



Shelter. Safety. Stability.

## The Sophia Way *Forward* Strategic Framework

# Letter from the Executive Director



Dear Colleagues, Supporters & Friends,

In early 2019 I joined The Sophia Way as interim executive director. At my first public event, we broke ground on a new shelter in Kirkland and I watched for the first time how the community came together in a big way. It touched my heart. A little over ten months later, I had accepted the honor to stay as executive director. Within weeks, our shelter, community and world were turned upside down with COVID-19. And while the women we serve and our organization faced major changes, I was inspired again by our caring community and its passionate for support women on their journey to a place called home.

During the last 18 months, the Board of Directors moved from being hands-on to a governing, more strategic entity. With the many pivot points that the pandemic has brought for The Sophia Way, we questioned whether this was a good time to create a strategic framework. The definitive response was “it is essential to move forward now.” That is why we are calling this document *The Sophia Way Forward*.

We began by including the board and staff in answering key questions—

- *What must we do in the next 12 months?*
- *How should we consider growing our impact over the next three years?*
- *What is the one thing that would change everything?*

Engaging with a wide variety of stakeholders, we came together (virtually) to share ideas, dreams, and aspirational goals to help end homelessness. Forty-two people took three hours out of their busy day to participate in the first ever virtual strategic session! Again, we began by asking questions—

- *Is shelter a process or destination?*
- *What does success look like when addressing the future of homelessness?*

What you will discover in the ensuing report are actionable strategies to realize the

outcomes The Sophia Way plans to, and will, achieve in the coming years. Rather than calling this a strategic plan, *The Sophia Way Forward* is the framework for the future of the organization, the programs – the future for women seeking shelter, safety, and the stability of a place to call home. This is a working document that we, together with you, will constantly be updating and revising to be responsive and relevant among the ever-changing landscape of our community.

We invite you to join us on our journey *forward*.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Alisa'.

Alisa Chatinsky

# THE SOPHIA WAY = F.O.R.W.A.R.D. →

= OCTOBER 2, 2020 =

Not an "OR"  
What does THE PERSON need?



MICRO COMMUNITY ROOMMATE HOUSING  
X "shelter"  
Let's think about TERMINOLOGY

TSW = Extended FAMILY

Relationships & Process  
"How do we do it safely?"



What is the PROCESS to get them there?

Lack of RESOURCES = Destination

What is "shelter"?  
A physical home?  
Stability? permanent or temporary?

ENDING HOMELESSNESS FOR WOMEN



"Don't talk about us without us!"



END SYSTEMIC RACISM



IS SHELTER A PROCESS OR A DESTINATION?

DESTINATION?



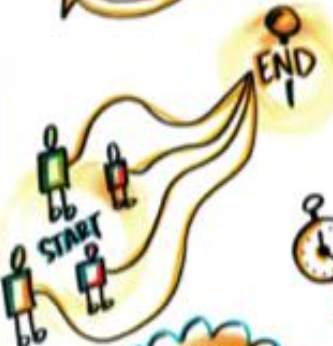
COLLABORATION

WHAT DOES SUCCESS LOOK LIKE WHEN ADDRESSING HOMELESSNESS?



LISTEN to what the COMMUNITY NEEDS

X PERCEPTIONS



SHORTER - BETTER BUT SAFETY is the best option!



KEY IDEAS

ENERGIZED HUMANITY

THINK ABOUT...

How do you solve capacity?

Need FLEX funds!

CAUSES OF HOMELESSNESS  
- Be a collective community to ALL the causes

SHELTER = PROCESS  
- No capacity + resources

LANES + ROLES

INTERCONNECTEDNESS

COMMUNITY  
- "HOME" - not HOUSING  
- supporters become FAMILY  
- Relationships + partnerships BUILT  
- working together

DECIDE: MACRO OR MICRO?  
(not mutually exclusive)  
- Focus: individual or whole community?

HEALTHCARE  
- mental health  
- Addiction Recovery

How do we define SUCCESS?  
Need to be more INCLUSIVE

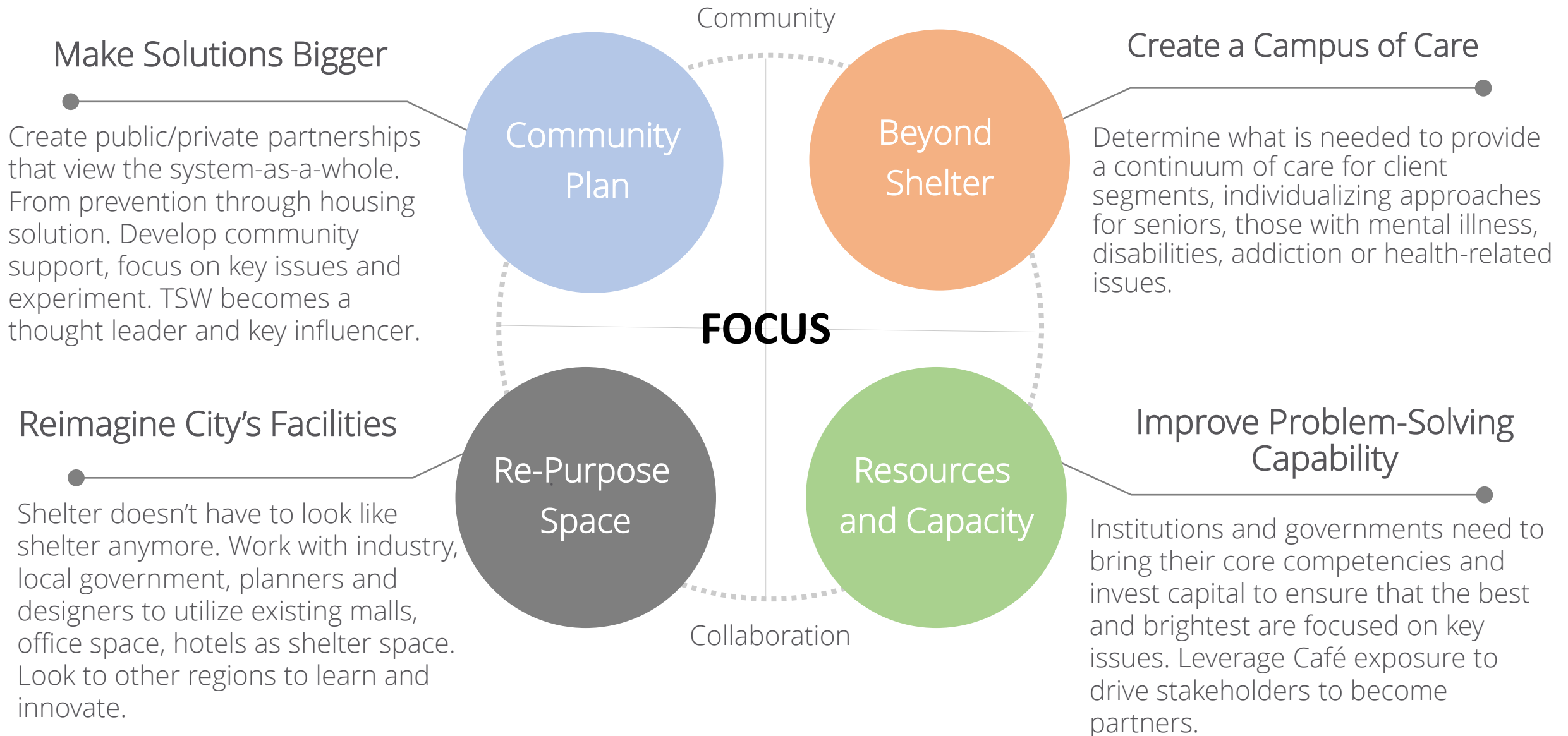
WORKING TOGETHER  
- Looking at the system as a whole

NORMALIZE MENTAL HEALTH

RESILIENCE & COMMUNITY

BUILD THE TOOLS to be successful

# The Sophia Way Forward: 360°





### ***Vision***

All women have a place to call home.

### ***Mission***

The Sophia Way is a place of hope and change for women. We support them on their journey from homelessness to safe and stable living.

### ***Values***

- Welcoming – We create a warm, welcoming space where everyone feels a sense of belonging.
- Dignity – We respect everyone, treating them with grace and honoring their lived experiences.
- Supportive – We partner with women and ask how we can best support them on their journey.
- Compassionate – We build and nurture relationships, being mindful and understanding that every woman has her own story to share.
- Inclusive – We value and embrace diversity and experiences, giving everyone the space to be their full, authentic selves.

# The Sophia Way Forward: Strategy-on-a-Page

## Mission

The Sophia Way is a place of hope and change for women.  
We support them on their journey from homelessness to safe and stable living.

## Vision

All women have a place to call home.

## Values

Welcoming • Dignity • Supportive • Compassionate • Inclusive

## Our Objectives

**Clarity of Mission**  
impact + advocate

**Scale Program Portfolio**  
services + talent

**Ensure Sustainability**  
funding + governance

## Our Strategic Priorities

- **Enhance public-private partnerships** to drive solutions and community plans. Advocate for The Sophia Way through all segments (government, foundation, corporate, individuals).
- **Define the right portfolio of client-centered services** to be more than a shelter. Investigate **Campus of Care** concept. Provide specialized services for unique needs of women and do so in the most efficient way.
- **Build a committed team.** Retain current staff while acquiring/developing new talent. Culture of **Diversity, Equity & Inclusion.**
- **Ensure financial stability** with efficient systems and processes. **Clear donor strategy** with increased private support.

# High-Level Tactical Plans

**Goal: Form public-private partnerships to drive solutions and community plans. Be the thought leader & advocate on homelessness.**

Objective	Actions	Who	When
1. Move from scarcity to abundance	Develop internal campaign to demonstrate: Focus + Competencies + Impact to be able to articulate clearly to multiple segments	Directors/BoD	Q1 2021
2. Greater impact and improved messaging	Create communication/engagement strategy to leverage World Café. Implement a donor moves management plan	Dev	Q2 2021
3. Strengthen community/member relationships	Build upon the Sophia Society concept, continue to strengthen long-term relationships with members	Dev	Q1 2021
4. Strengthen public/private partnerships	Create public/government affairs liaison	ED	Q2 2022

**Goal: Provide the correct portfolio of services to be more than a shelter. Create a one-stop Campus of Care to provide for all needs.**

Objective	Actions	Who	When
1. Define the campus of care model	Bring community leaders together to determine the right model and mix of services to provide a continuum of care for defined groups, i.e. seniors, individuals with disabilities, addictions, etc.	ED/Task Force	Q3 2021
2. Deliver core competencies	Determine what TSW can best deliver and how to partner with other agencies to use their competencies	ED & Program Team	Q2 2022
3. Increase housing sources	Develop task force with board members, partners and businesses to develop long-term solutions ( <i>see #3B</i> )	BoD	Q3 2021
4. Transition 25% of appropriate clients within 120 days	A. Building the Housing Fund to get more women out of shelter B. Identify new housing sources – malls, hotels, master lease properties	Program Team	Q4 2021
5. Investigate consolidation with similar orgs	Bring partners into discussion, hire consultant for assessment	ED	Q2 2021

# High-Level Tactical Plans

**Goal: Build the best team. Retain current staff and acquire/develop talent. New initiatives on Diversity. Equity. Inclusion.**

Objective	Actions	Who	When
1. Right-size team to support initiatives and Campus of Care	Create Talent Plan to ensure the resources to grow impact. Possible new positions: HR Coordinator ('21), Facilities/Operations Manager ('21), Donation Manager (post-pandemic), Government/Public Policy Role ('22)	HR Coordinator	Q2 2021
2. Performance-based compensation system	A. Develop an Annual Feedback system B. Embed normalized process to evaluate performance and tie merit compensation to performance	HR Coordinator	TBD
3. Formalized onboarding and staff training	A. Create Individual Career Plans to support development and training for all staff – Diversity Equity and Inclusion (DEI) B. Support leadership with development opportunities - DEI C. Develop and implement employee reward and recognition program	HR Coordinator	TBD
4. Case Manager training for best-in-class expertise	A. Provide training on all HMIS protocols B. Become certified to provide trauma-informed care training and train-the-trainer. Explore as revenue source	Director of Client Services	Q2 2022
5. Improved social impact awareness	Develop a written Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) policy to promote to staff and community	Racial Justice TF	Q1 2021
6. Intentional succession planning	Embed annual review process for ED and Board succession planning. Intentional Board development - DEI	ED/Gov Comm	Q1 2021

**Goal: Ensure financial stability with efficient systems and processes. Clear donor strategy with increased corporate support.**

Objective	Actions	Who	When
1. Comprehensive annual development and communications plan	Development team creates plan for 2021 implementation including volunteer engagement and retention	Dev	Q4 2020
2. Increase foundation support	Continue to build relationships and engage with major foundations	ED/DD	ongoing
3. Corporate sponsor partnership	Create a value-driven corporate sponsorship program, utilize Board to open doors and cultivate relationships	Dev & BoD	Q2 2020
4. Efficient and repeatable systems and processes	Employee manual, dev/finance reconciliation, hiring and onboarding process, shelter training program, trauma-informed care training. Communication + Manage people thru transition + workflow/sub-process and tools	Directors	Q4 2021
5. One year of financial reserves	Form task force to develop a plan to build capacity and ensure sustainability with adequate reserves	FC & Directors	4Q 2023



# Strategic Key Metrics

## Community + Advocate

**Form public-private partnerships** to drive solutions and community plans. Be the **thought leader and advocate** on homelessness.

Create a task force to investigate solutions for 55+ population Q2 2021

New/strengthened relationship with major corporation & foundation Q2 2021

Determine Scope of Gvmt Liaison/Public Policy Role Q2 2022

## Continuum of Care

Provide the **correct portfolio of services** to be more than a shelter. Investigate **campus of care** concept. Serve more, in the most efficient way.

“Campus of Care” Task Force in place by Q3 2022

Bi-annual review of the correct portfolio of services and measures

Increase # women housed/remain housed by 50% by Q4 2021

## Talent + Culture

**Build the best team.** Retain current staff while acquiring/developing new talent. New initiatives on **Diversity. Equity. Inclusion.**

Create tools, workflow, processes to effectively manage organization, staff/board transitions, and communications by Q4 2021

Increase employee retention rate six months by Q2 2021

Talent Plan with DEI metrics developed by Q3 2021

## Financial Sustainability

**Ensure financial stability** with efficient systems and processes. **Focused donor, corporate and foundation strategies.**

Community Engagement/Dev Plan by Q1 2021

Enough cash flow for no dips into reserves by Q1 2022

Establish One Year Financial Reserves by Q4 2023