



**Business Plan**  
**2023-2024**



# Leadership Message

**The work our incredible team accomplishes would not be possible without the larger community rallying behind us.**

Bissell Centre was founded in 1910. During our tenure, we have now been through two pandemics, two world wars, numerous economic depressions and recessions, and several shifts in the demographics of people needing our services. We have seen the lasting impacts of public policies, the development of automobiles, airplanes, television and now the internet. The team today is chronologically removed from our founders and yet their original vision of supporting people and communities in need is as true today as it was when they first rolled up their sleeves.

Our history books reveal a long collection of stories that reveal themes of hope, determination, entrepreneurial pragmatism balanced with a deep commitment to the values that have guided us along the way. Bissell's posture has been one of

continued learning and innovation, taking risks and keeping those that we are invited to walk alongside at the center of everything we do.

This document is intended to provide a high-level overview of the next season of our journey. It strives to integrate our new learnings and identify the key areas on which we will focus our energy and resources. This includes our four strategic priorities:

1. High Quality Programs & Services
2. Truth & Reconciliation
3. Systems Change
4. Organizational Strategy

We invite you to view this document as invitation to participate, to join in, align, and journey with us towards a better future. The other thing

that our history books reveal is that the idea of Bissell is far greater than any one organization. It is a collective movement of people and communities throughout the decades who are committed to bringing those on the margins into the centre, to fighting for justice and equity, to providing a listening ear and hot meal, an giving an opportunity to move beyond the trappings of poverty and houselessness and to adding light into our world.

If you are reading this, you are probably already aware that this includes you. We are excited to share this journey together with you!



**Gary St. Amand**  
CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER

“Thank you for being a part of our Bissell community.”





## **OUR VISION**

To eliminate poverty in our community.



## **OUR MISSION**

Working in community, we remove barriers and support people as they move out of poverty.

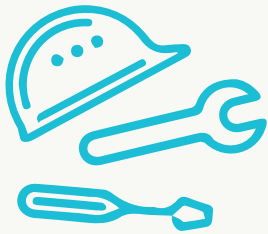


## **OUR CORE VALUES**

Our values of Respect, Human-Centered, Collaboration, Integrity, Equity and Accountability are reflected in all aspects of our work and within the culture of Bissell. They are our commitment to ensuring our participants, employees and stakeholders are involved with an organization that puts people first.



## 2022-23 Year in Review



### Workforce Development Program

The Workforce Development Program came to fruition with the aid of a Government of Alberta Grant, and the mission of our program is simple; to help eliminate employment barriers for Albertans looking to re-enter the workforce.

**The Workforce Development Program has three primary objectives that it is designed to achieve:**

- To support Albertans to participate in their communities through employment
- Helping Albertans reach their individual potential
- Ensuring Albertans are stable and safe

**The complementary objectives of the Program are as follows:**

- Ensuring Albertans have timely and consistent access to support to meet their basic needs
- Fostering resiliency in Albertans facing multiple barriers in their lives
- Supporting Albertans with disabilities to participate in the community and find employment opportunities
- Supporting First Nations and other indigenous peoples with disabilities to find employment and opportunities to participate in the community

Since September, 2022, our Workforce Development Program has helped an average of 56 unique individuals every month and has helped 29 people find and maintain permanent employment.



## Financial Empowerment Program

Financial Empowerment is essential to improving the lives of low-income Canadians. Bissell Centre trains its front-line staff and others within the community to deliver integrated financial empowerment services to people accessing Bissell Centre programs.

### The services we offer include:

- Financial literacy education workshops
- Assistance with tax filing and accessing government benefits
- One-on-one financial coaching through front-line programs

This program is offered in partnership with: e4c, Prosper Canada, and the Institute for the Advancement of Aboriginal Women.

During the past year, our Financial Empowerment Program helped 1,874 people with tax preparation and applications for benefits, and supported the filing of tax returns resulting in a total of \$6.07M in savings or increased income for Albertans.



## Housing Services

Being homeless means seldom being safe, both on the streets and in shelters. There are few safe spaces for the homeless. We believe that everyone deserves to have a safe place to call home. Our range of housing services includes our Homeless to Homes, Community Bridge and our Outreach Housing team.

In 2022-23, our housing teams connected 2,149 people with housing resources.



# Our Strategic Plan

We are working towards the day when Bissell Centre no longer exists in its current form because there is no more poverty.

Eliminating poverty is a complex task that requires systemic change. Families and individuals are often trapped in the cycle of poverty because of social structures and systems that keep them at a disadvantage.

The experience of living in poverty is interwoven with different and distinct realities for each person depending on their race, culture, gender, sexuality, age, and ability.

Ending poverty requires combined efforts at all levels to transform our individual, communal, and social experience to include everyone, especially those who are most marginalized.

To that end, we centralize our organizational strategy using a cascading method, like a waterfall, that includes our core values, organizational approach, riverbanks, and practice philosophy to set a clear path towards a poverty-free community.

This way of conceptualizing our strategic plan allows for innovative changes as the river flows, changes speed, fills up, and sometimes dries out. The river guides the possibilities and limits of our work, so we remain focused and determined to reach our goals.



**ORGANIZATIONAL STRATEGY**

**CORE VALUES**

**ORGANIZATIONAL APPROACH**

**PRACTICE PHILOSOPHY**

**RIVERBANKS**



# Our Organizational Strategy

“What we do and how we do it.”



## 1. High Quality Programs and Services

Bissell Centre develops and provides high quality programs and services and impactful community and economic development initiatives that benefit individuals, families, and neighbourhoods in poverty by:

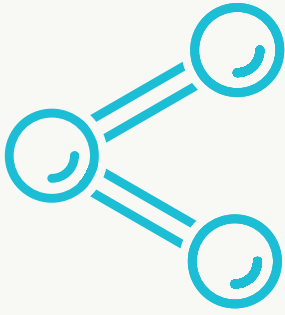
- Increasing involvement in, and advocacy for, appropriate and accessible housing options and supports
- Continuing our commitment to providing supports that address systemic gaps and barriers
- Enhancing alignment and collaboration with partners to increase effectiveness of supports
- Engaging collaboratively with local neighbourhoods and stakeholders
- Developing community-based social enterprise that will be sustainable and impactful for the community



## 2. Truth and Reconciliation

Bissell Centre commits to participating in the large systems work required to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the National Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice by:

- Building honest, meaningful, and good relationships with Indigenous communities (Nations/peoples), leadership, and organizations that support and act *with* them
- Centering the lived experience of Indigenous participants and staff
- Providing proper protocol to listen and learn with Elders, Knowledge Keepers, and Indigenous people to gain understandings of traditional knowledges of all Indigenous Nations in Treaty 6
- Developing opportunities for staff to build understanding and capacity to work with Indigenous participants, colleagues, Nations, and organizations



### 3. Systems Change

Bissell Centre aims to influence systems and societal change by:

- Engaging with all levels of government and other institutions to contribute to policy change and best practices that support families and individuals to move out of poverty
- Ensuring the voices of people with lived experiences are heard in a meaningful way to them
- Building an organizational culture based on learning, reflection, and a commitment to evidence-based practice
- Educating and raising awareness about the issues and complexities of poverty and inviting the community to actively engage in the elimination of poverty



### 4. Organizational Sustainability

Bissell Centre develops resources, capacity, and long-term organizational sustainability by:

- Organizational planning with a continued commitment to excellence that includes governance, risk management, infrastructure, and administrative capacity development to achieve our vision and mission
- Ensuring our work is consistent with, and pays close attention to, environmental sustainability across the organization's operations
- Raising funds to directly impact the people we serve and ensuring a high-quality donor experience
- Increasing public awareness about Bissell Centre and the impact of our work in the community
- Developing a healthy culture of employee engagement, accountability, celebration, and professional development that supports employees to understand their role in our vision and mission
- Providing equal opportunity, competitive staff compensation and benefits, and pay equity for all employees



# Our Operational Principles

## Ethical and Statutory Compliance

Guiding Bissell Centre are the ethical and statutory requirements for the responsible operation of a charity under the Alberta Societies Act, the Canada Revenue Agency's rules for charitable organizations registered under the Income Tax Act and the standards and practices prescribed by the Imagine Canada Standards.

The Imagine Canada Standards require Bissell Centre to demonstrate excellence and leadership in five key areas of operation:

- Board governance
- Financial accountability and transparency
- Fundraising
- Staff management
- Volunteer involvement

As a member of the Standards program, Bissell Centre complies with 73 Standards, including:

- A mission statement that is approved and revisited by the board at least every five years to assess its continuing relevance.
- Compliance with all legal requirements as a charitable organization and all relevant laws and statutes.
- Responsible conduct in all affairs of the organization and carrying out all legal and financial responsibilities in an ethical manner.
- Updated policies and procedures.
- Philanthropy and fundraising activities conducted in an ethical and responsible manner and a system of managing finances and assets in a responsible and accountable way.

**Bissell Centre is committed to credibility and donor confidence.**



# Our Board

Bissell Centre is managed by its Board of Governors consisting of 9 to 16 individuals who volunteer their time as Board Governors. Bissell Centre's Board Governors are leaders in social services, business and the community.

Board Governors are elected annually at Bissell Centre's Annual General Meeting by the members of Bissell Centre.

The Board currently has three committees:

- Human Resources, Nominating & Governance Committee
- Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee
- Community Engagement Committee

**Bissell Centre's Board of Governors is responsible for the strategic direction for Bissell Centre and focuses on the following key accountabilities:**

- Adequate practices are in place to reduce the risk of harm to its employees, volunteers, visitors and clients.
- Bissell Centre meets all legal, financial and regulatory requirements.
- Satisfactory progress is being made in achieving the objectives of the strategic framework and adequate resources are being provided to achieve the objectives.



**Lee-Ann Leitch**  
BOARD CHAIR

**Bissell Centre's Board of Governors are appointed based on their expertise, commitment, integrity and vision.**

**The Board's Human Resources, Nominating & Governance Committee is responsible for:** providing direction on Bissell's approach to governance issues; making recommendations regarding the Board's effectiveness; recommending individuals to the Board for nomination as Board members; and reviewing key compensation and human resources policies for Bissell.

**The primary responsibilities of the Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee include:** assessing the processes related to identification of risks to Bissell and effectiveness of its control environment; overseeing financial reporting; evaluating Bissell's internal control systems for financial reporting and material transactions; and evaluating audit processes.

**The Board's Community Engagement Committee** is primarily focused on looking for ways in which our Board and other community stakeholders can participate to expand the influence of and grow the organization's impact.

# Capital Planning Framework

Bissell's Capital Plan is a two-part forecast of annual facilities capital and information technology needs.

**Integral to Bissell's long-term service and financial planning, the Capital Plan's key objective is to strike a strategic balance among the following needs:**

- maintaining our infrastructure and facilities in an appropriate state of repair;
- optimizing our network of amenities to best serve our participants, volunteers, employees, and visitors;
- advancing Bissell Centre's mission priorities within its longterm financial capacity.

Bissell Centre's Capital Plan is a current and future projection of capital needs. The plan helps place forward-thinking projects in context and gives an overall perspective on facilities needs.

The Bissell Board of Governors approves each year's capital funding costs.

The Capital Plan is presented to Bissell Centre's Board of Governors and its Finance, Audit and Risk Management Committee for review and discussion. After the Plan has been approved by the Board, Bissell Centre can then begin work to plan, design and construct facilities and information technology improvements.

For the 2023-24 Capital Plan, Bissell Centre will continue to build on its strategic procurement framework to drive significant cost savings and maximize value on major facility projects.

Bissell Centre's 2023-24 Capital Plan has been approved by the Bissell Centre Board of Governors and proposes \$1,379,000 of capital investment priorities in the next year as set out below.

Information Technology Capital Planning includes the equipment and technology that allows our employees to perform their daily functions to deliver services to our participants and the community.

Total strategic capital investments in equipment and information technology for the 2023-24 fiscal year is estimated at \$209K, including \$41K for new equipment, \$168K in specialized applications, and \$112K in IT technical assistance services.

Equipment and information technology have short lifespans and require frequent replacement when compared to other types of capital assets.

Additionally, the world of information technology changes rapidly and is often accompanied by a change in the way work is done or a service is offered.





# Enterprise Risk Management

## Risk Mitigation

Bissell has committed to focus on prioritization, integration and communication of significant risks to management and the Board. In support of this, Bissell has implemented an enterprise risk register framework to provide guidance in managing risk across the agency.

### **Bissell Centre continues to mitigate enterprise risk through the maintenance of:**

- Bissell Centre's risk register an annual strategic review process
- Ongoing risk management assessments
- Annual budgeting and business planning process
- A tracking process for current contractual and funder reporting commitments

Bissell's key risk categories are Reputational; Operational; Governance; Financial; and Compliance.

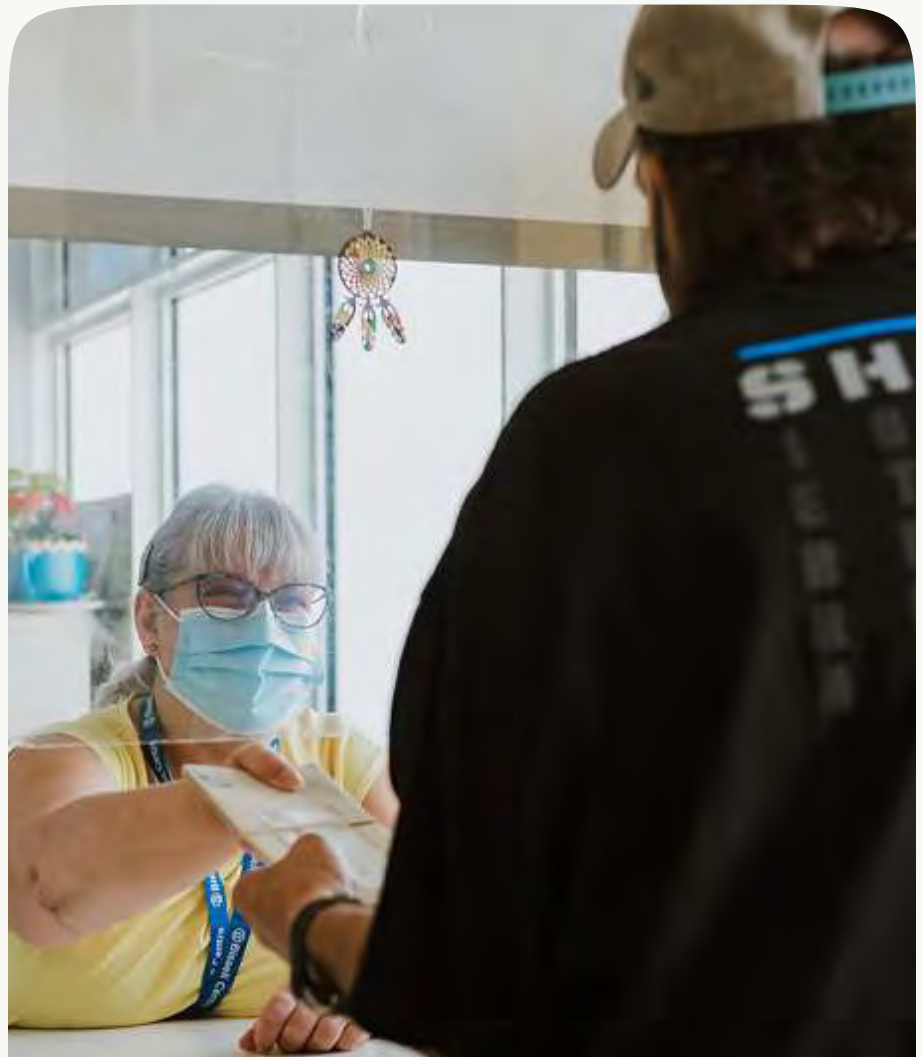
Risks are analyzed, considering impact rating, likelihood and inherent risk, to determine how they should be managed.

## Role of the Board of Governors in Risk Management

Our Board of Governors provides oversight of senior leadership's management of the various risks the agency faces. The Board meets regularly with key risk management functional leaders. It also receives annual reports from senior representatives of the agency's independent auditor.

The Finance, Audit & Risk Management Committee members have regular risk management discussions with senior leadership of the agency.

Ultimately, oversight of our risk management activities is one of the most important roles of the Board of Governors. The Board is dedicated and fully committed to its role in ensuring quality, compliance and effective risk management.



# Our 2023-24 Strategies

## 1.

### High Quality Programs and Services

*Bissell Centre develops and provides high quality programs and services and impactful community and economic development initiatives that benefit individuals, families, and neighbourhoods in poverty.*

#### 1.1 FULL SPECTRUM OF HOUSING SERVICES

In 2023-24, Bissell Centre will increase and/or strengthen its collaboration with community organizations and will develop a case for support for a Diversion program. A Diversion team will work on supporting people away from emergency shelters into housing.

Bissell Centre offers a full spectrum of housing services. Being houseless means seldom being safe, both on the streets and in shelters. There are few safe spaces for those who are houseless. We believe that everyone deserves to have a safe place to call home. Our range of housing services includes our Homeless to Homes, Community Bridge, and Outreach Housing teams.

Our Homeless to Homes (H2H) program is based on principles of Housing First which assert that housing should be addressed prior to any other barrier in an individual's life. Participants in H2H are provided with assistance in finding and setting up a market apartment, and work with our team to develop a service plan with the ultimate goal of increased housing stability. Our Community Bridge program is a rapid response intervention providing support to stop an eviction, disconnection or foreclosure. Our Outreach Housing program's sole purpose is to locate, engage, and house people who are houseless. The team will work in under-served and unreached areas of the city where people who are houseless congregate, and provide additional follow-up support to those housed.

#### 1.2 MUNICIPAL ENCAMPMENT RESPONSE PLANS

Bissell Centre has partnered with Homeward Trust and the City of Edmonton on implementing the Enhanced Encampment Response Plan (EERP) for 2023-24. Part of this partnership includes a pilot project to house 100 individuals from encampments by October, 2023.

The goals of the EERP are to provide people experiencing homelessness with clear, consistent and rapid connections to housing and supports, and to ensure that encampments do not diminish individual or public safety. The EERP will test if leaving encampments in place, while simultaneously providing encampment maintenance support and targeted housing outreach, will result in securing housing faster and decreasing encampment-related 311 calls.

## 2. Truth and Reconciliation

*Bissell Centre commits to participating in the large systems work required to implement the Truth and Reconciliation Commission Calls to Action and the National Report on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Calls for Justice.*

Bissell respects Indigenous ways of knowing and being and sees it as an integral value towards strengthening relationships with Indigenous community members, staff, communities, and businesses.

The Indigenous population we serve faces multiple intersecting barriers, and often struggles with present or historical traumas. At Bissell Centre, we define Indigenous as an individual self-identifying as either status or non-status, and as First Nations, Metis, or Inuit.

**In 2023-24, Bissell Centre will include the following in its work towards transparent and accountable reconciliation actions:**

- Develop and implement an Indigenous Engagement Strategy that will inform all Bissell Centre's programs and services
- Develop a Calls to Action Response Plan with clearly identified areas of priority for implementation
- Establish an Indigenous Engagement portfolio team to implement our Indigenous Engagement Strategy and accompanying identified priority initiatives
- Ensure Indigenous Cultures Training is provided for all staff





# 3.

## Systems Change

*Bissell Centre aims to influence systems and societal change.*

### 3.1 MULTISECTOR COLLABORATION

Solving today's complex social issues effectively and equitably extends beyond the reach of any one organization. Bissell Centre will continue its multisector work to create significant, sustainable improvements in social health and equity outcomes. Bissell Centre believes that effective collaboration increases the impact a group of organizations can have when working together to achieve shared goals.

In 2023-24, Bissell Centre will increase its collaborative efforts:

#### Programs and Services

- Drop-in nursing support available in our Community Space, with Streetworks
- Legal supports in our Community Space, with the Criminal Trial Lawyers' Association
- Programming in our Community Space, with Boyle Street Community Services and Veterans Association Food Bank of Edmonton
- Neighbourhood Beautification Project, with REACH Edmonton and the Chinatown Transformation Collaborative
- Bissell is part of the Sector Emergency Response, a collaboration between more than 25 system and partner agencies working together to facilitate an emergency response during extreme temperatures and peak shelter occupancy to ensure community members have a safe place to be
- Mobile PALS unit at Bissell, with the Edmonton Humane Society, providing affordable and accessible services for cat and/or dog spaying/neutering
- Conflict to Calm training available to local organizations, provided by Bissell
- Provide basic needs goods for youth in need, with Youth Empowerment and Support Services
- Provide leather and fur materials to Elders and seniors in the community for ceremony and crafts, with Edmonton Aboriginal Seniors Centre

### 3.1 MULTISECTOR COLLABORATION (CONTINUED)

#### Organizational

- Solar PV installation and energy improvement projects, with NEWO Energy and Solar Power Investment Cooperative of Edmonton
- Address single use item waste and move to biodegradable and/or recyclable materials for food distribution, with B&G Products
- Address food insecurities and remove barriers to food redistribution, with Edmonton Food Bank and Second Harvest
- Reduce electronic and textile waste at our Thrift Stores, with Quantum Lifecycle Partners and Rotex Supply
- Polling stations at Bissell, with Elections Alberta
- Amplification of others' voices on our social media, eg. Bent Arrow, Boyle Street Community Services, Find Edmonton, Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness, Canadian Mental Health Association, E4C, Metis Nation of Alberta
- Joint funding applications to operate joint programming with local organizations
- Create client relationship management software, with Sage Seniors Association
- Data research tools access, through SAS Institute
- Inner City Check-in application, with Boyle Street Community Services, George Spady Society, The Mustard Seed, and Homeward Trust
- Bissell is part of the Evaluation Community of Practice, with 10 other organizations
- Improve delivery of social services using data, with PolicyWise Children & Families and five social service agencies, to create a data warehouse that integrates key population data and makes it easily accessible for agencies to collaborate, understand and shape their service offerings
- Host executive leaders gatherings at Bissell's Moonlight Bay Centre, with over 40 agency leaders
- Share information and resources regarding Bissell's Moonlight Bay Centre facility at Lake Wabamun, with YWCA Yowochas Camp

### **3.2 TELLING OUR STORY**

We recognize the power storytelling has on influencing societal change that ultimately evokes system change. Our focus for 2023-24 will be to create stories through videos and blogs that create an emotional connection to our community members and make them feel heard and seen; stories that share their strengths, talents and successes.

In 2023–24 the Marketing & Communications team will collaborate with the Community Space and other programs to create platforms for community members and staff members to share their own stories on our social media and other digital platforms.

In Indigenous cultures, storytelling is firmly grounded in oral tradition and history. Indigenous storytelling is a way to instill a knowledge of the mind, body, and soul in connection to the earth through experienced and trusted knowledge keepers. Given that nearly half of those we serve identify as Indigenous, storytelling plays a huge part in Bissell’s culture.

In 2023–24, in consultation with Bissell’s Indigenous Engagement team, the Marketing & Communications team will ensure the voices of our Indigenous community members are heard, through videos and blogs, and that correct protocols are followed when ceremonies and information is shared with the public on our digital platforms. A new webpage will be developed to share resources, provide access to stories of our Indigenous community members, highlight days to observe and share Bissell’s commitment to Indigenous engagement.

### **3.3 INFORMING DECISIONS**

In 2023–24, Bissell will perform a deep analysis of the data it has gleaned since 2019 through its usage of the Bissell Self-Sufficiency Matrix. Bissell will use the information gained through this analysis to better inform its decision-making in future.

Bissell Centre adapted the Life-Works Self-Sufficiency matrix to measure participant journeys toward self-sufficiency. The self-sufficiency matrix is a tool that has been used to measure participant journeys toward self-sufficiency in multiple contexts and locations, from Washington State to Holland. It was developed to be able to understand self-sufficiency from a holistic perspective. The self-sufficiency matrix measures domains that relate to self-sufficiency (e.g., housing, support network, etc.) on a 5-point Likert style scale.

# 4.

## Organizational Sustainability

*Bissell Centre develops resources, capacity, and long-term organizational sustainability.*

### 4.1 EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT

In 2023-24, Bissell Centre will focus on improving its employee engagement by implementing the following organizational-wide improvements:

- Cost of living adjustment for all staff
- Compensation grid implementation to ensure salaries are equitable and align with market value
- Administrative support capacity added to support program and portfolio work
- Increased resources for staff recognition efforts
- Increased resources for professional development and leadership development

### 4.2 ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENTS

In 2023–24, as part of its commitment to renewable energy, Bissell will install photovoltaic (PV) solar panels and a training array on its Alberta Avenue Thrift Store building. Bissell Centre will also install two additional arrays of PV solar panels on its 10530 – 96 Street, Edmonton, Community Space building.

Together, these systems will consist of 106 solar panels and have an expected production of 58 megawatt hours (MWh). They will offset approximately 42 tonnes of greenhouse gas emissions. Bissell Centre partnered with NEWO Energy for the design, procurement and installation of the solar panel systems.



### **4.3 INFRASTRUCTURE IMPROVEMENTS**

In 2023-24, Bissell Centre will renovate its Bissell Centre West building envelope to improve energy efficiency and improve weatherproofing. The retrofit renovations include new roofing, upgrading windows and doors to a higher efficiency, and insulating, cladding, and adding vapour barrier to the building envelope. This project will provide a safe, insulated, weather tight building for the community to access that also has a smaller carbon footprint.

The increasing cost of food and housing will push more people into poverty. Bissell Centre's Community Space offers basic needs supports such as access to bathrooms, showers, laundry facilities, clothing, meals, and medical supports. Also housed within the building are cultural supports, mental health services, FASS, financial empowerment, housing supports, and more.

Food insecurity is high in the population we serve, so Bissell will upgrade its Community Kitchen to better offer space for community members to learn or relearn cooking skills, build their self-confidence, and foster relationships with peers. Food-related programming will be offered in the space, and participants will be able to use the kitchen to prepare their own meals.

### **4.4 CYBER SECURITY**

In 2023-24, Bissell will improve its information systems' security and build a robust cyber security assessment framework towards continual improvement in its cyber security stance. As technology continues to advance and become more integrated into daily lives, the potential for cyber attacks and data breaches also increases. These incidents can result in lost or stolen sensitive data, financial loss, damage to an organization's reputation, and even legal consequences.

### **4.5 CLIENT DATABASE SOFTWARE DEVELOPMENT**

In 2023-24, Bissell will work with a community partner to work with a developer to design, build and launch a custom database solution that better reflects the nature of both organizations' operation, and allows for better control over both the customization and cost of the database over time.

Equipped with the ability to better evaluate the impact of organizational efforts across different programs, we will be more nimble in facilitating the successes and overcoming the challenges to alleviating poverty.

Bissell Centre currently uses a commercially-available software database to record its efforts with clients and will build a more robust database collection software system to better allow us to measure social change, optimize outcomes, and drive greater impact.



## 4.6 SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

### **Bissell Food Services**

Bissell provides three daily meals within our Community Space, our Early Learning & Child Care Centre, and is under contract to provide three daily meals to the residents of two separate bridge housing units within Edmonton. Bissell intends to continue to expand its food service offerings with the goal of raising funds that will directly support our programs and services.

In 2023-24, Bissell intends to perform an upgrade to its Bissell East basement activities room to significantly increase our cold and pantry food storage systems, and upgrade its existing commercial kitchen appliances.

Of significant benefit to Bissell is that we are able to expand our social enterprise model of catering into existing space that is currently being used as storage by our Food Services team. Rather than leasing or purchasing a new space, in addition to infrastructure requirements, permitting, and other requirements, we are upgrading and expanding existing space with major optimizations for expected cost reductions in long-term operating expenses.

### **Bissell Thrift Shops**

In 2023-24, Bissell intends to upgrade its Alberta Avenue Thrift store entrance and vestibule, including potential vestibule redesign and replacement of frames and doors. All improvements include upgrades to ensure compliance with current Accessible Canada Act and Regulations thereto.

In 2023-24, Bissell intends to perform surface parking lot improvements to mitigate existing surface material deterioration and uneven surfaces of the current Thrift Shop parking lot. All surface lot improvements include upgrades to ensure compliance with current Accessible Canada Act and Regulations thereto.



**AMBROSIA MURAL**  
BISSELL THRIFT SHOP  
ALBERTA AVE - 2022





#### 4.7 INCLUSION, DIVERSITY, EQUITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

In 2023-24, Bissell Centre's Inclusion, Diversity, Equity and Accessibility (IDEA) Committee will implement and improve upon the strategy created by the IDEA Taskforce in 2022-23 to ensure that equity, diversity, inclusion and accessibility remain a central and intentional component at all levels of our organization.

The IDEA Committee membership is comprised of both internal employees and an Advisory Group of community experts, elders and external voices with lived experience.

#### 4.8 ADVOCACY STRATEGY

In 2023-24, Bissell will create and implement a communication advocacy strategy to support our advocacy efforts to raise awareness about the following and help to drive social change:

- the Housing First model, to support people experiencing chronic homelessness by providing immediate access to permanent housing integrated with support services;
- harm reduction principles aiming to minimize the negative health, social and legal impacts associated with drug use, drug policies and drug laws;
- permanent supportive housing as an evidence-based practice that combines rental or housing assistance with individualized, flexible and voluntary support services for people with high needs related to physical or mental health, developmental disabilities or substance use; and
- encampment settlements, which refer to temporary outdoor campsites on public property or privately owned land that most often result from a lack of accessible, affordable housing.



## **GET INVOLVED**

For more information about how to get involved with Bissell Centre through volunteering, partnership, or to donate, please reach out to:

**Gary St. Amand**  
Chief Executive Officer  
[gary@bissellcentre.org](mailto:gary@bissellcentre.org)

**Kelly Hoskins**  
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