

Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation Strategic Plan 2024-2028

Investing in our Future

Mission: The Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation provides donors the vehicles to contribute to the long-term financial stability and support of the needs of the agencies which serve the Ottawa Jewish Community. The Foundation acts as a steward for these gifts and links the past, the present and the future while building trust with everyone we serve.

Vision Statement: As a trusted leader and the centre of Jewish philanthropic giving, the Foundation will engage, educate, and inspire generations of donors, ensuring the long-term security and financial viability of Ottawa's Jewish community.

Guiding Principles

- **Determined Leadership:** the Foundation exercises innovative leadership, focused on respecting donors' rights, desires and aspirations.
- **Trusted Stewardship:** through professional financial management, the Foundation is committed to the responsible and transparent stewarding of all assets entrusted to us.
- **Jewish Values:** the Foundation's Jewish values of *tikun olam*, *tzedakah*, and *dor l'dor* shape and direct our mission to strengthen the Ottawa Jewish community. These values inspire us to work with all people in a collaborative, compassionate and respectful manner.
- **Commitment to Excellence:** the Foundation strives for excellence in all aspects of our work, which fosters trust with donors that we will meet their philanthropic goals.
- **Partnership:** the Foundation prioritizes partnerships to optimize the funds available for Jewish Ottawa.

INTRODUCTION

The Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation experienced unprecedented success through our 2019-2023 Strategic Plan. After gaining acceptance into the Harold Grinspoon Foundation's Life & Legacy initiative, the Foundation led efforts with our partners to secure almost \$20M in legacy gift expectancies. Despite pandemic limitations, the Foundation's profile was successfully raised through the celebration of the Foundation's 50th anniversary. Highlights included: the high-level Zoom speaker series with world-class philanthropists and a commemorative book highlighting the Foundation's 50-year impact. Additionally, through a robust process, the Foundation's investment model was transitioned to a new, more nimble approach.



The new strategic plan (2024-2028) builds on those successes to ensure that the Foundation will continue as a trusted philanthropic leader. The Foundation's efforts are centered on legacy giving, one of the three community pillars of *Tzedakah* (the other two are annual donations and volunteering).

This five-year strategic plan is highlighted by **three exciting and important opportunities**:

1. Legacy Giving: For the past three years, the Harold Grinspoon Life & Legacy initiative has driven legacy giving, which has always been a top fundraising priority of the Foundation. The Life & Legacy¹ initiative promotes after-lifetime giving to benefit Jewish day schools, synagogues, social service organizations and other Jewish entities. Through training, marketing, support and monetary incentives, the Program motivates Jewish organizations to secure legacy gifts, steward donors and integrate legacy giving in the philanthropic culture of the Jewish community. Over 300 donors have signed Letters of Intent with a conservative estimate of almost \$20M in expectancies.²

As legacy giving becomes increasingly normalized and a highly valued aspect of philanthropic endeavors, the Foundation will move into the next four-year phase of the program, Legacy Plus, to focus on formalization and stewardship. At the same time, the Foundation will work to secure additional legacy gifts from the Ottawa Jewish community, and such work will include working with smaller Jewish organizations.

2. Generations Trust for Jewish Education: When successfully completed, the Generations Trust will be the largest endowment campaign in the history of Jewish Ottawa. The Generations Trust for Jewish Education, housed at the Ottawa Jewish Community Foundation, is a partnership between the Foundation, Jewish Federation of Ottawa, Ottawa Jewish Community School, and Torah Day School of Ottawa to support the financial stability of both day schools and to make day school more affordable for middle-class families. Research has consistently shown the enormous impact of Jewish day schools on the entire Jewish community. The Foundation is an important partner in the Trust as the custodian of the gifts and as a fundraising partner.

3. Annual Disbursements: Since 2018, the Foundation has disbursed funds at 4%, above the government-mandated 3.5% annual disbursement rate, to better support the community. In 2023/24 the annual government-mandated disbursement rate for charitable foundations will increase from 3.5% to 5%. There is a resulting trend in charities and charitable foundations to better balance present disbursements with the preservation of capital for the future. This change in the disbursement requirement is an exciting opportunity for the Foundation to provide even greater assistance to Jewish Ottawa.

This strategic plan outlines objectives in each of the Foundation's three pillars: **Fundraising, Governance & Operations, and Education & Outreach.**

On an annual basis, the Foundation develops a business plan, with specific targets for that year that allows us to achieve the overall objectives contained in this Strategic Plan, as well as articulating the specific initiatives required to do so. After the first two years of the new Strategic Plan, the Foundation

¹ The Foundation's current partners in the Grinspoon Life & Legacy Initiative are: Ben & Moe Greenberg Family Hillel Lodge, Camp Bnai Brith of Ottawa, Congregation Machzikei Hadas, Jewish Family Services, Jewish Federation of Ottawa, Kehillat Beth Israel, Ottawa Jewish Community School, Tamir and Temple Israel.

² If the amount of the bequest is unknown, the Canadian average of \$35,000 is used, which is substantially lower than most past legacy gifts to the Foundation.

will re-evaluate and assess whether any changes are required to the remainder of the term of the Strategic Plan.

The Foundation has over \$74M in assets (as of December 31, 2022), which includes 3rd party managed funds. There are also 482 deferred (after-lifetime) gifts with an estimated additional value of \$51M.

FUNDRAISING

The Foundation is justifiably proud of all its accomplishments and at the same time, is driven to do even more.

- New needs continue to emerge in Jewish Ottawa, and the cost of meeting existing needs increase on an annual basis, particularly with the current and challenging high inflation rate. Accordingly, as a philanthropic leader, the Foundation must secure new capital to continue meeting needs in the community.
- It is expected the historic intergenerational transfer of wealth will continue, making approaching those engaged in such transfers a top community priority.

Priority - Legacy Giving

Encouraging gifts in wills is one of the Foundation's foremost goals. For many donors, a legacy gift (bequest) can be the largest philanthropic gift they ever make. The Foundation will work to assist community organizations to integrate legacy giving into their philanthropic culture. Legacy giving includes, but is not limited to, the Harold Grinspoon Foundation's Life & Legacy program.

Objective #1: Participate in the Harold Grinspoon Foundation Legacy Plus Program and meet all their annual metrics.

This is an exciting opportunity to keep working with existing community partners (e.g. Federation, the day schools, social services, congregations, etc.) on legacy giving. The Foundation will work to ensure that existing donors remain committed their to legacy gift (stewardship of existing gifts), to secure new legacy commitments in support of existing partners, and to actively work with our community partners to ensure legacy giving remains well integrated within fundraising efforts.

- The Foundation will ensure the annual metrics set by the Grinspoon Foundation are met.

Objective #2: Effective stewardship of all legacy gifts.

Even prior to Life & Legacy, past generations of Foundation leadership worked hard and were successful at securing legacy gifts. To ensure that donors maintain the current provisions in their wills, effective stewardship is required.

- The Foundation will ensure a minimum of three high-quality, annual touchpoints. Examples may include: events, personalized communication and invitations, holiday greetings, etc.

Objective #3: Secure additional legacy gifts.

There is an opportunity to work with organizations who are not part of the Life & Legacy initiative on legacy giving. Additionally, while tremendously successful, the Life & Legacy

Initiative launched in March 2020, unfortunately coinciding with the start of the pandemic. Accordingly, there is an opportunity to secure additional legacy gifts from Life & Legacy partners (beyond the goals of Life & Legacy Plus). The Foundation will also maintain and enhance the promotion of legacy giving from Jewish Ottawa at large.

- The Foundation will work as part of a collaborative process, to secure an additional 75 legacy gifts, with a minimum estimated value of \$5M.

Priority - Generations Trust

The Foundation recognizes its unique place in the Ottawa Jewish philanthropic landscape and its responsibility to steward the donations and investments associated with the Generations Trust, and to play a supporting role in the formation of the Generations Trust.

Objective #1: Raise a minimum of \$1.5 million in \$50,000-\$100,000 donations.

Ensure the successful collection and investment of the Generations Trust so that it can meet its goals of supporting Jewish education in Ottawa.

Priority- Endowment Fundraising

The Foundation prides itself on being donor-centric and particularly on offering lifecycle giving moments. While not likely to bring in significant dollars, if stewarded correctly, this can translate into a new generation of committed donors. This will be promoted through an active communications strategy and by working effectively with our partner organizations.

Objective #1: Secure a minimum of 30 new endowments and/or significant investments in existing endowment funds around life cycle moments (e.g. promotion of an existing fund for a milestone anniversary celebration).

Objective #2: develop partnerships with lawyers, accountants, and financial advisors to help maximize philanthropic giving (e.g. flow through shares).

Objective #3: develop partnerships with appropriate community organizations (e.g. camps, schools, funeral homes, etc.)

GOVERNANCE & OPERATIONS

The Foundation is an exceptionally well-run organization with best-in-class governance and operations, and it is important to continuously hit “refresh” to ensure that this is maintained.

Priority - Transition from 3.5% to 5% annual disbursement quota

An increasingly important function of the Foundation is the appropriate disbursement of investment returns. This is to be achieved through strong returns over time by the active involvement of a robust Investment Committee, a trusted outside consultant, and adhering to the Foundation’s Investment Policy Statement. The Investment Committee will have to shepherd the Foundation through the transition to the increased disbursement quota, which may require a re-examination of the investment strategy (e.g. investment portfolio design).

Objective #1: Reevaluate the Foundation's investment strategy

Based on the new disbursement quota, reevaluate the Foundation's investment strategy to determine if greater diversification and less liquidity is acceptable for a hopefully higher rate of return than the historic objective, to achieve a desired real return of 4.5% - 5.5% per annum over the long term (greater than 10 years). Once this has been done, and the strategic plan is evaluated in two years, a new benchmark for the desired rate of return will be provided.

Priority - Philanthropic Board of Directors

To support the significant fundraising objectives outlined in this plan, it is essential that the Board of Directors is actively involved in fundraising (asks, "door-opening", and thank yous).

Objective #1: On an annual basis, 100% of board members will be involved in conversations/meetings with potential donors.

Board members will be recruited with this expectation and will receive appropriate training to help them gain comfort and expertise.

Priority - Continuous Operational Improvement

The Foundation is committed to being transparent, efficient, and having strong day-to-day operations. These are essential to achieving fundraising objectives and are core to inspiring donor confidence strengthening relationships with existing donors, and building relationships with potential new donors.

Objective #1: Preparation and use of an Annual Operational Improvement Plan.

Management will submit a plan to the board for approval as part of the annual business plan. The focus will be on initiatives to support operational efficiencies, effectiveness, and transparency, with a particular focus on better documentation, more consistency, and building repeatable and efficient processes. As a result of the increased focus on Legacy giving, improvements to the process for insurance pledges and collection will also be required.

Objective #2: Operational support for the Generations Trust

The Foundation has an important role in fundraising, investments and ensuring that operations support donor stewardship, pledge reminders, etc. This includes working with Generations Trust Campaign chairs on annual communication to the donors. A section of the Annual Operational Improvement Plan will be specifically devoted to the Generations Trust.

EDUCATION AND OUTREACH

The Foundation has a proven track-record of fundraising and investment success, while at the same time, there continues to be brand confusion with The Jewish Federation of Ottawa, and a lack of clarity around different giving vehicles. On an annual basis, the Foundation infuses millions of dollars into Ottawa's Jewish community and that message needs to be even more widely shared. There are a myriad of ways better messaging can be used to promote, clarify and strengthen the Foundation's brand, including social media, outreach by Foundation board members, and community events, all to

ensure donors and potential donors are aware of the Foundation's current priorities and its evolving focus on legacy gifts.

Priority - Strengthen the Jewish Federation of Ottawa Partnership

Over the years, the Foundation has developed a valued and flourishing partnership with the Jewish Federation of Ottawa. Both organizations work closely and successfully to raise funds for our community. In this strategic plan, the relationship will become even stronger as the Foundation is excited to continue partnering with the Federation to build the Jewish Superhighway – a metaphor for meaningful Jewish experiences and journeys where Jewish life is vibrant, and no one is left behind. Specifically, the Foundation will:

- Focus on Legacy Giving (See fundraising section)
- Partner on the Generations Trust (see fundraising section)
- Emphasize the importance of the partnership in communications

Priority - Focus on explaining the Foundation's giving vehicles

Objective #1: Experiment with a minimum of two annual initiatives to promote and explain the Foundation's giving vehicles (e.g. Shabbat messages, profile events, financial planning seminars, etc.).

What does Success Look Like?

Based on objectives in the strategic plan, here are the key deliverables.

Priority	5 Year Strategic Plan Goal
Fundraising	
New \$ Contributed into Foundation to mark life-cycle moments	30 Life-Cycle moments Minimum
New Legacy commitments	75 commitments, minimum estimated value \$5M
Life & Legacy Plus	Grinspoon Foundation Metrics are met
Generations Trust	\$1.5 Million Minimum
Governance, Operation, Education and Outreach	
Operational Improvements	Minimum ¾ achieved annually
Investment	TBD, after a careful review
Giving Vehicle Promotion	Minimum 10 initiatives not currently done
Board Fundraising	100%

CONCLUSION

Working with partners, this strategic plan is designed to capitalize on unique opportunities to increase the financial resources that the Foundation can provide for Ottawa's Jewish community, and exercise leadership in best helping the community. Legacy Giving, the Generations Trust, the partnership with Federation, and recalibrating the Foundation's investment strategy to increase the annual disbursement to 5% are the cornerstones of the Foundation's strategic plan.

It is because of the work and dedication of past generations of leaders who had foresight, wisdom, and the philanthropic spirit that the Foundation is well-positioned to launch this bold strategic plan. It is because we cherish our collective future that we are committed to its successful implementation. *L'dor v'dor.*