

# GEF Seniors Housing Sustainability Framework



Revised February 2024

## Land Acknowledgement

GEF Seniors Housing acknowledges that our communities are located on the traditional territories of the people of Treaty 6, which includes the Nêhiyaw (Cree), Denesuliné (Dene), Nakota Sioux (Stoney), Anishinaabe (Saulteaux), Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Métis, and Inuit peoples. We recognize all nations, genders, and spirits who make their homes here and help us steward this land.



*Ottewell Place Lodge*



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# Contents

<b>Land Acknowledgement</b> .....	<b>2</b>
<b>Contents</b> .....	<b>3</b>
<b>Implementation, Governance, and Accountability</b> .....	<b>4</b>
<b>About GEF Seniors Housing</b> .....	<b>5</b>
<b>Our Quality of Life Philosophy</b> .....	<b>6</b>
<b>Our Approach   Setting a Framework for Success</b> .....	<b>7</b>
Why a Sustainability Framework? .....	7
Our Journey   How We Started.....	8
<b>Our Sustainability Principles   Three Pillars</b> .....	<b>9</b>
<b>Our Journey   Lessons Learned</b> .....	<b>10</b>
Strategies and Actions   Social, Cultural, and Political.....	11
Employee Quality of Work Life .....	11
Client Quality of Life .....	12
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion .....	14
Sense of Belonging and Accessibility .....	15
Transparency, Agency, and Engagement.....	16
Strategies and Actions   Environmental.....	17
Energy, Carbon, and Climate Resilience .....	17
Transportation .....	19
Materials and Waste.....	20
Water and Ecology .....	21
Delight and Enjoyment .....	22
Strategies and Actions   Economic.....	23
Funding Sustainability and Wellbeing .....	23
Investment in Community .....	24
Maintenance.....	25
Technology and Connectivity.....	26
<b>Appendix A: Sustainability Reporting Framework</b> .....	<b>27</b>
Social, Cultural, Political Sustainability   KPIs.....	27
Environmental Sustainability   KPIs .....	28
Economic Sustainability   KPIs .....	28

# Implementation, Governance, and Accountability

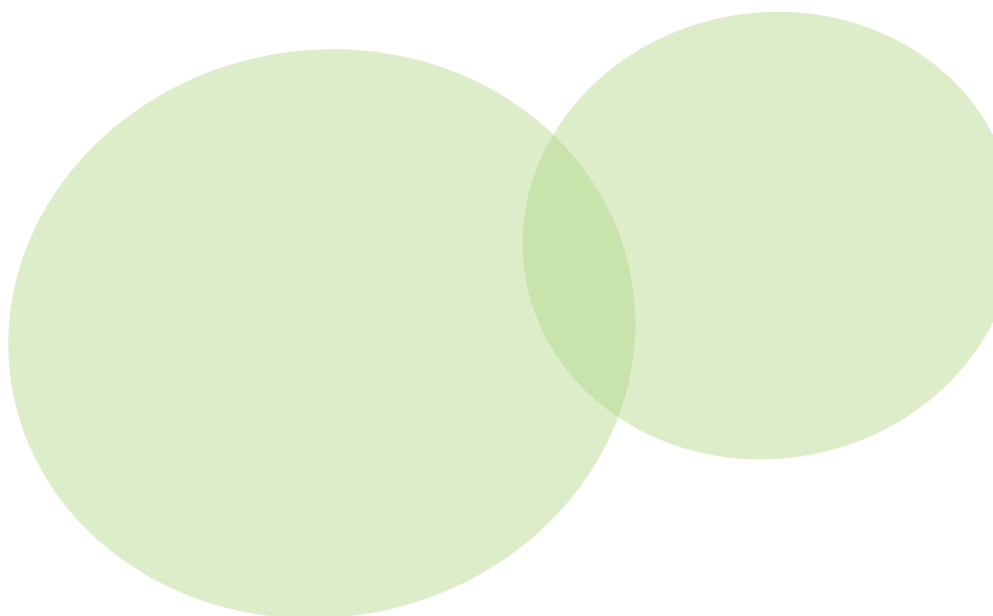
GEF Seniors Housing has a long history of providing safe, welcoming, affordable, quality social housing for seniors throughout Edmonton.

Affordable, quality, and ecologically-sound housing is an essential need in our communities, now more than ever. We also understand that safe, affordable housing is fundamental to the physical, economic, and social wellbeing of individuals, families, and communities, and that it is an essential element that contributes to a person's quality of life.

GEF developed and commenced implementation of the Sustainability Framework in 2022, because we understood the impact we have on our seniors, our employees, our city, and the environment we all share. Under the three pillars of Social, Environment, and Economic sustainability, the Framework outlines a path for us to achieve advances in sustainability that are inspirational yet pragmatic, with clear, transparent goals to drive actions while reinforcing our people first philosophy.

The longer-term success of our Framework is grounded in a shared accountability throughout the organization. The Framework's development and its ongoing implementation has involved our community at all levels, from the Board of Directors to front-line employees that are responsible for the daily operations of our facilities and services. Each community member plays an important role in helping us to achieve our sustainability goals, which is a keystone of our Strategic Plan. The work and the associated commitment required for us to move forward on this journey is both meaningful and purposeful.

Our Framework is a living document, which will continue to evolve as we grow and change with our community. GEF's Chief Executive Officer (CEO), along with the senior leadership team, maintain responsibility for the Framework's implementation and annual reporting, and for identifying key areas for improvement over time. By tracking, measuring, and reporting on the impact of our strategies, we are able to demonstrate the progress we are making toward becoming a more socially, environmentally, and healthy sustainable organization.



# About GEF Seniors Housing

**GEF Seniors Housing is the largest social housing provider for seniors in Alberta and is a registered charity.**

Currently, we provide nearly 3,800 low-to-moderate-income seniors with access to affordable housing and services in 41 housing communities across Edmonton. We believe every senior deserves a home that meets their housing needs and enhances their wellbeing, regardless of their level of income. Guided by our Vision, Mission, and Values and our Quality of Life Philosophy, we seek to support communities where those who live, work, and visit experience individual and collective wellbeing.



*Grace Garden Court Apartments*

## Our Vision

“To create vibrant, affordable communities for seniors.”

## Our Mission

As Alberta’s largest non-profit social housing operator for seniors, we focus on providing affordable, well-maintained, and secure buildings, where our clients can live with dignity and thrive in their communities with the support of friendly and caring staff and volunteers.

## Our Values

- We encourage relationships based on Respect and believe in treating everyone with dignity, kindness, and compassion.
- We want to put People at the centre of everything we do, where our aim is to positively contribute to everyone’s life journey.
- We believe in promoting interactions built on Trust, where we act with integrity, honesty, and fairness.
- We promote Accountability by accepting responsibility for one’s own words, actions and the choices that are made.
- We proudly acknowledge and enthusiastically pursue **Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion** in our work.



# Our Quality of Life Philosophy

**In support of GEF Seniors Housing’s Mission and Vision, our Quality of Life Philosophy is:**

“To provide seniors with accessible, affordable, and safe housing in comfortable and supportive environments that promote opportunities for them to successfully age in place.”

**The Guiding Principles to the Quality of Life Philosophy include working together to:**

- Promote and respect individual choice, recognizing that each senior has knowledge and experience to be able to determine how best to live their life;
- Ensure each senior is treated fairly and with dignity, regardless of their age, gender, religious belief, ethnicity and culture, sexual orientation, financial means, life experience or ability;
- Foster opportunities that contribute to promoting one’s well-being by supporting and encouraging each senior to live a healthy, independent life, where their voice is heard and respected;
- Encourage relationships between seniors, staff, and communities based on respect, kindness, and compassion;
- Promote accountability by providing each senior with the opportunity and encouragement to take ownership of, participate in, and provide feedback to the community in which they live.



# Our Approach | Setting a Framework for Success

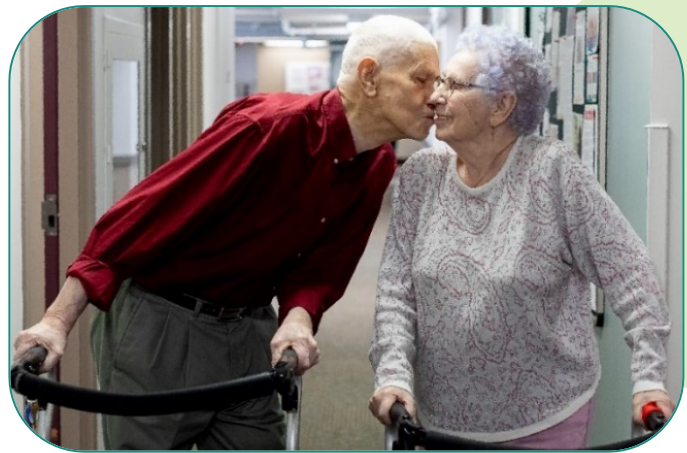
## Why a Sustainability Framework?

Sustainability means meeting our current needs without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their needs. It is a careful balance between economic growth, environmental care, and social wellbeing. To grow responsibly requires thoughtful planning and appropriate funding.

Data from the Canadian Census 2021 shows that seniors over the age of 85 are the fastest growing age group in the country and that the largest increase in the proportions of seniors is happening this decade. 82% of GEF seniors are between 71 and 100 years of age in 2023. Today, aging in Canada is coupled with complex systemic challenges and vulnerabilities. However, aging can be framed as an opportunity to enhance our society, economy, and culture.

For the last 25 years, seniors living accommodations have moved away from an institutional model of support to one that stresses the dignity and wellbeing of clients to help improve their quality of life. At the same time, the needs of seniors are becoming increasingly more complex.

In concert with this, there is increased attention on the quality of the work environment for employees and the integration of family members and friends into supporting seniors in their homes. This will help to create living environments that are stimulating and positive for everyone involved.



*Clients of Kiwanis Place Lodge*

GEF does well in designing efficient operations, which enables our delivery of housing programs and services that positively contribute to the wellbeing of our clients. Through this Sustainability Framework, GEF will continue to seek opportunities for improvement by making investments in and planning our work, so that we are responsible stewards of our resources and environments.



*Planting Days at Montgomery Place Apartments*

# Our Journey | How We Started

We have developed a Sustainability Framework that provides clear principles, key performance indicators (KPIs), and strategies to improve sustainability through a holistic, yet pragmatic lens embedded in the operations and culture of the organization.

The Framework is our opportunity to grow responsibly: socially, environmentally, and economically. It allows us to continue to deliver on our Mission, while not compromising the needs of future generations.

As part of our holistic approach that emphasizes the health and wellbeing of our community, our Framework was founded on the three-pillar approach to sustainability: Social, Environmental, and Economic.

We began laying the foundation for this work in 2020 and finalized the Framework in September 2022. We then tracked our progress on 47 KPIs to the end of August 2023. From conception through development and the first year of implementation, the Framework continued to evolve through the involvement, participation, and commitment of numerous employees, dedicated members of our Board, and the guidance and expertise of staff from DIALOG.



*Trishaw at Westlawn Court Apartments*



*Canadian Citizenship at Knox-Met Manor Apartments*



*Summer Fair at Meadowlark Place Lodge*



# Our Sustainability Principles | Three Pillars

GEF Seniors Housing is recognized and respected as a valued social housing provider serving low-to-moderate income seniors in Edmonton. Through our focus on the three pillars of Social, Environmental, and Economic sustainability, we are committed to positively contributing to our clients' quality of life. We will continue to meet the evolving needs of Edmonton's aging population, with a commitment to environmental stewardship that leverages opportunities to enhance both the natural environment and the lives of our community members.

**Social/Cultural/Political**

-  Employee Quality of Work Life
-  Client Quality of Life
-  Sense of Belonging & Accessibility
-  Transparency, Agency & Engagement
-  Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

## Social Cultural Political


We will nurture a sense of belonging, learning, and engagement, supporting clients and employees from various backgrounds to recognize and celebrate our diversity across the organization. Our goals will be clearly ingrained in our governance system, with a transparent and accessible method of input so clients and employees have a voice.

We will contribute to a meaningful quality of life for both clients and employees, by promoting homes and workplaces that enhance social engagement, social support, and community safety so that individuals and their communities can flourish.

## Environmental

We will sustain and enhance the healthy functioning of natural systems, understanding the link between the natural environment, health, and wellbeing, and we will serve the needs of our current community without depleting the resources needed by future generations.

**Environmental**

-  Energy, Carbon & Climate Resilience
-  Transportation
-  Materials & Waste
-  Delight & Enjoyment
-  Water & Ecology

**Economic**

-  Funding Sustainability & Wellbeing
-  Maintenance
-  Investment in Community
-  Technology & Connectivity

## Economic

We will leverage sustainable operations to expand our offerings that support affordable, accessible, and high-quality client services, and provide long-term resilience to our operation's model.

## Our Journey | Lessons Learned

With a mixture of exuberance and inexperience, we embarked on a journey to develop a comprehensive Sustainability Framework because of our awareness of and concern for the impact we have on our seniors, our employees, our city, and the environment we all share.

Over the past year, we have gained an appreciation for the level of commitment required by the organization and its employees to bring the Framework to life. Through the work to capture and report on the initial set of KPIs, we have developed an understanding of the degree of change required to successfully integrate the goals into our day-to-day work, to establish new or change existing processes on how to best capture and report on the KPIs, and the degree of change management required to support how we think and take positive actions that contribute to the meaningfulness of the three pillars we had identified to guide our work: Social, Environment, and Economic sustainability.

Much effort is required when working towards meaningful change and promoting sustainability, but this has been a worthwhile and validating journey to begin. With the reported progress on a number of our KPIs, we had developed a comprehensive first Annual Report in Fall 2023. As well, we have gained a better understanding of the importance of articulating appropriate and measurable KPIs. There is a significant amount of work ahead on this journey, but it is work that is going to continue to strengthen our commitment to clients, employees, the environment, and community.



*Staff Appreciation at McQueen Place Lodge*



*Pub Night at Meadowlark Place Lodge*



## Employee Quality of Work Life

GEF recognizes that the environment we live and work in directly impacts our own personal wellbeing. Prioritizing a holistic approach to providing a high quality of work life for employees acknowledges that employees who are well-supported, in turn, are better able to support the quality of life of GEF clients. This symbiotic relationship is the foundation to creating and maintaining a strong sense of “home” for our clients and to promoting a meaningful and rewarding workplace for our employees.



Staff Appreciation at Ottewell Place Lodge

**Social/Cultural/Political**

- Employee Quality of Work Life
- Client Quality of Life
- Sense of Belonging & Accessibility
- Transparency, Agency & Engagement
- Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Employee Quality of Life	% of Employees who feel GEF actively supports their wellbeing
Short-Term Strategies and Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete an annual review of the benefits program, including mental health and emotional wellbeing programs, available to employees to align offerings with demand and affordability.</li> <li>2. Provide additional volunteer and fundraising opportunities that are across all sites and central services.</li> <li>3. Expand the list of discount incentives for employees, leveraging GEF's existing partnerships and vendor relationships.</li> </ol>	

## Strategies and Actions | Social, Cultural, and Political



### Client Quality of Life

The Covid-19 pandemic highlighted conditions of isolation and loneliness among seniors, including those living in congregate settings (e.g. Apartments). Additionally, operational and demographic shifts involving senior supports have presented new barriers and challenges to developing and sustaining community relationships.

GEF has ongoing and specific initiatives to address clients' quality of life and their physical environment. We have established standards and principles that support senior-friendly, crime-free, and barrier-free spaces. Our buildings have dedicated spaces where clients can gather socially as well as host visitors comfortably. Building amenities and Activity and Wellness programming in our Lodges support the recreation, leisure, and fitness needs of clients. Scheduled social and recreational bus trips, and partnerships with external stakeholders, connect clients to the community.

Beginning in 2020, GEF has conducted annual Client Experience Surveys, inviting feedback from our nearly 3,800 clients. These annual surveys give our clients and their families a voice. The feedback helps GEF to identify our clients' evolving needs and areas that would benefit from some targeted improvement.



*Pets are welcome at all GEF communities*



*Meal Service at Kiwanis Place Lodge*

## Strategies and Actions | Social, Cultural, and Political

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Client Quality of Life	Average Occupancy Rates (rentable units)
	% of Food Offerings that meet Lodge residents' dietary needs
	% of Food Offerings that meet Lodge residents' expectations for taste and appeal
	% of Buildings with Fitness and/or Recreation Facilities
	% of Properties with dedicated Social Gathering Space
	Average Client Participation in Activity and Wellness Programs
<b>Short-Term Strategies and Actions</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Complete an annual review of the Activity and Wellness program to recognize the variability for each building and community, recognize the needs of the changing population, identify staffing capacity required, and identify initiatives to address these.</li> <li>2. Commit to holding at least one event per year related to affordable, healthy food options for Apartment tenants.</li> <li>3. Gather input from Lodge residents on food preferences and incorporate into menu planning.</li> <li>4. Implement tracking mechanisms to gather data on client use of amenity spaces to inform future retrofits and new construction projects.</li> </ol>	
<b>Long-Term Aspirations</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Partner with local libraries or other organizations to provide expanded options for leisure and recreation in GEF common spaces.</li> <li>2. Organize transportation to points of interest for seniors to spend time outdoors.</li> <li>3. Set up book and music sharing libraries in common spaces at GEF buildings.</li> </ol>	



*Dance at Beverly Place Lodge*



*Summer Fair at Meadowlark Place Lodge*

# Strategies and Actions | Social, Cultural, and Political



## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

GEF is committed to providing an open, welcoming, and inclusive environment for both clients and employees. The composition of our current employees is representative of over 40 diverse cultures. GEF’s Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion policy was developed to support and promote a healthy and respectful workplace, with a commitment to address any gaps in representation as we move forward. For example, increasing opportunities for engagement with Indigenous representatives.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	% of Leadership Roles held by women, 2SLGBTQIA+, and/or non-binary individuals
	% Non-Management Roles held by women, 2SLGBTQIA+, and/or non-binary individuals
	% Roles held by individuals self-reported as aboriginal or a visible minority
	% of Properties with Multi-Faith Space for Spiritual and Religious Activities
	% of Employees who believe the organization is purpose oriented and socially responsible

### Short-Term Strategies and Actions

1. Leverage the housing intake interviews to identify diversity in GEF clients to inform programming, building design, and other needs for GEF.
2. Complete an assessment of GEF's current client demographic. Identify and develop a plan to address any perceived barriers to inclusivity (e.g. language, other).
3. Provide language translations and support for new clients who are non-English speakers.
4. Ensure GEF's entertainment and social programming includes a diversity of perspectives to increase exposure to diverse groups.
5. Explore partnerships with Indigenous housing groups. Provide opportunities to share GEF's knowledge on affordable housing operations with others.
6. Include Indigenous Land Acknowledgement on publications and at events. Explore opportunities for providing Indigenous languages on signages and graphics.
7. Review and retrofit spaces to accommodate a diversity of religious or cultural activities.
8. Review employee recruiting methods to ensure there are no perceived barriers to individuals with disabilities, diverse backgrounds, and/or needs (e.g. 2SLGBTQIA+, non-binary, etc.).
9. Engage employees in on-going education and training on Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion, through such methods as tool kits, articles, internal publications, internal reading materials, and internal events.
10. Establish partnerships with relevant organizations for additional programming or employee training for GEF.
11. Create a cultural calendar to increase awareness of diversity and to share with all GEF employees.

# Strategies and Actions | Social, Cultural, and Political



## Sense of Belonging and Accessibility

Cultivating a sense of belonging depends on individual and collective opportunities to feel connected and engaged in civic and community life, regardless of background or ability. GEF is supporting more seniors with a range of needs. One way to ensure our clients can maintain their independence in their housing choice is by improving accessibility to both the building in which they live and their individual housing units.

GEF defines barrier-free as allowing proper and safe access and use of buildings, facilities, and open areas and regulating a proper and safe outcome for accessibility. Where applicable, GEF aligns the organization with the National Building Code, 2019 Alberta Edition (or most current), and the City of Edmonton's Safety Codes and Inspection, Section 3.8, in relation to barrier-free and adaptable dwelling units.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Sense of Belonging and Accessibility	% of Sites that are barrier-free
	% of Employees who experience a sense of belonging at work
Short-Term Strategies and Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Broaden definitions of accessibility to acknowledge ongoing demographic changes in seniors, such as evolving cognitive abilities, and incorporate into design guidelines and process.</li> <li>2. Create a long-term suite renewal plan for barrier-free upgrades.</li> <li>3. Provide food growth gardens at existing GEF sites with available landscape space.</li> <li>4. Engage with local artists for opportunities to incorporate public art at GEF sites that represent diverse cultural heritage.</li> <li>5. Provide accessibility features for virtual programming for employees, such as subtitles on videos.</li> </ol>	
Long-Term Aspirations	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work towards 10% of total GEF units being designated as accessible units.</li> </ol>	



Clients of Pleasantview Place Lodge



Tub to shower changeout at Beverly Place Lodge

# Strategies and Actions | Social, Cultural, and Political



## Transparency, Agency, and Engagement

Transparency, agency, and ongoing engagement is vital to maintaining healthy connections.

GEF publishes a number of documents on its external website to share insights on the organization (e.g. Strategic Plan, Client Experience Surveys' Summaries, blog stories, etc.). As well, bulletin boards are located in each building to encourage community engagement for clients.

GEF seeks feedback regularly from employees, clients, and their families through surveys, meetings, and informal channels. In addition, there are feedback forms (paper and electronic) to allow confidential comments and feedback. In 2022, GEF's senior leadership introduced Town Hall Meetings to increase communication and connection with employees.

Town Hall Meeting summary documents, including Frequently Asked Questions and Answers, are distributed in a print brochure format to each employee and published on the organization's intranet (GEF Connect).

GEF clients can furnish and decorate their own living spaces. This self-expression and personalization of their space contributes to their agency and wellbeing. Guided by our Quality of Life Philosophy, we encourage and support clients in their independence.



National Day for Truth and Reconciliation at Ottewell Place Lodge

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Transparency, Agency, and Engagement	# of annual opportunities for formal feedback through scheduled Tenant and Resident Meetings
	% of Employees that find a sense of accomplishment from their work
	% of Employees that feel GEF's Mission provides them meaningful direction
	% of Employees that report feeling engaged by the organization
	% of Employees participating in the bi-annual staff Town Halls
Short-Term Strategies and Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Publish Sustainability Framework Annual Reports.</li> <li>2. Close feedback loop on all surveys by publishing annual action plans outlining GEF's next steps.</li> <li>3. Explore opportunities for client personal expression outside of individual units (boards, displays, doors) and for recognition of different holidays that are meaningful to clients.</li> </ol>	





## Energy, Carbon, and Climate Resilience

As energy costs continue to rise, energy use represents an increasingly significant percentage of overhead costs in seniors living communities. Energy efficiency is key to reversing that trend, helping seniors living communities, such as GEF, spend less money on energy use, so they can invest more into “Quality of Life” initiatives for clients. It is important for GEF to integrate high-performance designs for any new construction and planned retrofits to existing buildings to be able to reduce total energy use.

In addition to the above, GEF must take into consideration the future impact of climate change in its planning and actions. The City of Edmonton has predicted a rise in temperatures and precipitation and an increase in low air quality events from forest fires in the coming years. Expanding our Emergency Preparedness activities will help protect buildings and our clients from future climate risks. In response to some of these events connected to climate change, we have been including strategies to address air quality issues that have arisen during the forest fire season.

**Environmental**

-  Energy, Carbon & Climate Resilience
-  Transportation
-  Materials & Waste
-  Delight & Enjoyment
-  Water & Ecology



*Ansgar Villa Apartments' Courtyard*

## Strategies and Actions | Environmental

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Energy, Carbon, and Climate Resilience	Annual Energy Use Intensity/Energy Consumption
	Annual Renewable Energy Generation
	Annual Average Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity
	Emergency Preparedness Plan
	Climate Change Adaptation Strategy
<b>Short-Term Strategies and Actions</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Align our Design Standards for new construction to target material improvements over code minimums for energy efficiency and Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions. Optimize massing and density, envelope assemblies, and mechanical systems to balance carbon reductions and capital costs, while aligning with the latest version of National Energy Code of Canada for Buildings (NECB), as a minimum.</li> <li>2. Mandate purchase of Energy Star certified equipment to improve efficiency and opportunities for rebates.</li> <li>3. Complete a net zero carbon feasibility analysis at the early design stages of every new construction project and implement any measures that are cost neutral over the lifecycle of the project (NPV neutral). Explore partnerships with third-party renewable energy providers that can provide upfront capital.</li> <li>4. Develop an Existing Building Decarbonization Strategy, based on archetypes / clusters of existing buildings in each portfolio (based on design, vintage, etc.).</li> <li>5. Prioritize internal functional audits / ASHRAE Level 1 audits on highest energy use buildings in each portfolio (top 25%). Based on results, apply upgrades to building archetypes.</li> <li>6. Seek funding for buildings that are due to renewal to study feasibility of deep carbon retrofit (ASHRAE level III).</li> <li>7. If funding is available, build a Net Zero Carbon development as a pilot project to inform future developments.</li> <li>8. Include considerations for space cooling through passive or active measures in any new construction projects while balancing carbon objectives.</li> <li>9. Retrofit existing common areas in any of the buildings presently without a cooling system to include air conditioning capability.</li> <li>10. Conduct training for GEF building operations employees to improve operational efficiency.</li> <li>11. Review and analyze utility consumption on a monthly/annual basis.</li> </ol>	
<b>Long-Term Aspirations</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Design new buildings to be Net Zero Carbon operating.</li> <li>2. Retrofit existing buildings to be Net Zero Carbon operating by 2050.</li> <li>3. Reduce Greenhouse Gas Emissions from GEF's buildings portfolio by 20% by 2030 and 80% by 2050 from 2019 levels.</li> <li>4. Explore funding sources for a portfolio-wide Climate Change Resiliency Strategy to identify major climate risks and opportunities for action.</li> <li>5. Explore funding sources for implementing Renewable Energy technologies.</li> </ol>	

# Strategies and Actions | Environmental



## Transportation

Transportation is the largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Edmonton.

Seniors' independence and their ability to manage their own daily needs is an important factor in influencing their quality of life. Edmonton has an average Transit Score of 49 out of 100 and an average Walk Score of 40 out of 100. The scores for our buildings are slightly above this average, as they are generally located along public transit routes. However, transit and walk scores do not account for safety or accessibility concerns that affect seniors.

GEF maintains a small fleet of vehicles in support of our operations. Our transportation emissions are extremely low, especially when compared to the carbon emissions from building operations. As we transition vehicles out of our fleet, it will be important to consider the acquisition of more climate friendly vehicles.

GEF offers a corporate discount for employees to purchase bus passes. This gives commuting employees more options than the use of principally single-occupancy vehicles. As well, we provide bicycle parking spaces for employees, clients, and visitors.



*Bus outing with Beverly Place Lodge*

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Transportation	# of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations
	Annual Fleet Vehicle Emissions
	% of Properties with bicycle parking spaces
Short-Term Strategies and Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Review EV chargers at building sites to support electric vehicle usage.</li> <li>2. Review fleet vehicle inventory and consider replacement with hybrid or electric vehicles when new purchases are required.</li> <li>3. Implement requirements within procurement agreements for service providers with fleet optimization.</li> <li>4. Prioritize food procurement secured from local farms and vendors to reduce transportation related to food services and deliveries.</li> </ol>	
Long-Term Aspirations	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Include mixed-use buildings into portfolio planning that include space for services to meet senior's daily needs.</li> </ol>	

# Strategies and Actions | Environmental



## Materials and Waste

GEF’s construction projects – primarily renovation and rejuvenation projects to housing units and building systems – involve the extraction and processing of materials that can produce large amounts of waste depending on the scope of the project. In addition, our clients generate household waste and our general operations use materials that in turn lead to the generation of waste.

GEF tracks the impact from our daily operations and construction projects in our commitment to effectively manage and reduce the waste we generate.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Materials and Waste	Operating Waste Diversion Rate
	Construction Waste Diversion Rate
	Annual pages printed at GEF Facilities
	Waste Streams Collected
<b>Short-Term Strategies and Actions</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Provide opportunity for organics waste collection in the Lodge’s kitchens.</li> <li>2. Review food-related services to identify opportunities to reduce food waste related to over production.</li> <li>3. Select construction materials with low embodied carbon (e.g. concrete) with high supplementary cementing materials (SCM), timber from sustainably managed forests, and steel with high recycled content.</li> <li>4. Implement mandatory 75% construction and demolition waste diversion for new project developments.</li> </ol>	
<b>Long-Term Aspirations</b>	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Explore potential for on-site composting for any GEF building sites with greenhouses or food growth gardens.</li> </ol>	



Construction at Rosslyn Terrace

# Strategies and Actions | Environmental



## Water and Ecology

Water is a valuable natural resource. In 2023, our buildings consumed 336,002 cubic meters of water. GEF has moved forward with implementation of water saving measures, such as installing aerators on faucets. We are exploring other ways to further reduce our water consumption, including auditing our water use and installing water-efficient fixtures.

*Planting Days at Montgomery Place Apartments*



Most of our buildings have gardens that add to the aesthetics for our clients and provide a connection to nature. GEF is responsible for large amounts of land, so the preservation and restoration of natural ecosystems is an important consideration. Much of our outdoor space is presently comprised of turf grass. Using native and drought-tolerant plants can improve biodiversity and protect and restore natural wildlife habitats. As well, natural spaces support the movement and retention of water that can help prevent flooding.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Water and Ecology	% of Properties with pollinators, native, or drought-tolerant species in landscape
	Annual Potable Water Consumption Intensity (m3/m2)
Short-Term Strategies and Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Update design standards for new developments to restore native or adapted vegetation for 30% of the site area.</li> <li>2. Update design standards for new developments to mandate use of water sense labeled fixtures.</li> <li>3. For buildings that are due for renewal initiatives, use water sense fixtures to reduce water use.</li> <li>4. For buildings that represent the highest rates of water utilization, conduct water audits to determine water conservation strategies.</li> <li>5. Use captured rainwater to water plants and gardens for buildings with on-site greenhouse or community gardens.</li> </ol>	
Long-Term Aspirations	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. For existing sites with permanent irrigation, consider using captured rainwater to reduce potable water consumption.</li> <li>2. Integrate low-impact development storm water management strategies for new site developments.</li> </ol>	

# Strategies and Actions | Environmental



## Delight and Enjoyment

Delight and enjoyment within a built environment (human-made spaces) impacts health and comfort.

Thermal comfort means that a person feels neither too cold nor too warm. Temperature, humidity, and air movement all affect thermal comfort. All our buildings have thermal controls for the individual housing units.

Air quality is another key factor that affects one’s level of comfort. To aid in our efforts to manage or improve air quality within our buildings, we have been purchasing Air Monitors that will be used to review indoor air quality in all buildings. This will inform future strategies for improving air quality where needed. For new construction and retrofits, we will use materials that support healthy indoor air quality.

Many of our buildings have greenspace and outdoor features available. We will consider ways to improve our current greenspaces and expand their use (e.g. furniture, art, gardening, etc.).



*Planting Days at Londonderry Village Apartments*

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Delight and Enjoyment	% of Properties with on-site Gardens or Greenhouses
	% of Properties with on-site Greenspace
	Average PM2.5 Levels in Common Areas and Facilities
	Average Total Volatile Organic Compound (TVOC) Concentration Level
	Average CO2 Levels in Common Areas and Facilities
Short-Term Strategies and Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and implement a healthy materials procurement strategy that prioritizes materials that contribute to healthy indoor air quality.</li> <li>2. Complete hazardous materials assessments (e.g. asbestos, lead paints, etc.) of existing, older buildings to determine appropriate abatement strategies, where required.</li> <li>3. Consider opportunities to integrate informal gathering spaces to existing green space for those buildings where none currently exist.</li> </ol>	
Long-Term Aspirations	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement monitoring and tracking of indoor air quality indicators.</li> <li>2. Explore opportunities to leverage existing greenspace for other activities, art installations, or gardening.</li> <li>3. Decrease annual spending on plants and flowers by purchasing more perennials.</li> </ol>	

# Strategies and Actions | Economic



## Funding Sustainability and Wellbeing

Incentive funding and grant programs are moving towards requiring organizations to have sustainability initiatives as a key part of the application process. This Framework helps GEF to prepare for and increase our eligibility for these programs.

Our internal “Quality of Life” fund supports the provision of services and amenities that enhance the quality of life of clients. Fundraising, purchasing incentive programs, and laundry service revenue all contribute to support of this fund.

Our Activity and Wellness program plans, delivers, and supports a wide array of programming for our clients. This program manages community events and entertainment to support social activities and positively



Donation Drive with assistance of The Gap and Old Navy

contribute to the wellbeing of clients. As well, the Community Support program connects clients to opportunities and resources available in the local community.

As a not-for-profit registered charitable organization, we know there is potential to leverage our charitable status and the well-earned reputation we have developed since 1959 in supporting the housing needs of vulnerable low-income seniors to be able to increase our annual donations over the next few years.

Economic

Funding Sustainability & Wellbeing

Maintenance

Investment in Community

Technology & Connectivity

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Funding Sustainability Initiatives	Quality of Life funds raised by GEF through donations and fundraising
Short-Term Strategies and Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Track incentive programs, funds, grants, and forgivable loans that are available to GEF to enable sustainable building practices.</li> <li>For any new development, commit to exploring building mixed-use developments with rentable ground floor space to provide additional revenue streams while also supporting walkable communities where feasible.</li> <li>Leverage position as a not-for-profit registered charitable organization to increase community donations.</li> </ol>	
Long-Term Aspirations	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pursue funding for and achieve ISO 50001 certification to demonstrate leadership in the non-profit industry.</li> </ol>	

# Strategies and Actions | Economic



## Investment in Community

GEF partners with a variety of other not-for-profit or community organizations that support seniors' quality of life and provide family support services, including:

- Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton (SAGE): GEF provides one floor of an Apartment building for SAGE to use as a Seniors Safe House. It is the only seniors-specific safe house in Edmonton.
- Skills Society: GEF provides space in three buildings for Skills Society to use for clients with developmental disabilities.
- Alberta Health Services (AHS): GEF supports a community-based Mental Health Program run by AHS at Ottewell Manor. GEF provides 38 housing units and associated accommodation supports to AHS clients that are 55 years of age and above.



*Operation Friendship Seniors Society Tour*

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Investment in Community	# of on-going Partnerships with Non-Profit Organizations
	# of Annual Client Volunteer Hours
	# of Partnerships with Community Organizations
Short-Term Strategies and Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Increase client access to and participation in volunteering by exploring opportunities for partnership with community organizations, increasing frequency of communications, and ensuring adequate variety of volunteer opportunities to meet abilities and interest of seniors.</li> <li>2. Position GEF as an attractive option for volunteers and student placements.</li> </ol>	
Long-Term Aspirations	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Work collaboratively with clients and community members to provide GEF common space to community organizations for programming and volunteer events.</li> </ol>	



# Strategies and Actions | Economic



## Maintenance

Maintaining our buildings and assets is vitally important to us to ensure that our communities are safe, healthy, and vibrant places to live. The 2023 Client Experience Survey showed that 87% of clients were satisfied with the overall maintenance of the building they lived in.

GEF has commenced work to transition the cleaning products we use to be more environmentally friendly and safe by purchasing and using those that are certified green and incorporating more green cleaning policies and procedures into our daily cleaning practices. This will assist us in reducing our impact on the environment and improving the health of our employees and clients.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Maintenance	# of Maintenance and Capital Projects Completed Annually
	% of Green Cleaning Products
Short-Term Strategies and Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Develop and implement a green cleaning policy to reduce levels of chemical, biological, and particulate contaminants that can compromise air quality, human health, building finishes, building systems, and the environment, while adhering to Public Health, and Infection, Prevention, and Control (IPC) standards and regulations.</li> <li>2. Purchase cleaning products that are certified by a third party (e.g. UL EcoLogo or Green Seal).</li> <li>3. Develop and integrate a pest management policy to reduce exposure to harmful pesticides and notify clients when pest treatments are occurring.</li> </ol>	



*Kitchen at Ottewell Place Lodge*



*Maintenance work at Montgomery Place Apartments*

# Strategies and Actions | Economic



## Technology and Connectivity

The COVID-19 pandemic has shown all too clearly the impact that social isolation has on an individual’s mental health and, in particular, the mental health of seniors who may already be dealing with the effects of social isolation. In place of face-to-face contacts, being able to connect to others digitally became especially important for everyone. During the pandemic, GEF

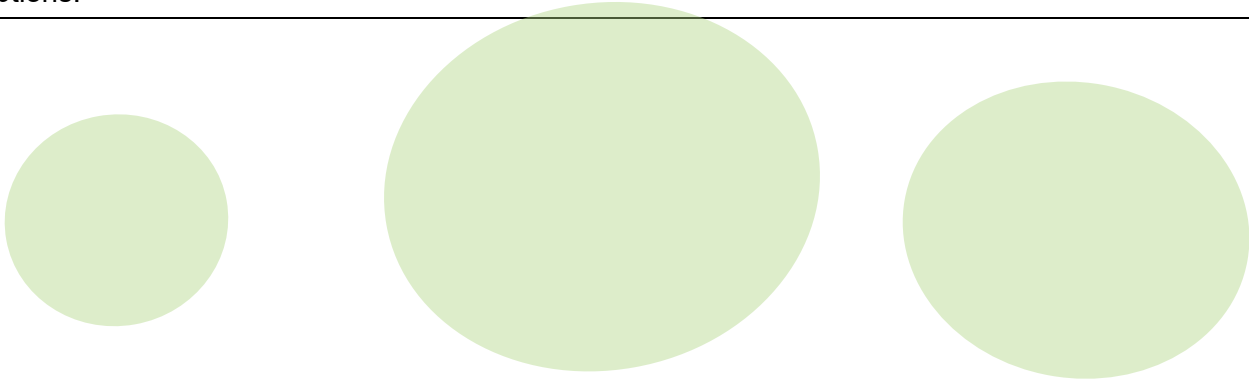


*Clients of Sakaw Terrace Apartments*

adopted several digital technologies for both clients and employees, including providing iPads with cellular service to clients so they could connect with others, and holding meetings virtually.

Although virtual programming is not always an appropriate tool for many seniors, being able to access and use technology to facilitate some degree of connectedness to others can have a positive impact on one’s quality of life. The majority of our buildings’ common areas have accessible Wi-Fi.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)
Technology and Connectivity	# of Virtual Training Modules Completed
	% of Properties with free Wi-Fi access for clients in common areas
	% of Properties with Wi-Fi access for clients in their units
Short-Term Strategies and Actions	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Seek volunteers or community partners capable of leading educational sessions on technology for our seniors.</li> <li>2. Develop a variety of virtual programming and resource options and promote the opportunities available with GEF resident iPads.</li> <li>3. Continue to introduce VR programming with the goal to diversify the opportunities available to GEF clients and site teams.</li> </ol>	
Long-Term Aspirations	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Engage with service providers to be able to offer a competitive rate for Wi-Fi within clients' units.</li> <li>2. Continue to explore and implement opportunities for GEF clients to utilize a variety of technology options.</li> </ol>	



# Appendix A: Sustainability Reporting Framework

Updated: February 2024

## Social, Cultural, Political Sustainability | KPIs

Framework Pillars	Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Metric
Social, Cultural, Political	<b>Cultural Domain</b>		
	<b>Equity, Diversity, &amp; Inclusion</b>	% of Leadership Roles held by women, 2SLGBTQIA+, and/or non-binary individuals	%
		% Non-Management Roles held by women, 2SLGBTQIA+, and/or non-binary individuals	%
		% Roles held by individuals self-reported as aboriginal or a visible minority	%
		% of Properties with Multi-Faith Space for Spiritual and Religious Activities	%
		% of Employees who believe the organization is purpose oriented and socially responsible	%
	<b>Sense of Belonging &amp; Accessibility</b>	% of Sites that are barrier-free	%
		% of Employees who experience a sense of belonging at work	%
	<b>Political Domain</b>		
	<b>Transparency, Agency, &amp; Engagement</b>	# of annual opportunities for formal feedback through scheduled Tenant Meetings and Resident/Family Meetings in each Apartment/Lodge respectively	#
		% of Employees that find a sense of accomplishment from their work	%
		% of Employees that feel GEF's Mission provides them meaningful direction	%
		% of Employees that report feeling engaged by the organization	%
		% of Employees participating in the bi-annual staff Town Halls	%
	<b>Social Domain</b>		
	<b>Client Quality of Life</b>	Average Occupancy Rates (rentable units)	%
		% of Food Offerings that meet Lodge residents' dietary needs	%
		% of Food Offerings that meet Lodge residents' expectations for taste and appeal	%
		% of Buildings with Fitness and/or Recreation facilities	%
		% of Properties with dedicated Social Gathering Space	%
Average Client Participation in Activity and Wellness Programs		%	
<b>Employee Quality of Life</b>	% of Employees who feel GEF actively supports their wellbeing	%	

# Appendix A: Sustainability Reporting Framework

## Environmental Sustainability | KPIs

Framework Pillars	Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Metric
Environmental Sustainability	Environmental Domain		
	Energy, Carbon, & Climate Resilience	Annual Energy Use Intensity/Energy Consumption	ekWh/m2
		Annual Renewable Energy Generation	%
		Annual Average Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity	kgCO2e/m2
		Emergency Preparedness Plan	y / n
		Climate Change Adaptation Strategy	y / n
	Transportation	# of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	#
		Annual Fleet Vehicle Emissions	Tonnes CO2e
		% of Properties with bicycle parking spaces	%
	Materials & Waste	Operating Waste Diversion Rate	%
		Construction Waste Diversion Rate	%
		Annual pages printed at GEF Facilities	#
		Waste Streams Collected	Types
	Water & Ecology	% of Properties with pollinators, native, or drought-tolerant species in landscape	%
		Annual Potable Water Consumption Intensity	m3/m2
	Delight & Enjoyment	% of Properties with on-site Garden or Greenhouse	%
		% of Properties with on-site Greenspace	%
		Average PM2.5 Levels in Common Areas and Facilities	µg/m <sup>3</sup>
Average Total Volatile Organic Compound (TVOC) Concentration Level		mg/m3	
Average CO2 Levels in Common Areas/Facilities		ppm	

## Economic Sustainability | KPIs

Framework Pillars	Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Metric
Economic Sustainability	Economic Domain		
	Funding Sustainability Initiatives	Quality of Life funds raised by GEF through donations and fundraising	\$
		# of on-going Partnerships with Non-Profit Organizations	#
	Investment in Community	# of Annual Client Volunteers Hours	#
		# of Partnerships with Community Organizations	#
		# of Maintenance and Capital Projects Completed Annually	#
	Maintenance	% of Green Cleaning Products	%
		# of Virtual Staff Meetings	#
	Technology & Connectivity	% of Properties with free Wi-Fi access for clients in common areas	%
		% of Properties with Wi-Fi access for clients in their units	%