hardy, CRFCSS Manager

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