



Date: 23/05/19

# *CommunityWise Resource Centre*

**A Community Hub for Non-Profit, Charitable  
and Grassroots organizations.**

## *Annual Report—2019*

**40th !**



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CommunityWise would like to acknowledge and express our gratitude to be here on this territory. Calgary, Moh-kíns-tsis (Blackfoot), Wincheesh-pah (Stoney), Kootsisáw (Tsuut'ina) exists within the Treaty 7 Region of Southern Alberta. These are the territories of Blackfoot Confederacy First Nations of Siksika, the Piikuni, and Kainai; the Stoney-Nakoda First Nations of Chiniki, Bearspaw, and Wesley; and the Tsuut'ina First Nation. The City of Calgary is also homeland to the historic Northwest Métis and to Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3.

## Our Quadragennial Anniversary!

For 40 years, alongside countless member organizations, CommunityWise (formerly the Old Y Centre for Community Organizations) has managed, cared for, and brought to life the Old YWCA building as an important cultural centre and a workplace for those in the non-profit sector. In the spring of 1971, the YWCA, who had built and used the facility since 1910, moved out. The City of Calgary took possession of the building.

Once considered one of the most modern buildings of its time, it had by the 1970's become underutilized, neglected, and in danger of demolition. In the absence of a long term plan for the building, the City began renting space to community groups. The building was described by the media and certain politicians at the time as ramshackle, antediluvian, and worthy of being condemned and destroyed. The building was in danger. The organizations who had planted the seeds of what we have today chose to try something new. These groups were providing invaluable services and community supports not offered anywhere else and they knew this place and the people in it were worth fighting for. This was an opportunity to make something truly special. An historic first for the city of Calgary. A community of communities fighting for the future of this beloved building. A place from which love, care, compassion, and justice could be nurtured and shared with all of Calgary.

After years of uncertainty, threats of demolition, flooded basements, and some serious funding cuts to certain members, the groups all decided to come together, form their own non-profit, get Provincial historic protection status for the building, and in 1979, the association of 16 member groups were able to secure a long term lease with the City of Calgary .

In the years to follow, the building developed into a unique centre for non-profit and community organizing. Countless organizations have operated out of our centre and continue to today. Our member groups have been important champions for social change and have represented the truly rich diversity of people in this city.

Today we are now called CommunityWise. We have been here now for 40 years and today have over 90 member organizations. The impact of the members in the community in a wide range of areas of work has been monumental and city changing....for the better.



**The New “Old Y”**  
Why tenants fought for their shabby home

## Table of Contents, Vision and Mission

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**Vision:** A community cultivated by and for everyone.

**Mission:** To be a non-profit hub, providing inclusive, affordable, and equitable space and community development programs to support and strengthen diverse grassroots and non-profit members.

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## Message from the Board

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It is a true honour to be writing on behalf of the CommunityWise Board of Directors for its 40<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting. I would like to take the opportunity to share what your Board of Directors accomplished in the past year; 1/40<sup>th</sup> of our history.

CommunityWise has grown and changed a great deal in recent years, and to continue to meet the needs of our members, we took on several new strategies to strengthen our internal capacity and engage our stakeholders. Our slate of new Board Members brought a range of skills, perspectives, and enthusiasm to the Board. This coincided with the formation of committees that took on some heady tasks.

- Fund development committee not only exceeded their goal of raising \$5,000.00 through donations from individuals but introduced new strategies through social media and connected with a large audience of supporters. Both elements enhance our financial sustainability for the long-term.
- A Lease Committee continued to work with the City to co-create a plan of action to address the preservation of the Old Y Building, improve accessibility, and ensure CommunityWise Members get the most out of this space. The Board committed more resources in this priority work area to meet the demand.
- An *ad hoc* committee met throughout the year to advance our Theory of Change, develop a change-management strategy to keep pace with the increase in demand for CommunityWise Services, and steward the creation of a new strategic plan.
- Governance Committee updated bylaws, facilitated the nomination process of new board members, and connected these processes within our Equity Framework.
- Finance Committee updated reporting and cost-control practices. This allows for a pro-active approach to budgeting, managing grants, and ensuring our finances are not just in order, but are used effectively to meet the needs of our members.

The Board is excited about celebrating and promoting the work of our members and the communities they serve over the next year. Turning 40 is a big thing, and we'll be taking the year to enjoy it, with lots of fun programming. The past year confirmed and reconfirmed the work of CommunityWise. It has been incredible to see so many of the member organizations thrive, and the constant activity in and around the building. We salute all of your amazing work!

The Board would also like to recognize the incredible work of our staff team. They go above and beyond above and beyond. You. Are. The. Best. We look forward to the adventures ahead.

Sincerely, CommunityWise Board of Directors

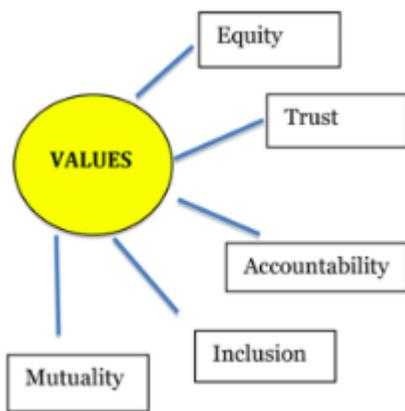
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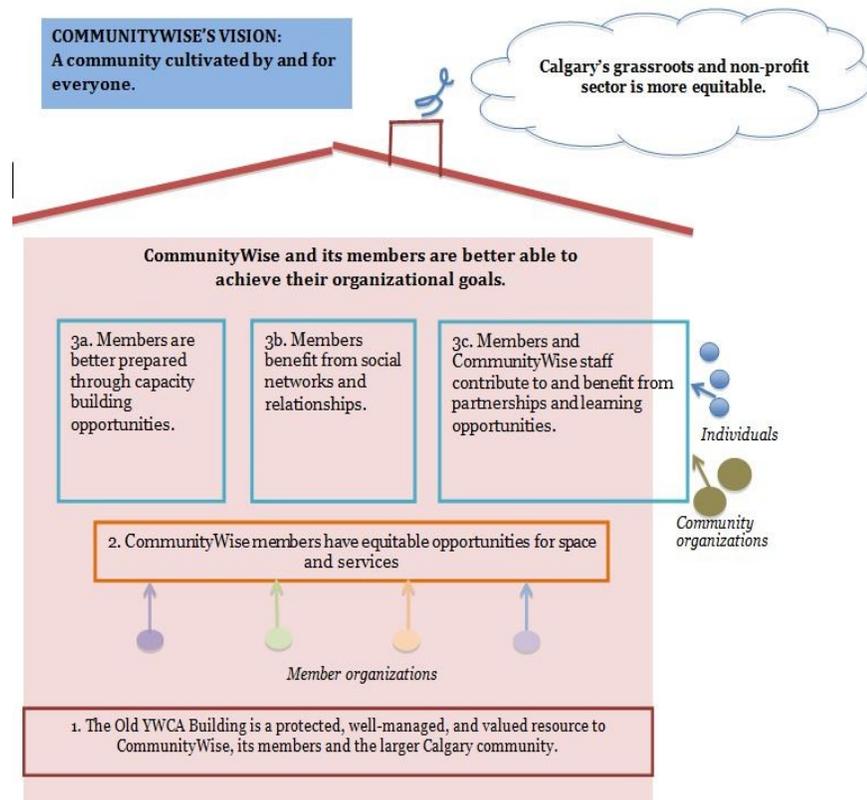
## Theory of Change

In 2018 the CommunityWise Theory of Change became formalized. It answers a number of key questions for our organization:

- Why do we exist? (evidence/rationale)
- Who are we? (vision/mission/values)
- Who do we work with?
- What do we do? (strategies)
- How do we do it?
- What is the expected impact?



This Theory of Change forms the foundation of a renewed strategic plan that we are continuing to develop with the guidance of skilled consultant, Rida Abboud. We will be undertaking an equitable community engagement process to inform our strategic planning this summer. This strategic plan will be completed in September 2019.

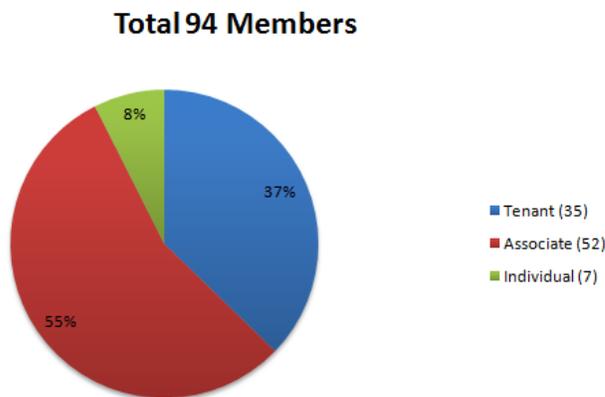


## Membership

CommunityWise is a member based organization supporting an exciting community of non-profit organizations through backbone infrastructure services and non profit sector development. In our historic building close to 100 CommunityWise members, and their communities, are now supported. Each member has a unique and valued experience at CommunityWise and brings life into the Historic building and community. Members of CommunityWise offer vital services and programs to the community in highly impactful ways.

*CommunityWise Members work in areas such as addictions supports and advocacy, hunger alleviation, disability services, mental health supports, ethnocultural community organizing, LGBTQ2S+ peer support, Indigenous community services, and film, performative, and community arts*

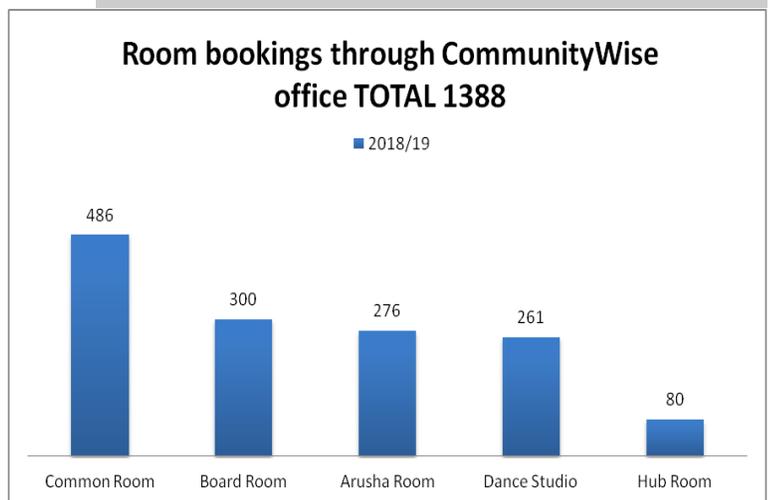
Funding CommunityWise receives from our members in the form of rent and fees goes directly back into the historic building and its operation. CommunityWise has Tenant, Associate, and Individual grassroots members. The CommunityWise membership collectively serves tens of thousands of individuals annually, 365 days a year on site at the building.



Below: Common Room bookings at CommunityWise. Note: this does not take into account the hundreds of group meetings held in tenants' own spaces .

### New Members 2018-2019

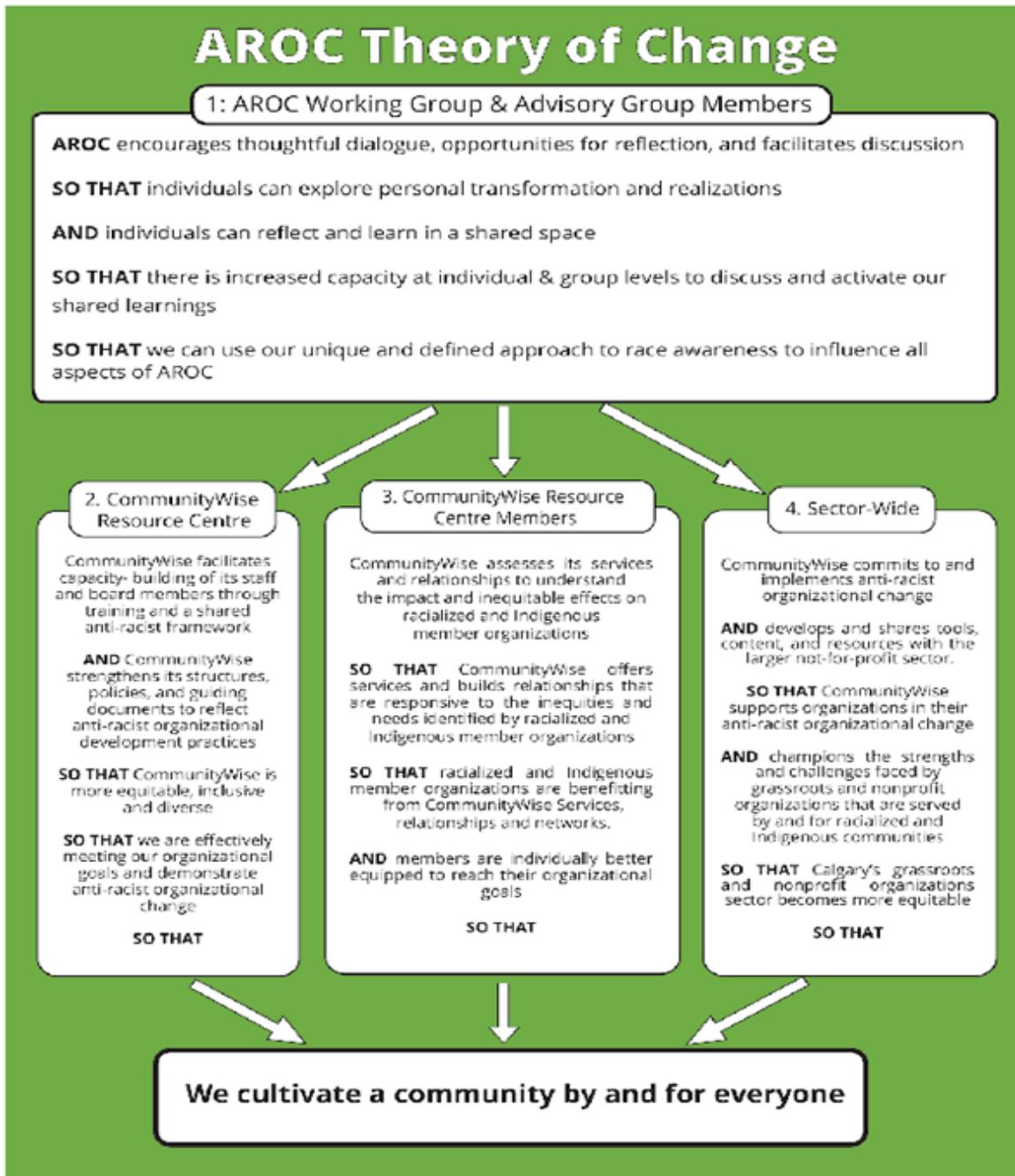
- River Wearmouth (Individual)
- WP Puppet Theatre (Associate)
- Canadian Rockies Gay Rodeo (Associate)
- Hollow Bone (Associate)
- Diana Izard (Individual)
- Calgary Queer Church (Tenant)
- Diversity Initiatives for New Immigrants (Tenant)
- Feast of Friends (Tenant)
- We Did It! School Age Care (Associate)
- Chanel Nicol-Ellis (Individual)
- Hakili Sustainable Development (Associate)
- Western Canadian Institute for ISTDP (Associate)





## Anti-Racist Organizational Change

We have been undertaking Anti-Racist Organizational Change (AROC) at CommunityWise for three years now. During this time, we've worked through a consultative and emergent process to better understand and define organizational racism as well as develop and implement strategies to create greater racial equity in our organization. Four pathways of change started to emerge in the fall of 2017, and they now guide our AROC process:



## Anti-Racist Organizational Change

### AROC Working and Advisory Group Members:

- The AROC Working and Advisory Groups came together to “unlearn racism while facilitating organizational change together”. We hired Sameen Ashraf to support these AROC meetings

- 33 different individuals attended 7 Working Group meetings and 3 Advisory Group meetings

- A “Most Significant Change” evaluation surfaced the learning and change that occurred for individuals in the Working and Advisory Group (example quoted below)

"I no longer deny that my own non-profit organization is racist.

I no longer see that as a scary fact that should be denied and justified away.

It's simply a true fact.

And once it's accepted as true, it's easier to see that we can work to change it."

- AROC Working Group Member

I hope that I am moving from a place where saying and thinking that I actually care about equity and anti-racism can have actionable and accountable activities demonstrated or played out in more meaningful ways."

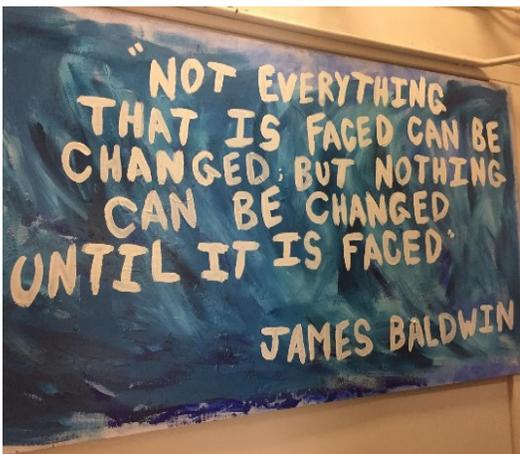
- AROC Working Group Member



### 2. CommunityWise Resource Centre:

-CommunityWise has undertaken much work internally to address organizational racism, such as:

- On-going anti-racism learning and reflection with board, staff, students, and committees
- Using a racial equity lens in updating the building rules (e.g., including a smudging policy), understanding the impact of rental increases, and in strategic planning
- Undertaking the “Accountability to Indigenous Communities” project, including the hiring of Nicole Eshkakogan as an Indigenous Organizational Consultant
- Making changes to the physical space (such as this mural on left) to be more racially sensitive.



-CommunityWise is currently undertaking an evaluation to understand the extent to which our organization has changed as a result of AROC—stay tuned for more on this!

## Anti-Racist Organizational Change

### 3. CommunityWise Resource Centre Members:

- The CommunityWise Staff Collective has been factoring in the effects of racism on decisions around membership and use of space, as well as in addressing the barriers that racialized and Indigenous groups may face in accessing space
- We have made an application to the federal government's Canadian Heritage "Community Support, Multiculturalism, and Anti-Racism Initiatives Program" to more thoroughly support our work on this pathway

"I no longer feel as lost,  
or like I don't have a place here."

- AROC Advisory Group Member

### 4. Sector-wide:

- We were the 2018 recipient of the Canadian Race Relations Foundation "Award of Excellence in Community Category"
- We released two new resources in partnership with the Alberta Association of Immigrant Serving Agencies (AAISA), which can be found at [communitywise.net/aroc](http://communitywise.net/aroc): A second resource booklet called "Deeper AROC: More Tools and Resources" and An "Introduction to AROC Webinar"
- We were invited to train several Calgary non-profits (including AAISA, the Lougheed House, and Momentum), and presented at various events around the city (including the WELL Conference, run by member Calgary Queer Arts Society)
- We are a member of the Coalitions Creating Equity Calgary Advisory Group
- We collaborated with or supported the following groups and individuals on events in the building including:
  - Action Dignity
  - Canadian Cultural Mosaic Foundation
  - Voices
  - Mel Vee
  - Uproot YYC and the Unlearning Channel
- We were consulted by the provincial and federal governments on issues related to diversity, inclusion, racism, and anti-racism



## The Historic Old YWCA Building

### Renovation and Repair

CommunityWise is responsible for supporting the day to day operations of the building and maintaining it as a functional space for non-profit and charitable work while always keeping significant heritage considerations in mind.



As a provincially registered historic resource, the Old YWCA, which we are stewards of, requires ongoing and increasing work to maintain. Over the past year and while longer-term major renovation plans are underway, CommunityWise has continued to undertake upkeep projects sometimes in partnership with other stakeholders. The cost of upkeep continues to rise as CommunityWise also addressed several significant plumbing, heating, and electrical items throughout the building.

Some notable projects include:

- May 2019—Common Room Painted
- December to February 2019—Substantial water line repair work and boiler pump replacement
- November 2018—several windows and front door repaired
- Office #103 and #105 Renovations—Member led improvement
- Basement renovations (new carpet and flooring, wall removals and networking—member partnered improvement (Miskanawah)
- Total of approximately 3800 sq. ft painted
- Total of approximately 2800 sq. ft. new flooring installed
- Obtained new AV equipment

City of Calgary sponsored work:

August – September Foundation protection project—Downspouts replaced, backyard pavers installed

August-December—Destructive Testing Project

CommunityWise helped facilitate and pass all fire, boiler, emergency lighting systems, extinguisher and related inspections on the facility.

## The Historic Old YWCA Building

### Building Restoration

Our Historic Old YWCA building is considered a priority building within the City of Calgary's heritage property portfolio. The continuity of use for social purpose as well as the important historic contributions of our members over the last 40 years is one of the primary factors in both restoration planning as well as recent efforts initiated by CommunityWise to update the provincial historic statement of significance

After two and a half years of planning, study, design, and destructive testing work at CommunityWise by the City, a project plan is set to be available sometime later this year. CommunityWise spent a great deal of time and resources over the past year helping facilitate their work and mitigate impact on members and users of the facility.

Over the year CommunityWise worked to protect and advocate for our members' use of the facility. In March we were successful in securing a commitment from the City to undertake a "Project Chartering" activity with the City of Calgary (Land and Leasing, Corporate Facilities, Heritage). This will take further effort in the coming year to conclude. The Project Chartering work is in part to outline a clear, mutually understood project plan for the City and CommunityWise to use as a guiding document regarding the operation and implementation of various renovation projects in the years to come. It is also a tool to foster a more cooperative relationship; one that respects the value that each party brings to the table. In the Fall of 2018 the City of Calgary budgeted \$5 Million dollars to go towards the building.



### Lease

Continuing with the foundational work in 2017-2018, this past year the Lease Committee continued to oversee work to update our overhauled lease with the City and to realize the opportunities for improvement related to the operation of the centre.

This facility and importantly the CommunityWise members using it will be better protected and supported with the establishment of a Lease, one that clearly identifies CommunityWise's as well as the City's responsibilities. All this while ensuring the long term viability of the centre as a unique non profit hub stewarded by CommunityWise. Our staff continued to connect with the City of Calgary Partner Strategist assigned to CommunityWise, met several times with Councilor Evan Woolley, and also met with Councillor Jeremy Farkas on the matter.

## Community and Sector Development

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**-Board Leadership Calgary Collaborative (BLC):** we have co-organized accessible, affordable learning events in board governance, fund development, and financial management basics since 2014. The most recent event was held at Bow Valley College on November 3, 2018 and was attended by 350 people representing over 90 nonprofit organizations.

**-University of Calgary and Mount Royal University Social Work faculties:** we have supported 1-2 social work practicum students per semester who work collaboratively with our member organizations.

**-Community Resource Centre Hub Partnership:** weekly partnership with Sunrise Community Link to host a Community Advocate to deliver basic needs referrals, and individual and family supports to better meet the needs of visitors to the building.

**-Being CommunityWise: Empathizing and Engaging with People Experiencing Homelessness:** December 2018 workshop for members organized in collaboration with Inn from the Cold and the City of Calgary Community Social Worker for the Beltline.

**-CommunityWise Winter Party:** December 2018 celebration in which members and community rang in the winter season with this annual tradition complete with a potluck, musical performance, and activities.

**-Reduce Harm, Remove Stigma, and Raise Home:** January 2019 presentation and workshop for members hosted by Change the Face of Addiction about overdose prevention, recognition, and response, including a hands-on Naloxone training.

**-Work Bees:** monthly volunteer opportunities focusing on cleaning and maintenance work to support the ongoing collective care of our building.

### From Time Capsule:

“Congratulations on 40 years. That’s a big deal. 40 years is a long time to be a pillar of the community. It’s hard for me to pick a favorite memory in this building because I have so many. I’ve had work meetings, attended beautiful events, done volunteer work, been to narrative therapy sessions. Being in this building, no matter what the reason, makes me feel like I’ve come home. Thank you for being a place for me - in all aspects of my life and self. This building has a real special place in my heart.”

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## Community Social Work

One of the most fun and rewarding aspects of each year is getting to work alongside incredible community social work practicums who remind us to think critically, prioritize relationship-building, and reflect on why we do what we do. It is truly difficult to imagine CommunityWise today without the participation and contributions of these students over the years. In this anniversary year, it seems fitting to take a look back at the students of the past and recognize their collective contributions to our present and future.

Thank you to Marylynda, Diana, Sobia, Kyla, Megan, Eman, Valerie, Maddison, Agnes, Dheny, Amandella, Carolyn, Tigist, Jamie, Nathan, Danisha, Amanda, Jennifer, Josh, Leticia, Courtney, Amy, Asya, and Shannon!



In 2018, Megan MacKay (University of Calgary) contributed 300 practicum hours to CommunityWise. She produced our first-ever video member spotlight, led our staff in a learning session on peer support models, assisted with fundraising efforts, made beautiful posters, organized and facilitated workshops, supported the day-to-day operations of the building, and so much more!

### Interns

With the support of the Serving Communities Internship Program (SCiP), we have hosted two interns this year: Jennah Martens-Forrester and Megan MacKay, who have supported CommunityWise in our 2019 Member Information Survey and the creation of member video spotlights.

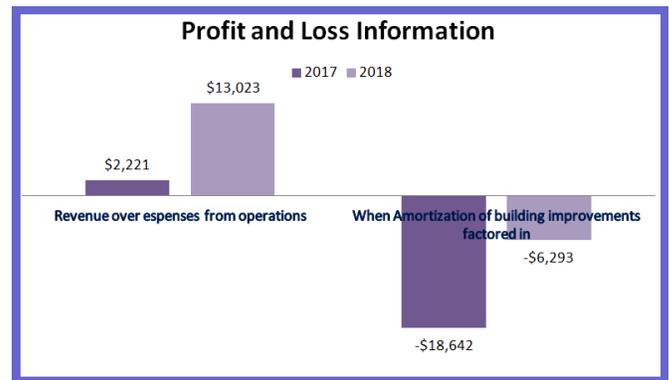
“It was incredibly valuable to have the opportunity to learn in such a unique and exciting environment, and I especially appreciate how intentional CommunityWise is about bringing in an equity lens to each decision. It has helped me to become a better critical thinker and to be aware of my own biases.” – CommunityWise Practicum Student

## Financial Report (2018 Fiscal Year)

2018 finances have been reviewed, evaluated, and verified by independent auditors and they are available through the CommunityWise Admin Office.

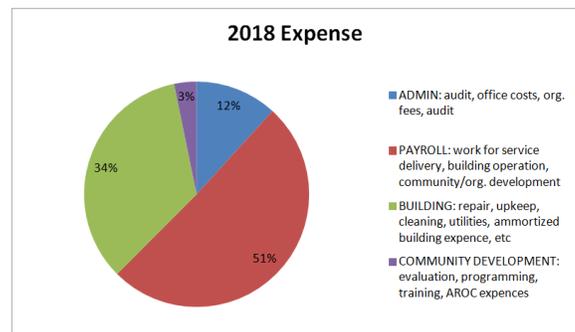
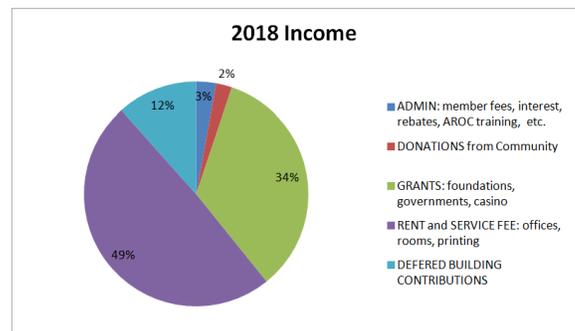
The 2018 fiscal year was a uniquely challenging but also a successful year financially. Throughout the year we experienced overall operational cost increases as well as a number of unexpected expenses. Funding revenue from members also declined from previous years early on in this fiscal year. Addressing these challenges became a staff priority. With support from the board and members we were able to pull together, as we do, and we finished the fiscal year with a healthy net operating revenue over our operating expenses. This net revenue is critical to offset the amortised expenses of the building improvements we record each year.

**1. Profit and loss statements indicate that operation is positive.** By year end 2018 we had net positive revenue over expenses from operations of **\$13,024**. However, when amortization expenses of building improvements over the years is factored in our deficit is **\$6,293**.



Comparing from 2017 financial information we increased the net revenue from operations by **\$10,802** and reduced the overall deficit by **\$12,349**.

| Revenue 2018                                    |                  |
|---|------------------|
| Admin   | \$9,540          |
| Donations                                       | \$7,607          |
| Grants  | \$113,358        |
| Rent and Service Fee                            | \$163,919        |
| <b>Total from Operation</b>                     | <b>\$294,424</b> |
| Expense 2018                                    |                  |
| Admin   | \$40,012         |
| Payroll   | \$172,049        |
| Building  | \$75,204         |
| Community Development                           | \$10,919         |
| <b>Total from Operation</b>                     | <b>\$281,400</b> |
| <b>Revenue over Expense from Operation 2018</b> | <b>\$13,023</b>  |
| Other items 2018                                |                  |
| Deferred capital contributions                  | \$38,636         |
| Amortization expenses                           | -\$57,952        |
| <b>Revenue over Expense Other items 2018</b>    | <b>-\$19,316</b> |
| <b>Net Revenue/Loss</b>                         | <b>-\$6,293</b>  |



## Financial Report (2018 Fiscal Year)

**2.. Financial position shows strength.** By year end CommunityWise had cash assets in excess of liability of **\$76,934**. We maintain a clear source of funds to pay for liabilities. We continued in 2018 to set aside funds for the future including to our leasehold fund. Our total restricted and unrestricted savings total **\$85,568**.



### COMMUNITYWISE RESOURCE CENTRE STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

|  | December 31       |                   |
|--|-------------------|-------------------|
|  | 2018              | 2017<br>(Note 10) |
| <b>ASSETS</b>                            |                   |                   |
| Current asset:                           |                   |                   |
| Cash and cash equivalents                | \$ 110,491        | \$ 153,134        |
| Accounts receivable                      | 11,516            | 11,330            |
| Goods and services tax recoverable       | 2,691             | 2,611             |
| Prepaid expenses                         | <u>1,110</u>      | <u>1,058</u>      |
|  | 125,808           | 168,133           |
| Long term investments (Note 4)           | 85,586            | 83,423            |
| Capital assets (Note 3)                  | <u>241,346</u>    | <u>278,425</u>    |
|  | <u>\$ 452,740</u> | <u>\$ 529,981</u> |
| <b>LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS</b>        |                   |                   |
| Current liabilities:                     |                   |                   |
| Accounts payable and accrued liabilities | \$ 13,788         | \$ 16,308         |
| Employee remittances payable             | -                 | 4,196             |
| Security deposits                        | 33,336            | 30,634            |
| Deferred revenue (Note 5)                | <u>95,380</u>     | <u>123,678</u>    |
|  | 142,504           | 174,816           |
| Deferred capital contributions (Note 6)  | <u>154,542</u>    | <u>193,178</u>    |
|  | <u>297,046</u>    | <u>367,994</u>    |
| Net assets                               |                   |                   |
| General fund                             | 115,694           | 123,245           |
| Restricted fund                          | <u>40,000</u>     | <u>38,742</u>     |
|  | <u>155,694</u>    | <u>161,987</u>    |
|  | <u>\$ 452,740</u> | <u>\$ 529,981</u> |

**3. Statement of Cash flow displayed sufficient funds to supply our needs:** At the beginning of the year, we started with cash inflow of **\$236,557**, ended at cash outflow of **\$196,077**. Cash inflow is more than cash outflow. We have adequate funds to support operation, programs and services.

**4. Budget vs. Actual statement show that funds are well planned.** Actual revenue and expenses reached 99% and 98% of the budgeted amount, respectively. Changes to our budgeting methodology and controls proved effective.



In 2018 we held a Casino fundraising event, a successful online fundraising project, filled office vacancies, generated new revenue from fee for services related to AROC work, and proactively searched for funding opportunities, some of which have already proved successful for 2019. Through these activities we achieved important financial progress and significant improvement in financial planning and management.

## Funders

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### Anti-Racist Organizational Change funded by:

- The Alberta Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund
- The Calgary Foundation
- Catherine Donnelly Foundation
- Government of Alberta—Anti-Racism Community Grant

### Building Operations and Admin funded by:

- CommunityWise Members
- AGLC
- Committee of 10,000
- The Calgary Foundation
- Individual Donors
- Government of Canada—Canada Summer Jobs
- Government of Alberta—Serving Communities Internship Program

“You all do beautiful and tireless work. Thank you for your contribution to our city even when times are tough.” – Community-Wise Donor

“Thanks for offering a safe space for groups and organizations who can't often find one in traditional structures!” – CommunityWise Donor

## Board of Directors

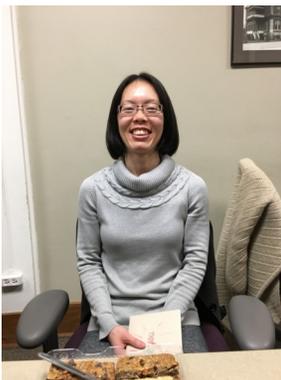
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CommunityWise is governed by a volunteer board of directors. CommunityWise draws directly from our membership to fill most of the board positions.

These directors bring diverse experiences, expertise, and perspectives to the table and work with staff to collaboratively to support the mission, vision, and values of the organization. CommunityWise is governed using a facilitated consensus decision making process.

### Outgoing Board Members (who we will miss dearly)

Helen Mok (2016-2019)



## THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE COMMUNITYWISE RESOURCE CENTRE:

### New Board Members (2019-2020)

- Maris Vezina (Miskanawah, Tenant Member)
- Cynthia Okafor (Community Member)
- Erica Foulds (Refuge Recovery, Associate Member)

### Board Members Continuing Terms

- Seth Leon (Alberta Community and Cooperative Association, Tenant Member)
  - Lori DeLuca (Propellus, Associate Member)
  - Megan Asselin (Community Member)
  - Chris Jensen (Calgary Centre for Global Community, Tenant Member)
  - Erin Jenkins (Calgary Queer Arts Society, Tenant Member)
  - Wendy Treschel (Brown Bagging for Calgary's Kids, Tenant Member)
  - Syma Habib (Community Member)
-

## Staff Collective

CommunityWise employs a small staff collective to carry out and facilitate the work of the organization. The staff collective works collaboratively. While each member takes on different leadership roles within the organization the group utilizes a flat structure rooted in consensus decision making processes. CommunityWise also hires consultants to coordinate evaluation and strategic planning as well as work related to our Indigenous accountability process. In 2018-2019 CommunityWise staff consisted of the following:

### Core Staff

Sarah Zhu—Finance Coordinator

Thulasy Lettner—Equity Coordinator

Erin McFarlane—Organizational Development Coordinator

Philip McCutcheon—Operations Coordinator



### Support Staff:

Sameen Ashraf—AROC Support Staff—April to November 2018 and April 2019-Present

Jannah Martens-Forrester— Admin Support—Canada Summer Jobs 2018 and SCiP internship 2019

Megan MacKay- member video coordinator—SCiP internship 2019



CommunityWise actually only places 4th



## THANK YOU!!

In many respects the histories of the Old YWCA building, CommunityWise (formerly the Old Y Centre for Community Organizations), and member organizations are intertwined. We have seen so many people and organizations come and go over the years. Even in change, both internally as a non-profit center and externally from positive work of our members in the community there are constants that need to be acknowledged. The physical space we occupy, protect and bring to life each day is here because of you. The social and community foundations we have built are no accident. They bring strength, confidence, inclusion, and solidarity to help us all rise to the challenges of today. To all the member organizations, community members, allies, funders, stakeholders, friends, donors, visitors, staff and volunteers Thanks you from the bottom of our hearts in contributing your time and energy to creating a community by and for everyone.



For any follow-up inquiries relating to the information contained in this Annual Report or the Audited Financial Statements for the 2018 fiscal year please contact CommunityWise through our administration office . Contact information below or to the board—[board@communitywise.net](mailto:board@communitywise.net)

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