

# GEF Seniors Housing Sustainability Framework Annual Report

September 2023



# Land Acknowledgement

Edmonton is located within Treaty 6 territory and within the Métis homelands and Métis nation of Alberta Region 4. We acknowledge this land as the traditional territories, traditional meeting grounds, gathering places, and travelling routes of many first nations, such as the Nehiyaw (Cree), Denesuliné (Dene), Nakota Sioux (Stoney), Anishinaabe (Saulteaux), and Niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Métis, and Inuit peoples.

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# Executive Summary

GEF Seniors Housing is Alberta's largest not-for-profit social housing organization working with the Government of Alberta and the City of Edmonton to provide vulnerable seniors access to safe, affordable, and well-maintained housing. Since 1959, we have been providing affordable housing for low-to-moderate income seniors, with demand for our services continuing to increase.

We are seeing more seniors who have complex needs applying for affordable housing, while the number of housing units we own and or operate have remained stable and our buildings continue to age. As with many organizations, particularly those that are not-for-profit like GEF, we are impacted by external factors out of our control, such as rising prices for the goods and services we purchase, and revenue that remains relatively unchanged – our largest source of revenue is the rent paid by our clients.

We have kept these issues front of mind as we strive to achieve balance, fairness, and equity for everyone – particularly clients and staff – while maintaining our commitment to affordability and sustainability.

Our Sustainability Framework provides principles, actions, and targets that help to guide us on our journey to achieve the social, environmental, and economic goals we have set in a practical and holistic way. We began laying the foundations for this work in 2020 and finalized the Sustainability Framework in September 2022. We have tracked our progress on 47 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to the end of August 2023 to arrive at this first annual report; a report we are proud to share with our many stakeholders and the community at large.

The Sustainability Framework, from conception through development and now through its first year of implementation, has been achieved through the involvement, participation, and commitment of numerous staff, dedicated members of our Board, and the guidance and expertise of staff from DIALOG. Of importance to GEF is that this Framework has been developed and implemented concurrent to the organization having managed through some significant change, including:

- The COVID-19 pandemic.
- Changes in senior leadership and Board membership.
- Portfolio restructuring; restructuring of Central Maintenance.
- Opening of our latest development in the Lauderdale community.

Although we are only one-year into our Framework's multi-year implementation, our commitment to achieving our social, environmental, and financial goals is reflected in a number of areas where we have made progress, or where we have identified more work to be done.

**We have made progress in the following areas:**

- We have put affordability first by not increasing the rates for services we charge to clients while increasing wages and benefits for staff.
- Improved our efforts to meaningfully engage with our staff and clients by involving them in the development of a new Strategic Plan to guide the organization for the next five years.
- Have maintained high occupancy rates in well-maintained buildings.
- All buildings' entries and communal areas are considered accessible.
- Improved energy efficiency through retrofits.
- Added cooling systems in common areas.
- Decreased Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions.
- Emergency Preparedness.
- Above average walkability and transit scores.
- Reduced paper utilization.
- Providing greenspace for the delight and enjoyment of clients.
- Grants and donations for "Quality of Life" initiatives.
- ISO 50001 Energy Management System certification.
- Partnerships with not-for-profit or community organizations supporting seniors.
- Building maintenance projects that improve energy efficiency, safety, and quality of life.
- Free Wi-Fi in communal areas of most buildings.

**We have more work to do in the following areas:**

- Staff and client engagement.
- Food services, and Activity and Wellness programming in our Lodges.
- Climate Change Adaption Strategy.
- Reducing energy use.
- Water conservation.
- Engaging clients and the community in maintaining gardens in our buildings.
- Air Quality monitoring.
- Increasing the number of external volunteers.

**We need to rethink our approach in the following areas:**

- Fitness and recreation.
- Electric vehicles and charging stations.
- Renewable energy.
- Artificial Intelligence (AI).
- Tracking our impact from waste from daily operations or construction projects.
- The types of plants we put in our communal garden spaces.

While the progress we have made towards our Sustainability Framework's goals in our first year is noteworthy, and for which we take a great deal of pride, we know that the foundational changes we have committed to will not come easily nor without challenges. However, we believe this is meaningful work that is important to our longer-term success and look forward to continuing to report on the progress we are making in future annual reports.

Further, we hope that the work we have undertaken in developing and reporting on a comprehensive Sustainability Framework will serve as a guide for other not-for-profit organizations in addressing the social, environmental, and economic needs, opportunities, and challenges that they may face.

**Dale Forbes**

Chief Executive Officer

# Principles, Strategies, and Actions

## Our Sustainability Purpose Statements

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

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 staff have a voice.

We will contribute to a meaningful quality of life for both clients and staff, 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.



### 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 operations model.



# Social, Cultural, and Political

## Social, Cultural, and Political



### Employee Quality of Work Life

The environment we live and work in directly impacts our wellbeing. Employees who have a healthy and supportive work life are better able to support our clients' quality of life.

In 2022, GEF implemented several strategies aimed at improving staff wellbeing. We reviewed the employee benefits program and increased the Health Care Spending Account, paramedical maximums, and out-of-country medical insurance maximums to meet increased demand. We reduced the hours of work during the week from 40 to 37.5, introduced wage scales for greater equity and transparency across positions, and committed to the principle of a minimum/living wage aligned with Alberta Living Wage Network current standard. We also increased the number of Full-Time positions: as of May 2023, less than 10% of our staff work Part-Time.

In the past, the annual Employee Engagement survey was one of the means through which we gained valuable insight into the relationship we have with our employees.

In 2022, GEF introduced informal Town Hall meetings to promote two-way communication between senior leadership and staff. Town Hall meetings occur twice a year and give staff a direct opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback on issues that matter to them.

Both the survey and the meetings help us to identify areas where we can strive to improve and measure levels of engagement.

### Key Performance Indicators

#### % of Employees who feel GEF actively supports their wellbeing

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2021	2023
Employee Quality of Life	% of Employees who feel GEF actively supports their wellbeing	75%	N/A Kincentric discontinued question

It is difficult to measure reaction to the changes we introduced between the fall of 2022 and the spring of 2023 to improve staff wellbeing since the question was discontinued from the 2023 staff survey. This KPI will be reviewed for 2024.

Social/Cultural/Political



Employee Quality of Work Life



Client Quality of Life



Sense of Belonging & Accessibility



Transparency, Agency & Engagement



Equity, Diversity & Inclusion

*“Increase in Full-time positions – that is huge and how great it is.”*



## Social, Cultural, and Political

At Town Hall meetings, staff expressed appreciation for the improvements to their wages, benefits, and work life balance. However, overall results from the 2023 survey were lower in all dimensions, indicating that staff are feeling uncertain about the future, in large part influenced by the significant increase in the cost of living, and the need for more support to adapt to the many changes that have taken place in recent years, both within GEF and outside of the organization, including the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the changing needs of our clients.

*"It is nice having more money for the paramedical (massage) benefits."*

Over the next five years, we will focus enhancing our change management practices throughout the organization to better support staff through the organizational changes needed to support GEF's strategic direction.

We will be reviewing the 2023 survey results at the fall Leadership Meeting and discussing how best to evaluate staff engagement in the future, including integrating the survey into our new Human Resources Information System (HRIS) that will be fully implemented by spring 2024.



### **Client Quality of Life**

GEF has ongoing and specific initiatives to address clients' quality of life and their physical environment. Set standards and principles 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. As well, employees with appropriate training and certification, e.g., Chefs with Red Seal Certification, ensure our commitment to a high level of service.

Since 2020, GEF has conducted annual Client Experience Surveys, inviting feedback from our almost 4,000 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. From previous surveys, GEF has acted by providing multiple options for getting client feedback, including installation of suggestion boxes in all buildings—where clients can provide written feedback—and an online feedback form, and launching reviews of Food Services and Activity and Wellness programs in our Lodges.

## Social, Cultural, and Political

For 2023, GEF received an overall satisfaction rating of **81%**. This is not surprising as clients continue to report that they are feeling unsafe in the wider community and, notwithstanding our buildings being generally safe, each community is experiencing the spill over effects of increased crime in their neighbourhoods. As well, in the past year, we had several capital maintenance projects underway such as elevator modernization, building renovations, window replacements and boiler upgrades to name a few. Many of these projects are long overdue and have long project timelines and, in many instances, clients have to continue living in the building as these are undertaken.

### Key Performance Indicators

#### Average Vacancy Rates

At the end of August 2023, GEF's overall vacancy rate was 6%, representing 213 vacant housing units out of 3,777 total housing units. However, of the 213 vacant units, only 72 units were available for rent, with the remaining 141 units not available for rent due to unit renewals and turnovers. Accordingly, our overall vacancy rate was 4% based on rentable units and the Affordable program was nearly 100% occupied with 214 of 215 units rented.

GEF has seen a notable increase in the overall number of housing applications for both the Seniors Self-Contained (SSC) Apartments and Lodge programs over the past year. As a result, GEF has high occupancy rates as well as high waitlist numbers for most of its sites.

The increase in housing applications reflects an increased need for affordable seniors' housing as the cost of living continues to increase without a corresponding increase in seniors' benefits. Due to lower vacancies, especially in the SSC program, GEF has been limited in its ability to provide housing options (traditionally, bachelor units) for seniors aged between 60-64.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
Client Quality of Life	Average Vacancy Rates (rentable units)	9% Lodges 5% Apartments	5% Lodges 4% Apartments
	% of Food Offerings that meet Lodge residents' dietary needs	75%	70%
	% of Food Offerings that meet Lodge residents' expectations for taste and appeal	64%	67%
	% of Buildings with Fitness and/or Recreation Facilities	100% Lodges 73% Apartments	100% Lodges 74% Apartments
	% of Properties with dedicated Social Gathering Space	100% Lodges 89% Apartments	100% Lodges 89% Apartments
	Average Client Participation in Activity and Wellness Programs	Not yet tracked	28%

## Social, Cultural, and Political

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### **% of Buildings with Fitness and/or Recreation Facilities**

Nine of 11 Lodges have dedicated space for fitness equipment. Fitness equipment includes a treadmill, bike, and free weights, while four lodges have vibration platforms. Seven of 31 Apartment (SSC and Affordable) sites do not have any exercise equipment, primarily due to lack of available space.

There has been discussion regarding the quality and appropriateness of the fitness equipment provided for our clients' use. We are assessing the equipment we currently have in each site, as well as the equipment's condition, and putting together a plan and budget to replace equipment where appropriate.

### **% of Properties with dedicated Social Gathering Space**

All but one of our communities have dedicated social gathering spaces. The Virginia Park Apartment Plazas—consisting of three separate SSC Apartment buildings—have little to no gathering spaces for tenants. To counter this limitation, tenants are encouraged to connect with and use community available services, e.g., seniors' centres.

### **Average Client Participation in Activity and Wellness Programs**

Activity and Wellness programming is a service provided in the Lodges by a team of Life Enrichment Supervisors and Activity and Wellness Coordinators (AWCs). This team also supports tenants in the SSC Apartments program to facilitate their own programs and activities. Some Apartment sites have tenant-led Social Committees to organize programming.

Our ability to track participation in these programs is challenging for several reasons:

- In the Apartments, activities are tenant-led and not organized through the Life Enrichment team.
- In the Lodges, AWCs do not attend all activities that are planned. As well, participation also varies from active to passive as some individuals pop in and out of a program. Vacations and absences also impact reliable tracking and reporting.

The Life Enrichment team began tracking participation in Activity and Wellness programming in the Lodges in April of 2023. AWCs capture the number of individuals attending one to three programs/month, and the number of individuals attending three or more programs/month.

The number of individuals attending one to three programs/month is trending downward, from 34% to 28%, while the number of individuals attending more than three programs/month is trending upwards, increasing from 19% to 34%.

Life Enrichment Supervisors are working with the AWCs to improve data collection so that modifications can be made to improve client programming and participation rates based on utilization and expressed interest by our clients.

# Social, Cultural, and Political



## Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion

GEF is committed to providing a welcoming and inclusive environment for both clients and staff. 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.

### Key Performance Indicators

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion	% of Leadership Roles held by women or non-binary individuals	70%	62%
	% Non-Management Roles held by women or non-binary individuals	78%	81%
	% of Properties with Multi-Faith Space for Spiritual and Religious Activities	100% Lodges 89% Apartments	100% Lodges 89% Apartments
	% of Employees who believe the organization is purpose oriented and socially responsible	85%	63%

### % Non-Management Roles held by women or non-binary individuals

Over the past year, there were changes to GEF’s Leadership Team due to resignations, retirements, and restructuring.

The percentage of leadership roles held by women or non-binary individuals has also been impacted by the inclusion of the Chefs positions—of which there are ten—into the calculation of GEF’s Leadership Team composition. In North America, 64% to 75% of Culinary Chefs are men. GEF’s Culinary Chef demographics align with industry trends: 25% are women and 75% are men. If we look at the demographics of our Leadership Team by excluding the Chefs, the overall Leadership Team’s composition would change to where 73% are women and 27% are men.

The reduction in the percentage of leadership roles held by women or non-binary individuals is also influenced by the turnover of six leadership positions between September 2022 and August 2023; four (67%) of which were held by women or non-binary individuals. All six of the leadership positions have been filled; three (50%) of the successful candidates being women or non-binary individuals, and three (50%) of the successful candidates being men, which had an impact on this KPI.

# Social, Cultural, and Political

## % of Properties with Multi-Faith Space for Spiritual and Religious Activities

A limited number of our properties (Sakaw Terrace, Rosslyn Place Lodge, and McQueen Place Lodge) have a dedicated space for spiritual/religious activities, but all properties, except for the Virginia Park Plazas, have space that could accommodate these activities. Residents and tenants are encouraged to utilize the spaces available in each community to meet their needs, including for spiritual/religious purposes.



### Sense of Belonging and Accessibility

Feeling connected and engaged in civic and community life is important for an individual’s sense of belonging. At the same time, GEF is supporting more seniors with more complex needs, including limited mobility. One way to ensure our clients can maintain their independence is by improving accessibility to both the building in which they live and their individual housing units.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
Sense of Belonging and Accessibility	% of Sites that are barrier-free	100% Lodges 100% Apartments	100% Lodges 97% Apartments
	% of Employees who experience a sense of belonging at work	81%	N/A Kincentric discontinued question

## % of Sites that are barrier-free

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, and the City of Edmonton Safety Codes and Inspections, Section 3.8, in relation to barrier-free and adaptable dwelling units.

Except for Lauderdale, which opened in 2023, all building entries and communal areas are considered accessible and barrier-free. Entry to each site has ground level or ramp access, with larger door frames and auto entry buttons. Every site with more than one level (40 of our 42 buildings) has elevator access to all floors, and the remaining two buildings are single level structures.

Within each site, there are common areas that are located on the main floor or that are accessible via elevators. Each site’s common areas have doorways that are accessible and bathrooms that offer barrier-free options.

## Social, Cultural, and Political

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The number of barrier-free housing units within each site varies, but are increasing with modernization projects to units that include vinyl flooring vs carpeting; walk-in showers vs tubs; lower cabinetry heights; etc. As a minimum, all of GEF's housing units have grab bars located in tubs/showers in the bathrooms.

GEF has recently updated its Facilities Management Standards and Design Guidelines to include Seniors-Friendly design for all new construction and major renovation projects.

### **% of Employees who experience a sense of belonging at work**

This question was developed specifically for tracking direct impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on staff and was removed from the most recent Employee Engagement Survey. We will explore another way to track this metric in future employee engagement surveys.



### **Transparency, Agency, and Engagement**

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

For transparency, 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. During the COVID-19 pandemic, GEF embraced virtual platforms and digital tools to enable communication in different ways, increasing access and participation.

GEF seeks feedback regularly from employees, clients, and their families through surveys meetings, and interviews. 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 staff. 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/internal website (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. GEF will consider opportunities for this outside of personal living spaces as well.

The Learning, Development and Healthy Workplaces program provides comprehensive educational opportunities—both mandatory and optional—for employees to expand their skillsets. This program supports employee retention, skills development and growth, and career advancement possibilities within GEF.

## Social, Cultural, and Political

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
Transparency, Agency, and Engagement	Annual opportunities for formal feedback through Tenant Meetings, and Resident/Family Meetings in each Apartment/Lodge respectively	4/10	4/10
	% of Employees that find a sense of accomplishment from their work	81%	65%
	% of Employees that feel GEF's Mission provides them meaningful direction	78%	58%
	Employee/Client participation rates at social events	Not yet tracked	Will be tracked starting in 2023

### Key Performance Indicators

#### % of Employees that feel GEF's Mission provides them meaningful direction

As previously noted, overall results from the 2023 Employee Engagement Survey were lower in all dimensions, indicating that staff are feeling uncertain about the future, influenced by the significant increase in the cost of living, and the need for more support to adapt to the many changes that have taken place in recent years, both within GEF and outside of the organization, including the continued effects of the COVID-19 pandemic and the changing needs of our clients.

Over the next five years, we will focus enhancing our change management practices throughout the organization to better support staff through the organizational changes needed to support GEF's strategic direction.

We will be reviewing the 2023 Employee Engagement Survey results at the fall Leadership Meeting and discussing how best to evaluate staff engagement in the future, including integrating the survey into our new Human Resources Information System (HRIS) that will be fully implemented by spring 2024.

#### Employee/Client participation rates at social events

This metric had not been tracked since the implementation of the Sustainability Framework but will be tracked going forward for all staff recognition and appreciation events, and resident and tenant events.



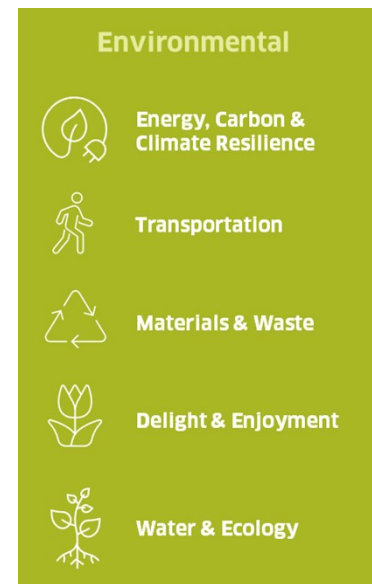
## Environmental

### Environmental



#### *Energy, Carbon, and Climate Resilience*

There are almost 11,400 seniors living communities and residential care facilities in Canada, which account for about 25.8 million gigajoules of energy use per year. As energy costs continue to rise, that energy use represents an increasingly significant percentage of these facilities' overhead costs. Energy efficiency is key to reversing that trend, helping seniors living communities, like GEF, spend less money on energy use so they can invest more into clients' "Quality of Life" initiatives. It will be essential 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 in its planning and actions the impact of climate change. The [City of Edmonton](#) has been predicting increased temperatures and precipitation, and an increase in low air quality events from forest fires. Expanding our Emergency Preparedness Plan 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.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
Energy, Carbon, and Climate Resilience	Annual Energy Use Intensity/Energy Consumption	417 ekWh/m2	392 ekWh/m2
	Annual Renewable Energy Generation	Not yet tracked	Not yet tracked
	Annual Average Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity	132 kgCO2e/m2	122 kgCO2e/m2
	Emergency Preparedness Plan	Yes	Yes
	Climate Change Adaptation Strategy	No	Will be developed in 2024



# Environmental

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## Key Performance Indicators

### Annual Energy Use Intensity/Energy Consumption

ENERGY STAR certified buildings save energy, save money, and help protect the environment by generating fewer greenhouse gas emissions than do typical buildings. To be certified as ENERGY STAR, a building must meet strict energy performance standards set by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)/NRCan. GEF will be exploring the opportunity to obtain ENERGY STAR certification for individual buildings within each portfolio commencing in 2024.



### Annual Renewable Energy Generation

The main sources of energy used in the operation of our buildings are electricity from the provincial power grid and natural gas for heating and domestic hot water. As of July 2023, Alberta's electricity product was generated by 60% from natural gas, 20% from wind, 7% from coal, 6% from solar, 5% from hydro, and 2% from biomass or geothermal, with coal-fired generation to be phased out by the end of 2023. Currently, GEF is exploring renewable energy generation through Solar Photovoltaic (PV) Systems to provide electricity and Geothermal to provide heating and cooling.

### Annual Average Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity

As of 2023, greenhouse gas emissions from our buildings' energy use have decreased by 14% from 2017 levels. Our retrofit work has been primarily responsible for this decrease in emissions. This work has included LED lighting upgrades, water fixture retrofits, and high efficiency boiler upgrades in a number of our buildings.

In 2023, we retrofitted a number of common areas in buildings without a cooling system, including the Pleasantview, Beverly, Ottewell, and McQueen Place Lodges and Westlawn Apartments. We balanced carbon objectives through active measures in the form of energy efficient heat pumps to provide both space cooling and heating. Additional projects will be identified and actioned in the coming year based on approved capital budgets.

### Additional Actions/Activities

In 2023, funding requests were submitted to the Canada Mortgage and Housing Corporation (CMHC) via the Government of Alberta to initiate Cluster Energy Audits for GEF's owned and operated buildings. Once funding has been approved and received, we will develop an Existing Building Decarbonization Strategy, based on archetypes/clusters of existing buildings—based on building design, age, size, etc. The Decarbonization Strategy will review:

- Direct carbon emissions controlled by GEF.
- Purchased Electricity carbon emissions.

## Environmental

- Indirect emissions from other sources that GEF does not directly control or own.

Short Term Key Performance Indicators	Action	Completed
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 reduction and capital costs, while aligning with the latest version of NECB as a minimum.	Update of currently adopted and applicable required codes and standards. The mechanical energy target will be in excess of the minimum code requirements for energy efficiency and GHG emissions.	Yes
Complete a Net Zero Carbon Feasibility Analysis in the early design stage of every new construction project.	Will be explored during early concept development of any new construction project.	Yes
Explore partnerships with third-party renewable energy providers who would be prepared to provide upfront capital.		For future consideration
Prioritize internal functional audits/ASHRAE Level 1 audits on GEF's highest energy consuming buildings (top 25%). Based on results, apply upgrades to building archetypes.	Funding application for ASHRAE Level 2 which exceeds ASHRAE Level 1 has been submitted.	Under Review
Seek sources of external funding for buildings in GEF's buildings portfolio that are due for renewal to study the feasibility of deep carbon retrofits (ASHRAE level III).	This will be investigated after ASHRAE Level 2 funding has been secured and Level 2 has been completed.	For future consideration (Lodges Only)
Explore the feasibility of constructing a Net Zero Carbon building for any new building development.	Review the implications and costs of constructing a Net Zero Carbon building for any building development.	For future consideration
Include considerations for space cooling though passive or active measures in any new construction projects while balancing carbon objectives.	Passive ventilation measures to be investigated.	For future consideration

### Emergency Preparedness Plan

GEF has comprehensive Emergency Preparedness Plans that include policies and procedures, contact lists, and training exercises to ensure staff are ready and able to respond quickly and effectively in the event of an emergency to ensure the safety of clients, staff, and others in our buildings.

These Emergency Preparedness Plans are reviewed and updated on a regular basis to ensure they remain current, incorporate new organizational learnings, and align with industry best practices.

## Environmental

Every three years, GEF's Emergency Preparedness Plans are reviewed and evaluated by external auditors as part of the Partnerships in Injury Reduction (PIR) audit process. In 2020, GEF received an audit score of 90% on the emergency response element of the PIR audit. During this audit, it was identified that GEF could improve the completion of fire drills and other emergency tabletop exercises conducted across the organization as well as ensuring an annual review of all Emergency Preparedness Plan is completed by all staff so employees are knowledgeable should an event take place.

Year	Fire Drill Compliance Rate	Fire & Emergency Preparedness Training Compliance Rate
2020	34%	4.9%
2021	42%	52%
2022	58%	26.4%
2023	78%	48%

GEF's commitment is to work towards achieving 100% Fire Drill Compliance Rates across our 41 buildings and having all of our active staff members complete their annual fire and emergency preparedness training.

In the coming year, Emergency Preparedness Plans for inclement weather will be presented at all Resident and Tenant meetings prior to seasonal changes to increase awareness and promote preventative strategies to help protect buildings and the clients from future climate risks.

Additionally, GEF will be updating its Emergency Codes to align with the standardized Alberta Emergency Response Code System as part of our commitment to adopt industry best practices. This shift will simplify and streamline our current emergency response procedures and support a better understanding of the different emergency response codes by staff, residents, tenants, and visitors. Shifting to the standardized Alberta Emergency Response Code System enables GEF to utilize the various free emergency response resources and materials available through our different organizational partnerships.

### Climate Change Adaptation Strategy

The impacts of climate change are becoming increasingly evident and challenging for all levels of society. Ensuring GEF is resilient to these climate change impacts is critical to maintaining community well-being, environmental health, and a vibrant local economy over the long term.

A community that is resilient to climate change has a localized economy, strong and healthy ecosystems, tight-knit neighbourhoods, and a strong social fabric; it is walkable, energy efficient and can thrive through disruptions, such as rising energy and food prices or a natural disaster.

## Environmental

In the coming year, GEF will develop a Climate Change Adaptation Strategy. A cross department working group will identify medium to high level risks in key areas which could be most impacted by climate change, then develop a plan to mitigate them. These areas are:

- Flood Management and Drainage
- Infrastructure
- Ecosystems and Natural Areas
- Urban Trees and Landscaping
- Human Health and Safety, and
- Food Security

The Climate Change Adaptation Strategy, as one element of this Sustainability Framework, will ensure that GEF is taking reasonable and appropriate action(s) to increase resilience across our communities in a timely and cost-effective way, based on the best available information. As our knowledge evolves, so will this Strategy.



### 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 (vans and trucks) spread across the city. Our transportation emissions are extremely minor when compared to our carbon emissions from building operations. For our fleet, we will be considering some degree of transition to the use of electric vehicles and EV (Electric Vehicle) charging stations in future years.

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 staff, clients, and visitors.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
Transportation	# of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	0	0
	Annual Fleet Vehicle Emissions	125 tonnes CO2e	125 tonnes CO2e
	% of Properties with bicycle parking spaces	10% Lodges 3% Apartments	50% Lodges 44% Apartments

## Environmental

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
	Average Walk Score	48% Lodges 60% Apartments	52% Lodges- 60% Apartments
	Average Transit Score	52% Lodges 54% Apartments	55% Lodges 57% Apartments

### Key Performance Indicators

#### # of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations

In 2022, GEF submitted an application to NRCan for Electric Vehicle (EV) charging station funding but was not successful. No funding is currently available for this technology. As funding streams become available, GEF will submit appropriate application.

#### Annual Fleet Vehicle Emissions

Our annual fleet vehicle emissions are likely to remain unchanged until such time as our buildings' portfolio increases. EVs could help to reduce fleet emissions; however, EV charging station infrastructure is required prior to purchasing an EV or EVs.

#### % of Properties with bicycle parking spaces

- 5 bicycle racks at GEF Lodges (accommodate approximately 25 bicycles).
- 8 bicycle racks at GEF Affordable Apartments (accommodate approximately 24 bicycles).
- 18 bicycle racks at GEF SSC Apartments (accommodate approximately 85 bicycles approx).

#### Average Walk and Transit Score

Data collected from the online resource: <https://www.walkscore.com/> indicates our properties continue to benefit from updates to the Edmonton Transit System.

Data from 2023 also includes the bike score, which also includes scooter accessibility for seniors and, when combined with the availability of bicycle racks, speaks to improved commutability by bike for staff and visitors.



### Materials and Waste

Raw material extraction and product manufacturing are significant contributors to climate change. Manufacturing, industry, and construction are the second largest source of greenhouse gas emissions in Edmonton. In addition, waste disposal requires space for landfills. These all have negative effects on air quality and the ecosystem.

## Environmental

Our construction projects—primarily renovation and rejuvenation projects to housing units and building systems—involve the extraction and processing of materials and produce large amounts of waste. In addition, our buildings generate household waste and our general operations use materials that in turn lead to the generation of waste. Edmonton's waste collection services handle our landfill waste and recycling.

Although GEF is considering ways to effectively manage and reduce the waste we generate, we have not yet landed on a suitable mechanism for tracking our impact from daily operations or construction projects.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
Materials and Waste	Operating Waste Diversion Rate (estimate)	40%	N/A
	Construction Waste Diversion Rate	Not yet tracked	Will be tracked starting in 2024
	Annual pages printed for Operations	1,073,000	405,489
	Waste Streams Collected	Household Trash and Recyclables	Household Trash and Recyclables

### Operating Waste Diversion Rate

GEF currently has no mechanism in place to weigh these types of waste and neither does the City of Edmonton (for our 31 Apartment buildings or Integrity (for our 11 Lodges). Rates are calculated based on the number of bins, multiplied by collection frequency per type of waste. Rates will be static throughout the year unless there is a change in collection frequency.

### Construction Waste Diversion Rate

This KPI will focus on select construction materials with low embodied carbon, such as concrete with high supplementary cementing materials (SCM), timber from sustainably managed forests, and steel with high recycled content. We are targeting a goal of achieving a 75% diversion rate for construction and demolition waste for any new building developments.

This will be tracked from 2024 onward once the data has been gathered and uploaded into Energy Star Portfolio Manager.

### Annual pages printed for Operations

In 2022, a total of 1,728,211 pages were printed. Data from the first two quarters of 2023 show a downward trend in pages printed. For example, 453,610 pages were printed in the second quarter of 2022, compared to 405,489 pages printed in the same period of 2023.

# Environmental

## Waste Streams Collected

GEF has two major waste streams collected – (1) Household Trash, which includes food scraps from the 11 Lodge kitchens, and (2) Recyclables. This will not change throughout the year unless there is construction waste, which would then be captured and reported as a third major waste stream.



## Water and Ecology

Water is a valuable natural resource. In 2021, our buildings consumed 321,391 cubic meters of water. This amount of water consumption would fill about 129 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

GEF has moved forward with implementation of water saving measures, such as installing aerators on faucets, although we want to further reduce our water consumption. This will include auditing our water use and installing water-efficient fixtures.

Most of our buildings have gardens. They add to our aesthetics 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, preventing flooding.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
Water and Ecology	% of Properties with pollinators or native species in landscape	82% Lodges 40% Apartments	No Data
	Annual Potable Water Consumption Intensity (m3/m2)	1.23 Lodges 1.30 Apartments	1.29 Lodges 1.34 Apartments

## Key Performance Indicators

### % of Properties with pollinators or native species in landscape

More work is needed when planning GEF's garden spaces and when purchasing plants during the annual spring planting season. GEF needs to invest in more appropriate perennial type bushes, flowers, and plants. Furthermore, engaging with gardening experts when planning our garden spaces will increase the number of pollinators and native species in the landscape across GEF's 42 locations. This will also support better use of our financial resources.

As of August 2023, GEF updated its design standards for new developments to restore native or adapted vegetation for 30% of the site area.



## Environmental

### Annual Potable Water Consumption Intensity (m3/m2)

Potable water consumption remains fairly static. We are currently updating water consumption to our ENERGY STAR Portfolio Manager. As of August 2023, GEF updated its design standards for new developments to mandate use of water sense labeled fixtures. For buildings that are due for renewal/rejuvenation initiatives, we will use water sense fixtures to facilitate a reduction in water use. For the top 25% of water consuming buildings, we will conduct audits to identify and plan appropriate water conservation strategies. Water audits will be budgeted for completion in 2024 and 2025.

We will use captured rainwater to water plants and gardens for buildings with onsite greenhouses or community gardens. This area will be investigated as part of the water audit due for completion in 2024.



### *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 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.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
Delight and Enjoyment	% of Properties with on-site Gardens or Greenhouses	100% Lodges 45% Apartments	100% Lodges 100% Apartments
	% of Properties with on-site Greenspace	100% Lodges 89% Apartments	100% Lodges 97% Apartments
	Average PM2.5 Levels in Common Areas and Facilities	Not yet tracked	Not yet tracked
	Average Total Volatile Organic Compound (TVOC) Concentration Level	Not yet tracked	Not yet tracked



## Environmental

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
	Average CO2 Levels in Common Areas and Facilities	Not yet tracked	Not yet tracked
	% of Housing Units that include balconies	31% Lodges 71% Affordable Apartments 2% SSC Apartments	31% Lodges 71% Affordable Apartments 2% SSC Apartments

### % of Properties with on-site Gardens or Greenhouses

All GEF Lodges have green space within the site, with plants located directly in the ground and in pots; all GEF Apartments have some form of garden on-site. Resident and tenant engagement and interest in gardening varies from site to site.

For the 2023 gardening season, all sites purchased flowers/plants and GEF partnered with local businesses to support sites on planting days where a need was identified. Approximately 100 employees from five different partner organizations contributed 200 hours of time planting alongside residents and staff at seven locations across Edmonton.

In addition to communal gardens, several GEF Apartment sites use lottery systems to allocate garden space to interested tenants.

Some GEF sites, in particular Ottewell Place Lodge, Meadowlark Lodge, and Central Services, have additional space to support the establishment of community gardens. A community garden would make good use of the available space, provide an opportunity for Lodges to connect with their local community, and an excellent way to recruit volunteers to assist with the maintenance of GEF garden space.

Maintenance of garden spaces and flowerpots is a challenge that some sites face throughout the season, with more work needed to encourage resident and tenant participation in gardening at some sites.

### % of Properties with on-site Greenspace

All Lodges and all but one Apartment site have access to some greenspace, but the size of greenspace varies greatly. For example, Queen Alexandra and Beverly Lodges both have mature trees and some grass on their properties. Cathedral Close Apartments has a large garden space in the front of the property. Efforts are made in the spring to add flowers and plants to all GEF properties, including those with limited green space.

There has been some discussion regarding tenants' perception of safety when spending time in greenspaces due to crime and other concerns in certain neighbourhoods. Suggestions from tenants include the installation of fencing, where appropriate.

## Environmental

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### **Average CO2 Levels in Common Areas and Facilities**

We have purchased Air Monitoring handheld devices for air monitoring in common areas starting in the fall of 2023.

### **% of Properties that include balconies**

31% of the 990 Lodge units have balconies, 71% of the 215 Affordable Apartment units have balconies, and 2% of 2,572 SSC Apartment units have balconies.

These numbers are forecast to remain static given the age and condition of the 41 properties, and there being no realistic expectation that any building retrofit project will be planned in the foreseeable future to increase the number of housing units with balconies. With this in mind, we will be removing this metric as a KPI in the updated Sustainability Framework we are working on concurrent to this Annual Report for the current 2022 Sustainability Framework.

What remains unchanged is our commitment to reviewing design requirements for any new building project to give due consideration to including balconies as a feature that can contribute to the delight and enjoyment of the living space for clients.

## Economic



### *Funding Sustainability and Wellbeing*

Incentive funding and grant programs are starting to require organizations to have sustainability initiatives are 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 our ability to provide services and amenities that enhance the quality of life of clients. Fundraising events, purchasing incentive programs, and laundry service revenue all contribute to support of this fund. In 2022, donations received from individuals and corporate partners were directed to 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 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.



Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2022*
Funding Sustainability Initiatives	Quality of Life funds raised by GEF through donations and fundraising	\$121,000	\$100,316
* The reporting period for donations is Jan.1 – Dec. 31. Totals for 2023 were not available by Aug. 31			

### **Quality of Life funds raised by GEF through donations and fundraising (MB)**

GEF’s major source of fundraising comes from bi-annual Casino revenue. GEF’s last casino event in late 2021 raised more than \$75,000 for support of our Quality of Life fund.

Fundraising activities were limited during the pandemic as many in-person events could not take place. We shifted our approach towards applying for grants and enhancing partnerships with our vendors.

In September 2022, we received a grant from the Edmonton Community Foundation for \$7,500 to purchase yarn for GEF’s Great Knitting Giveaway. To maximize this grant, we partnered with Michael’s to receive at 30% discount on the purchase of yarn to supply our many valued knitters.

## Economic

In November 2022, we asked our vendors to donate to our Giving Tuesday campaign. We collected \$10,000 in donations for the Quality of Life fund, which helped provide grocery gift cards to residents and tenants and defray the costs to tenants of attending social events.

For the 2023 gardening season, we again partnered with vendors to support sites on planting days where a need was identified. Approximately 100 employees from five different businesses contributed 200 hours of time planting alongside residents and staff at seven locations across Edmonton.

In May 2023, GEF was successful in securing \$98,000 from the Community Services Recovery Fund for the Technology as a Tool for Social Connectedness project. The funding, provided by the Government of Canada through the United Way of the Alberta Capital Region, allows GEF to increase and diversify engagement opportunities for clients through technology-based programming, and enhance the recruitment of volunteers to support client-focused programming. The funding was used to purchase the Rendever Resident Engagement Virtual Reality system (June) and Better Impact Volunteer Management software (August).

### Long-Term Aspirations

- Pursue funding for and achieve ISO 50001 certification for energy management, which will improve our energy utilization and demonstrate leadership in the social housing sector.

Funding has been secured from Natural Resources Canada for all GEF properties to achieve the ISO 50001 standard by May 2025. GEF is currently working on a GAP analysis for this project to construct an Energy Management (EnMS) template for use across all our properties. ISO 50001 assists facilities in evaluating and prioritizing the implementation of new energy-efficient technologies and in improving energy efficiency and reducing energy use and consumption. It also creates transparency and facilitates communication on the management of energy resources.

Further, it promotes energy management best practices and behaviors and provides a framework for promoting energy efficiency throughout the supply chain and facilitates energy management improvements for greenhouse gas emission reduction projects.



### Investment in Community

GEF partners with approximately 56 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 (3) buildings for Skills Society to use for clients with developmental disabilities.

## Economic

- 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.

GEF offers volunteer opportunities to clients. The COVID-19 pandemic decreased our external volunteer base by more than 50% since 2019. To encourage volunteering, we have taken steps to increase communication about opportunities with GEF. As well, we are exploring other opportunities for volunteers, from both within and outside of the organization, with varying skillsets and interests.

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
Investment in Community	# of on-going Partnerships with Non-Profit Organizations	6	56
	# of Annual Client Volunteer Hours	350	N/A
	# of Partnerships with Community Organizations	31	56

### # of on-going Partnerships with Non-Profit Organizations/# of Partnerships with Community Organizations

In 2022, we partnered with the Central Lions Seniors Association (CLSA) to promote recreational opportunities to our more than 2,500 Apartment tenants, with the CLSA having provided their venue free of charge to us to host the annual Great Knitting Giveaway event.

In 2023, we partnered with Age-Friendly Edmonton/Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council to take part in the Seniors Week launch in early June at City Hall. We also partnered with several members of ASCHA, including Silvera in Calgary, to celebrate and elevate seniors' issues through the Blue Ribbon awareness campaign initiated by GEF in 2022. During Seniors Week, approximately 4,000 of these ribbons were distributed to clients, staff, and partners of GEF.

### # of Annual Client Volunteer Hours

GEF's current internal volunteer program data is limited, as many residents and tenants contribute in meaningful ways that do not result in an accurate documentation of their gifted hours. As a result of the weakness in our data associated with accurately capturing and reporting volunteers and volunteers' hours, we are shifting to a community focused approach guided by resident feedback and have suspended the input of logged hours into our current database for capturing volunteer data. Our newly acquired Volunteer Management software will be implemented in the coming months.

## Economic

During Volunteer Appreciation Week in April 2023, Community Celebration events were hosted in lieu of some of the traditional Volunteer Appreciation events that were held across GEF. All GEF residents and tenants from their respective communities were invited to join in the celebration. Many residents shared that they did not have an attachment to the title 'Volunteer' and felt that it carried a feeling of authority or responsibility that they did not feel was appropriate. In addition to the Community Celebrations, Thank You cards were distributed at all GEF sites as a tool to encourage neighbours to show appreciation to one another.

Going forward, we are planning to increase our communication with residents and tenants to develop a more community-focused approach in place of the previous formal, internal volunteer program.



### Maintenance

Maintaining our buildings and assets is vitally important to us to ensure that our communities are 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, and 90% of clients were satisfied with their weekly housekeeping services.

GEF has commenced work to transition the cleaning products we use to be more environmentally friendly and safe by purchasing and using more certified green cleaning 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 (KPI)	2020	2023
Maintenance	# of Maintenance Projects Completed Annually	136	128 (targeted for completion)
	% of Green Cleaning Products	Not yet tracked	67%

### # of Maintenance Projects Completed Annually

In 2022/2023, GEF received over \$8 million in external funding from the Government of Alberta to complete 117 building related projects. These projects included:

- Boiler Replacements
- Elevator Modernizations
- Housing Unit Renewals
- Roofing Replacements
- Energy Efficiency Improvements
- CCTV Security Improvements

## Economic

### % of Green Cleaning Products

The percentage of cleaning products that we are using in our buildings that are certified as being green cleaning products is currently at 67%.

### Future Considerations

The practice of overseeing and maintaining the physical assets of GEF buildings is poised to undergo significant transformation with the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technology. From reducing energy consumption to enhancing safety and security, AI has the potential to revolutionize facilities management.

One of the biggest advantages of AI is its ability to optimize energy consumption. By leveraging data from sensors, weather forecasts, and occupancy patterns, AI systems can learn the usage patterns of buildings and predict when and where energy is being wasted. This can lead to significant cost savings on energy bills while also reducing a building's carbon footprint. GEF is already using AI in some building automations and looks forward to exploring this technology further.



### 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 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 (KPI)	2020	2023
Technology and Connectivity	# of Clients Attending Virtual Programming	125	N/A discontinued-
	# of Clients Requesting to Borrow iPads	200	N/A discontinued
	# of Virtual Staff Meetings	9	N/A discontinued
	% of Properties with free Wi-Fi access for clients in common areas	50%	89%



## Economic

Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)	2020	2023
	% of Properties with free Wi-Fi access for clients in their units	N/A	N/A

### **% of Properties with free Wi-Fi access for clients in common areas**

Currently, there are a total of 97 access points across most of GEF's buildings. These access points are mounted in accessible common areas in each of the buildings that have been able to support Wi-Fi access. Presently, a small number of sites do not have the ability to accommodate access points in their accessible common areas. Overall, 89% of GEF buildings are able to provide free Wi-Fi access to clients, employees, and visitors.

Weekly, there are on average 3,410 devices connected to the 97 access points, where 58% of the connected devices are using YouTube.

### **% of Properties with free Wi-Fi access for clients in their units**

Unfortunately, due to the age and construction of our buildings, clients have no access to free Wi-Fi from their unit unless their unit happens to be close to the access points where the Wi-Fi access points have been installed.

GEF does not provide in-unit Wi-Fi for clients and therefore is unable to track this metric. Clients make their own arrangement with their Internet service provider if they wish to receive in-unit Wi-Fi access.

### **Next Steps in Addressing the KPIs highlighted under the Sustainability Principle of Technology and Connectivity**

Most of the KPIs identified and included in this Sustainability Principle drew from the early actions taken by many organizations in response to the COVID-19 pandemic, and on reflection, have limited application as ongoing KPIs that will guide meaningful change and/or improvements to clients' use of technology.

With the physical limitations posed by the age and construction of many of GEF's buildings, it makes it impractical or extremely difficult to move forward with tangible improvements to the implementation of Wi-Fi access across our buildings. However, we recognize the importance of maintaining a commitment to exploring and implementing opportunities, where practical, that can positively contribute the Principle of Technology and Connectivity. As we move forward with a review and update of our current Sustainability Framework, we will need to identify more appropriate and measurable KPIs that would positively support this Sustainability Principle going forward.



## Conclusion

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 staff, our city, and the environment we all share.

Over the past year we have gained an appreciation for the degree of commitment required by the organization and its staff to bring the Framework to life. Through the work to capture and report on the 47 highlighted KPIs, we have developed an understanding of the level 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—over the coming years.

The comprehensiveness of this first Annual Report, the progress we have been able to report on related to a number of the KPIs, the learnings we have made in better understanding the importance of articulating appropriate and measurable KPIs, and the amount of effort required to work towards meaningful change that positively contributes to the work we do in promoting social, environment, and economic sustainability serve to validate that this has been a worthwhile journey to begin. We know there is a significant amount of work ahead on this journey, but work that is going to continue to strengthen our commitment to clients, staff, the environment, and community.

# Appendix A: Sustainability Reporting Framework

Updated: September 26, 2023

Framework Pillars	Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Metric	Baseline (2020-22)		2023	
				Lodge	Apartment	Lodge	Apartment
Social, Cultural, Political	Cultural Domain						
	Equity, Diversity, & Inclusion	% of Leadership Roles held by women or non-binary individuals	%	70%		62%	
		% Non-Management Roles held by women or non-binary individuals	%	78%		81%	
		% of Properties with Multi-Faith Space for Spiritual/Religious Activities	%	100%	89%	100%	89%
		% of Employees who believe the organization is purpose oriented and socially responsible	%	85%		63%	
	Sense of Belonging & Accessibility	% of Sites that are barrier-free	%	100%	100%	100%	100%
		% of Employees who experience a sense of belonging at work	%	81%		N/A – Kincentric discontinued question	
	Political Domain						
	Transparency, Agency, & Engagement	Annual opportunities for formal feedback through Tenant Meetings and Resident/Family Meetings in each Apartment/Lodge respectively	#	4/10		4/10	
		% of Employees that find a sense of accomplishment from their work	%	81%		65%	
		% of Employees that feel GEF's Mission provides them meaningful direction	%	78%		58%	
		Employee/Client participation rates at social events	%	Not yet tracked		Will be tracked starting in 2023	
	Social Domain						
	Client Quality of Life	Average Vacancy Rates	%	9%	5%	5%	4%
		% of Food Offerings that meet residents’ dietary needs	%	75%	N/A	70%	N/A
		% of Food Offerings that meet resident expectations for taste and appeal	%	64%	N/A	67%	N/A
		% of Buildings with Fitness and/or Recreation facilities	%	100%	73%	100%	74%
		% of Properties with dedicated Social Gathering Space	%	100%	89%	100%	89%
		Average Client Participation in Activity and Wellness Programs	%	Not yet tracked		28%	
	Employee Quality of Life	% of Employees who feel GEF actively supports their wellbeing	%	75%		N/A – Kincentric discontinued question	

# Appendix A: Sustainability Reporting Framework

Framework Pillars	Sustainability Principle	Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)	Metric	Baseline (2020-22)		2023	
				Lodge	Apartment	Lodge	Apartment
Environmental Sustainability	Environmental Domain						
	Energy, Carbon, & Climate Resilience	Annual Energy Use Intensity/Energy Consumption	ekWh/m2	417		392	
		Annual Renewable Energy Generation	%	Not currently tracked		Not currently tracked	
		Annual Average Greenhouse Gas Emissions Intensity	kgCO2e/m2	132		122	
		Emergency Preparedness Plans	y / n	Yes		Yes	
		Climate Change Adaptation Strategy	y / n	No		Will be developed in 2024	
	Transportation	# of Electric Vehicle Charging Stations	#	0	0	0	0
		Annual Fleet Vehicle Emissions	Tonnes CO2e	125		125	
		% of Properties with bicycle parking spaces	%	10%	3%	50%	44%
		Average Walk Scores across Properties	%	48	60	52	60
		Average Transit Score across Properties	%	52	54	55	57
	Materials & Waste	Operating Waste Diversion Rate (estimate)	%	40		N/A	
		Construction Waste Diversion Rate	%	Not currently tracked		Will be tracked starting in 2024	
		Annual pages printed at GEF Facilities	#	1,073,000		405,489	
		Waste Streams Collected	Types	Household Trash and Recyclables		Household Trash and Recyclables	
	Water & Ecology	% of Properties with pollinators or native species in landscape	%	82%	40%	No data	No Data
		Annual Potable Water Consumption Intensity	m3/m2	1.23	1.30	1.29	1.34
	Delight & Enjoyment	% of Properties with on-site Garden or Greenhouse	%	90%	45%	90%	100%
		% of Properties with on-site Green Space	%	80%	89%	80%	86%
		Average PM2.5 Levels in Common Areas and Facilities	µg/m³	Not currently tracked		Not currently tracked	
		Average Total Volatile Organic Compound (TVOC) Concentration Level	mg/m3	Not currently tracked		Not currently tracked	
		Average CO2 Levels in Common Areas/Facilities	ppm	Not currently tracked		Not currently tracked	
		% of Properties that include balconies	%	31%	71% + 2%	31%	71% + 2%
Economic Sustainability	Economic Domain						
	Funding Sustainability Initiatives	Quality of Life funds raised by GEF through Donations/Fundraising	\$	\$121,000		\$100,316 (2022)	
	Investment in Community	# of on-going Partnerships with Non-Profit Organizations	#	6		56	
		# of Annual Client Volunteers	#	350		N/A	
		# of Partnerships with Community Organizations	#	31		56	
	Maintenance	# of Maintenance Projects Completed Annually	#	136		128 (targeted)	
		% of Green Cleaning Products	%	Not currently tracked		67%	
	Technology & Connectivity	% of Properties with free Wi-Fi access for clients in common areas	%	50%		89%	
% of Properties with free Wi-Fi access for clients in their units		%	N/A		N/A		