

***DRAFT***

***Strategic Plan***

***2021 to 2023***

**Sept 18, 2020**

**Preface**

Lanark County Community Justice (LCCJ) program celebrates 20 years of operations. This is our Strategic Plan for the next three years, with the expectation that we will continue to serve the County for decades in the future.

The strategic plan has 4 sections.

Sections One and Two provide the background and history of LCCJ, including the mission, vision and values. These are the guiding principles for the organization's strategic plan.

Section Three is a summary of the previous strategic plan from 2015 - 2019 and the agency’s current key objectives. The current key objectives provide a snapshot of the organization as it stands, and a platform for developing strategies to build on over the next three years. This section will define the key objective areas of LCCJ describing the goals, the current activities and the key performance indicators of each. Four Key Objectives have been identified.

Section Four builds on the objectives and creates a strategic approach for our next three years, 2021 - 2023. For the purposes of the Strategic Plan each of the four objectives above are reformulated as initiatives with relevant sub-initiatives. Each sub-initiative is described with planned activities and performance indicators.

**1. Introduction**

**History of LCCJ**

Twenty years ago, an interest in restorative justice spread throughout Lanark County in response to a fire that was set as a prank, by two young people in Almonte and resulted in the death of two people. The community was searching for a way to heal from this tragedy, and restorative justice was the answer, resulting in the formation of Lanark County Community Justice (LCCJ). Restorative Justice brings together the offenders, victims as well as others affected by the crime to come to an agreement on how to heal the harm done and rebuild relationships. Restorative Justice is an alternative to the traditional criminal justice system. It is a community response to crime, wrongdoing and healing.

Lanark County Community Justice’s diversion program accepts referrals for youth and adult offenders from the police services, the Crown Attorney’s office, schools and community members. Since 2000, approximately 740 forums have been facilitated by LCCJ volunteers in Lanark County and the Town of Smiths Falls.The facilitators have provided an estimated 20,000 hours of direct service over the years, and this does not include the training and administrative hours they also selflessly provide! The ongoing commitment of our volunteers is the foundation of this organization.

LCCJ has offered numerous other restorative programs over the years including training and mentoring in the use of restorative approaches to other community agencies and businesses. One highlight is our former BE STRONG program that shared how to use restorative practices in the classroom with over 16,000 youth in Lanark County schools. We continue to search for funding to work with schools, youth centres and the community, to promote a culture of restorative approaches. We are grateful to our current funders including the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services, the Perth and District Community Foundation, the County of Lanark, United Way East Ontario and a number of local service clubs throughout the region. We are also grateful to individual supporters and partner agencies for their ongoing financial and practical support.

**Restorative Justice, Restorative Practices and the Role of LCCJ**

According to the Department of Justice, Canada, (date), restorative justice requires not only a change in practice, but also a transformation in thinking. This philosophical shift is best illustrated through an examination of the current definition of criminal behaviour. Restorative justice models are based upon several overarching principles. First, crime is primarily a conflict between individuals, resulting in harm to victims and communities and to offenders. It is only secondarily a transgression against the state. This simple notion has profound consequences. Second, the central goal of the criminal justice system should be to reconcile victims, offenders and their communities while repairing the harm caused by the criminal behaviour. That is not to say that public safety is not paramount. Rather, it is the method of achieving public safety that is under debate. Third, the criminal justice process should facilitate active participation by victims, offenders and their communities. This results in a diminished role for the state.

In theory, there may be several benefits to restorative justice practices. For victims, restorative justice offers individuals a meaningful voice in the process, and serves several crucial human needs, including the need to be included and the need to be understood. In some cases, the victim may also experience satisfaction from playing a part in preventing future criminal behaviour and from receiving reparation. For offenders, the process can be therapeutic as they take responsibility for their actions and take steps to repair the harm. For community members, the process serves to humanise the criminal justice system and reduce fear of crime by providing more accurate information about offenders and crime in general. Restorative justice also provides community members with a voice in the criminal justice process. Restorative justice has been described as an empowering experience for all participants in the triad.

The benefits of restorative justice are well documented. Restorative justice is an alternative to the traditional justice system. The following are some of the proven benefits of restorative justice.

* Substantive reduction of repeat offenses (recidivism).
* When used as a diversion, it reduces the costs of the traditional criminal justice system.
* It provides both victims and offenders with more satisfaction that justice has been served than does the traditional criminal justice. LCCJ’s participant evaluations indicate that 98% of participants felt that the matter was dealt with better through restorative justice than would have been the case in the traditional justice system.
* It is victim centred. In the traditional justice system crime is defined as a wrong against the state. Accordingly, a representative of the state prosecutes an individual accused of having committed a crime. The critical point of contention is the failure of this process to recognise the victim. It is the victim who experiences the actual harm caused by a crime. Restorative justice promotes a more victim-centred definition of criminal behaviour wherein the harm or wrong is against the individual rather than the state. Restorative Justice involves the victim, who has a critical stake in the process, requires input and meaningful participation as well as reparation.
* It reduces crime victims' post-traumatic stress symptoms and the related costs.
* It aids in the reintegration of the offender as a contributing member of the community, as they are not stigmatized with a criminal record.
* It provides the offender an opportunity to be accountable for their actions and repair the harm done to the victim and the community for their wrongdoing.

**Restorative Practices**:

The goal for LCCJ is maintaining a healthy community through restorative practices. This is an exciting time for the organization as we further engage not only reactive measures but also introduce proactive ones as well. We are working hard with our core court diversion services but also continue to introduce and provide outreach programs to better serve the needs of our community. We hope to engage troubled youth and families to help before issues can reach a level of criminalized behaviour. We will help our community to become more self-sufficient and resolve conflicts in ways that are healing to the parties involved.

LCCJ remains sustainable because of you. We rely primarily upon grants and community funds to provide our services. We retain a small core staff and deliver our programs through well-trained volunteers from within our community. Our staff and volunteers have undergone many hours of expert training to provide the restorative practices at the core of all our programs.

The primary focus for LCCJ is to provide court diversion services for youth and adults within Lanark County by means of Community Justice forums.

In addition to the court focus, LCCJ brings the enormous socio-economic and health benefits of restorative practices to our community in other projects which over time have involved schools, youth centres, workplaces, service agencies, families, parenting relationships, faith groups, sports teams and civic clubs/organizations. Restorative practices are an innovative, effective way of building a community of caring, where people are connected to each other and to their community.

**2. LCCJ Principles**

***Our Mission***

To provide and promote the community use of restorative practices.

***Our Vision***

Our community will embrace restorative practices to repair harm, build community and strengthen relationships.

***Our Values***

* **Inclusiveness:** Creating safe, respectful spaces where all people can “speak their truths” in an open and honest way.
* **Responsibility:** People are responsible for their actions and are accountable to others.
* **Trust:** By building, maintaining and restoring relationships, our community becomes stronger.

**3. Key Objectives of LCCJ**

**Objective 1: Provide Restorative Justice Services**

**Goal**

Increase diversion to LCCJ’s restorative justice diversion program from the justice system.

**Current Activities**

LCCJ provides a court diversion program for youth (12 to 17 years of age inclusive) and adults (mostly young adults). We do this by providing a community justice forum. A forum is a facilitated voluntary, confidential process that brings together the victim(s), the accused, their respective support people and community members in order to have a structured conversation about what happened, and who was affected, to determine the impact on individuals and the community and to agree on how to make things right. This program is delivered by a team of highly trained facilitators and our Program Coordinator. Funding for youth diversion is provided in part by the Ministry of Children, Community and Social Services Funding for adult diversion is provided in part by the United Way East Ontario, fundraising events, donations and local service clubs.

**Key Performance Indicators**

* for the 7 fiscal year period from FY 2013/14 to FY 2019/20 we held an average of 44 forums annually (30 youth and 14 adult forums).
* in our last FY 2019/20 we held 47 forums (30 youth and 17 adult forums)

**Objective 2: Expand the Use and Principles of Restorative Justice in the Community**

**Goals**

To communicate widely throughout Lanark County the value of a restorative approach.

To seek more ways to provide restorative practices in Lanark County.

**Current Activities**

Restorative Parenting: LCCJ is currently supporting families in Lanark County who are struggling to maintain relationships and connection to the young people in their lives (ages 12-29) by providing family forums, education and training about how to use a restorative approach when communicating and providing case management to help families identify and access the support services needed to keep families intact. Funding for this pilot project is provided by the Perth and District Community Foundation.

BE STRONG 2.0:

LCCJ is currently seeking funding to support a reconstructed BE STRONG program that would:

a) provide restorative justice forums as a response to conflict in high-schools

b) provide restorative practice training and forum facilitation at the youth centres in Lanark

County

This program was successfully implemented by LCCJ in the years 2016-2019.

Diversion for Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault:

LCCJ is currently seeking funding for and developing a greater understanding amongst staff and community partners for the increased provision of restorative justice forums for low risk cases of domestic violence and sexual assault for both youth and adults.

Community Presentations:

LCCJ is currently offering presentations regarding our agency's services and information about restorative justice and restorative practices to the community. This includes but is not limited to presentations to local service clubs.

Victims and Survivors of Crime Week:

LCCJ has regularly provided educational opportunities on the use of restorative practices annually during Victims and Survivors of Crime week funded by the Department of Justice.

Restorative Justice Week:

LCCJ regularly provides education opportunities during restorative justice week.

**Key Performance Indicators**

* This FY we are implementing one funded community practice program.
* This program is provided by a team of 8 volunteer facilitators, the program coordinator, a board member and the Executive Director.

**Objective 3: Ensure sound financial management and secure long term funding for programs**

**Goals**

Build the operational capacity of LCCJ first, by ensuring sound financial management policies and practices and second, by securing long term funding for current programs to meet LCCJ’s financial obligations at least 12 months in advance.

**Current Activities**

The finance committee meets regularly to review the financial status of the organization and ensure that all financial obligations can be met. The committee has established a reserve / contingency fund with a target of 25% of annual budgeted expenses to serve as a resource in case of emergencies.

The fundraising committee meets regularly to plan for the delivery of fundraising events, presentations or campaigns, and assess the feasibility of applications for funding to the government, foundations, service clubs, private corporations and other organizations that provide funding.

Both committees report monthly to the Board.

The Executive Director is responsible for compiling the data for reporting to our main funders: For the last 15 years we have received annual funding from the Ontario Government. For the last 10 years we have received funding from the United Way of Lanark County. For the last 3 years we have received funds from the Perth and District Community Foundation.

**Key Performance Indicators**

* A balanced budget in FY 2019/20
* The reserve / contingency fund has been funded to 10% of the annual operational budget.
* In FY 2019/20 revenue received from these sources: Provincial & Municipal governments - 40%; Donor Agencies - 32%; Fundraising & Memberships - 28%.
* 23% of revenue put into reserve for FY 2020/21.
* Full budget variance report every quarter submitted to the board of directors by the finance committee.
* Monthly review and signing off on the finances by the Executive Director and the Board Treasurer. (Monthly bank reconciliation, CRA remittance, payroll reports and Visa Statement). Monthly financial summary report to the board that these documents have been provided and approved by the ED and Treasurer.

**Objective 4: Building Capacity of LCCJ**

**Goals**

To build our capacity to provide more restorative justice services within the Criminal Justice System.

To build our capacity to provide more restorative practice services to Lanark County schools and organizations.

To strengthen the governance, staffing and volunteer base of LCCJ in order to effectively manage expanding restorative justice services and expand the use of restorative practices in Lanark County.

**Current Activities**

We are currently providing the youth and adult court diversion programs and the restorative families program. New volunteers are recruited, interviewed, screened, trained, placed, supervised and evaluated on an ongoing basis by the program coordinator with the support of the executive director.

**Key Performance Indicators**

* LCCJ currently has a part-time executive director (22.5 hours a week) and a program coordinator (30 hours a week) delivering all programs. In addition:
  + the restorative justice program has 18 active volunteer facilitators.
  + the restorative families program has 8 volunteer facilitators, and one board member
* In the last FY \_\_\_ new volunteers were engaged.
* In the last FY \_\_\_ training opportunities were provided staff and/or volunteers.
* % of volunteers who participated in a forum.
* the number of volunteer hours.

**4. Strategic Plan Initiatives for 2021 to 2023**

**INITIATIVE 1: Increase Access to Restorative Justice Services**

Many citizens of Lanark County could benefit from Restorative Justice Forums. Accordingly, LCCJ would like to increase access to Restorative Justice Forums. Three Sub-Initiatives have been designed.

**1.1 Continue to increase pre- and post-charge referrals**

**1.1 Activities**

* Continue to identify and build relationships with key justice services in the County such as court liaison partners, police services (OPP and Smiths Falls) and Crown Attorneys.
* Work with partners to develop an enhanced court diversion protocol. Work with justice partners to encourage an increase in pre and post referrals of youth and adults.
* Partner with Interval House and Victim Witness Assistance Program (VWAP) to support victims of violence and assault. Work towards creating a protocol for restorative justice to be use in areas of domestic violence and sexual assault when appropriate.
* Create a database of value-added statistics from the program to support claims of effectiveness and to improve funding support.

**1.1 Planned Key Performance Indicators**

* An increase in the number of restorative justice forums held for both pre and post sentencing.
* An increase in the number of restorative justice forums held for domestic violence and sexual assault cases.
* An ongoing restorative database is available and has been analysed to show program effectiveness.
* An increase in funding for the program.

**INITIATIVE 2: Expand the use and principles of restorative justice in the community**

Many citizens of Lanark County could be benefiting from community restorative justice forums and other restorative practices.

**2.1 Improve community understanding of a restorative approach to create inclusive, responsible and trusting relationships.**

**2.1 Activities**

* Develop communications materials that strongly represent our vision, mission and values.
* Clarify our message and brand so that the community can easily understand what we do and what constitutes restorative practices.
* Website updates reflect our brand and messaging as well as providing internal and external resources.
* Develop and deliver a social media campaign to increase our community reach.
* Raise the profile of National Restorative Justice Week in our community.
* Participate with the OPP Situation Table model and community partners.

**2.1 Planned Key Performance Indicators**

* An updated Website is active
* Monitor and report on the effectiveness of the social media outreach monthly through indicators such as number of shares or web site “hits”.
* Monitor and report monthly on number of communication engagements such as;
  + newspaper articles
  + radio interviews
  + facebook posts
  + instagram posts
  + twitter posts
  + presentations

**2.2 Promote the use of restorative practices within Lanark County and the town of Smiths Falls.**

**2.2 Activities**

* Identify agencies /organizations and situations where restorative practices might usefully be employed. Assess agencies and organization’s interest in working with LCCJ and the skills we might bring.
* Assess funding opportunities.
* Build on the activities identified in Objective 2: Expand the Use and Principles of Restorative Justice in the Community.
* With adequate funding, develop programs to address the restorative practices services identified.

**2.2 Planned Key Performance Indicators**

* Number of agencies / organizations and situations identified where restorative practice might be employed.
* Number of Restorative Practice programs managed by LCCJ which are funded and operational.

**2.3 Reach out to the indigenous population to look for understanding, mutual trust building and learning**

**2.3 Planned Activities**

* Search for Indigenous representation on the Board.
* Include the needs of this community in the assessment identified by 2.2 Activities.
* Discuss the particular needs and circumstances of this client group with the OPP and Crown Attorney.
* Create a volunteer and staff training event that examines the history, opportunities and needs of Canadian Indigenous community restorative practices.

**2.3 Planned Performance Indicators**

* Indigenous representation on board or in organization.
* Holding of a staff and board training event.

**INITIATIVE 3: Ensure sound financial management and secure long term funding**

**3.1 Increase the funding base to allow us to grow our capacity ensuring sound financial management**

**3.1 Activities**

* Develop a financial 3-year Financial Sustainability Plan in order to meet the goal of increased staff hours and increased programing.
* Increase our fundraising capacity to meet targets developed by the plan through such measures as: developing a searchable donor / constituent list, establishing value-added statistics to demonstrate the effectiveness of our programs and determining the Social Return on Investment (SROI) to demonstrate cost effectiveness of our program.
* Fundraising capacity may also be increased through:
  + Exploring new sources of funding, such as Donor campaigns, Major grants, or Corporate sponsorship.
  + Developing a steady supply of personal donations.
  + Engaging monthly or regular annual donors or legacy donors / bequests.
  + Holding fundraising event(s).
  + Maintaining and further developing local partnerships with agencies such as municipalities or service clubs and local organizations.
* Continue to contribute to the Reserve / Contingency Fund until the target of 25% of annual budget is achieved.
* Set up fiscal management systems
  + Set up financial monitoring to permit tracking deferred revenue from fund raising.
  + Set up financial monitoring and modelling tools which permit regular assessment of the effectiveness of revenue generation.

**3.1 Planned Key Performance Indicators**

* A Financial Sustainability Plan is in place.
* Revenue targets established by the Plan are met and balanced with expenses in each FY.
* Sources of program funding are monitored for contributions and sustainability in meeting funding goals.
* Fundraising efforts are guided by cost benefit analysis of revenue generation.
* The reserve / contingency fund has been funded to 25% of the annual operational budget.

**INITIATIVE 4: Build the Human Capacity of LCCJ**

Given the times in which this strategic plan is being created, we have to take into consideration COVID19 and how it affects the day to day running of organizations. The protocol in schools, social service organizations and our community at large will play a role in deciding what programs will be possible to introduce or reinstate. The number of programs affects our staff complement. Will staff be working in the office or off site?

**4.1 Ensure adequate staffing and volunteer complement to meet program delivery needs.**

**4.1 Activities**

* Have sufficient staff and volunteers in the roles required to run all programs flexibly and efficiently meeting changing social constraints.
* The Board HR committee monitors staff program commitments and reports issues to the board.

**4.1 Planned Key Performance Indicators**

* Expanding staff time and hiring as workload requires and budget permits in keeping with the 3 year Financial Sustainability Plan.
* Number of new volunteers annually

**4.2 Provide opportunities for education and growth for facilitators, volunteers, staff and Board members.**

**4.2 Activities**

* Provide training to meet identified needs of facilitators, staff and board members where funding and capacity permit.
* Develop and provide specialized training to facilitators to meet the support needs of new programs such as restorative families program, school program(s), diversion for sexual assault and domestic violence and restorative aboriginal justice.
* Encourage and facilitate inter-agency meetings as well as meetings with other restorative justice and like-minded organizations.

**4.2 Planned Key Performance Indicators**

* Number of additional training opportunities provided to facilitators, staff and board members annually.

**4.3 Grow and enhance the use of our volunteer resources.**

**4.3 Activities**

* Evaluate the extent and effectiveness of volunteer facilitator resources. Ensure roles and responsibilities are clear and effectively implemented.
* Move away from a Working Board toward a Governance Board model.
* Develop a Board committee framework that allows for increased capacity of the organization and engages other skills from the community.
* Assess board and committee structures, including size and composition for optimal impact.
* Conduct Board effectiveness training.

**4.3 Planned Key Performance Indicators**

* Board committees having community volunteer members.
* Percent of cases that go to forum and are volunteer led.
* Board training sessions provided annually.
* Board evaluations completed annually.