



Options Community Services' new strategy *commits to a healthy, caring community, where everyone thrives.*

Case Study: Options Community Services

Through more than 50 years, *Options Community Services* (*Options*) has earned wide respect as a leading provider of support services and housing for vulnerable populations across the city of Surrey, British Columbia, and its surrounding communities. *Options* touches over 100,000 lives every year with a program portfolio that includes some 80 community services and a newer department of housing development that is currently planning its first purpose-built, mixed income housing site.



Operating in a highly diverse, rapidly growing community with increasing complexity and significant systemic issues, such as the housing crisis, *Options* invited Junxion to facilitate a six-month strategic planning engagement. The

process involved the board of directors, the executive team, over 100 staff, and external stakeholders, to redefine *Options*' 10-year vision and develop the new strategic plan, which is anchored in systems change, development of a learning culture, and bold, proactive community leadership.



Junxion's open and supportive planning process *enabled Options to take a big step forward to be a more inclusive and agile organization.* Their approach included so many stakeholders that this plan is truly an expression of our commitment to community."

— Christine Mohr, *CEO*,
Options Community Services

The new strategic plan enhances Options' internal capacity to effectively support and develop its people and leadership, which will in turn strengthen Options' ability to meet the needs of the community and the social services sector.

The Business Challenge

Over the past five years, *Options* has managed great momentum and exponential growth, while navigating the increasing complexity of Surrey's fast growing, culturally diverse community in an under-resourced climate. Long-term systemic issues, such as the BC housing crisis, result in increasingly complex client needs, putting significant demands on the capacity, skill, and training of *Options*' employees. Attracting and retaining qualified staff is a key challenge. This in turn puts pressure on *Options*' organizational structure, design, culture and leadership, which must evolve as the agency works to meet its current and future objectives and growth targets. Systems and processes must be updated and renewed to meet the needs of a quickly evolving and fast paced environment. And more intentional community outreach and leadership must further *Options*' position as an agency and employer of choice. And all of this must be undertaken in the context of rapid community growth, increasingly complex community needs, and an era of limited resources.

How We Helped

Options engaged Junxion to guide them through the development of their new strategic plan, using our proprietary TurningPoint™ approach. We conducted focus groups and interviews with the leadership team, staff, and board members. This initial data gathering, coupled with market and materials review, including an external stakeholder survey, enabled Junxion to surface key opportunities and challenges for *Options* to consider.

Junxion then facilitated two full-day workshops with executive team, board and senior leadership. The first workshop focused on defining a 10-year vision and aspirations for the future; the second one on identifying the key capabilities, skills and actions that would be required to reach these goals. From there, Junxion translated the workshop outcomes into a draft plan with three overarching strategic priorities and four key capability areas that will drive *Options* forward. The plan was reviewed and edited with the executive team and presented to the board of directors for further refinement and finalization. The result is a ten-page, actionable strategic plan that allows the team to remain nimble and agile, prioritizing on a quarterly basis the most pressing initiatives for a rapidly growing community services sector, while working towards an inspiring 10-year vision for the communities *Options* serves.

Measuring Success

With Junxion's guidance, *Options* developed a profoundly aspirational 10-year vision for the communities it serves, and an agile strategic plan that identifies the key capabilities and priority projects necessary for success. The process itself was an opportunity for *Options* to pause and reflect at a critical time of its development. It allowed for and confirmed the need for more engagement and collaboration across the organization, and offered staff across *Options* opportunities to engage in the process. Junxion continues to support the executive team, as they navigate the COVID-19 crisis, with an agile implementation approach. Training with executive team and the development of a quarterly scorecard of priorities is complete, and currently continues with senior leadership and their program teams. This ensures the strategic priorities meaningfully cascade across the organization, with each program area anchoring their goals and projects to the overarching plan.

