



Strategy 2020-2025

A plan to improve the lives of animals
and build a more compassionate society

Strategy 2020-2025

Contents

1.0	Background.....	3
2.0	Plan Synopsis	4
3.0	Key Business Drivers	5
4.0	Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT).....	5
5.0	Mission and Vision	6
6.0	Critical Success Factors	7
7.0	Key Assumptions.....	7
8.0	Strategic Intent	7
9.0	Core Capability.....	8
10.0	Strategic Initiatives	9
11.0	Strategic Outcomes.....	10
12.0	Summary.....	10

THS Strategic Plan 2020-2025

1.0 Background

This document outlines a strategic plan for Toronto Humane Society (THS) for the period 2020-2025. It encompasses a comprehensive review of THS' operating environment, assessment of its capabilities, a critique of strategic alternatives for the Society's future, and a set of strategic initiatives and expected outcomes.

The plan identifies **sustainability** as THS' core issue. The current business model (structure, processes, management systems, resource allocation, revenue generation) is resulting in a structural financial deficit in shelter operations, offset by contributions from public programs and services and highly dependent on bequest giving. This model is set against a backdrop of a well-documented more difficult fundraising environment; significant shifts in animal populations; and sectoral changes. Specifically, the challenges THS has been facing are shifting. There are considerably fewer stray animals in Toronto and indeed in many urban centres across North America, as documented and reported on by Humane Canada, necessitating more expensive intake from other regions and posing an existential threat to the viability of many shelters. This phenomenon, born of the success of spay and neuter and education programs over the past decade, is placing a number of shelters 'at the brink' or tipping point financially, including THS.

This picture is further compounded by fewer surrenders, with an increasing percentage of those involving older more complex care animals, again at greater cost; and aggressive competitive positioning by other humane societies in terms of offerings and geographic reach as they address their own viability.

The THS' challenges have shifted toward the increasing cost of veterinary and other animal care. With the increasing cost of care for pets, fewer families are accessing the care their pets need.

Our current model is increasingly precarious and needs to change.

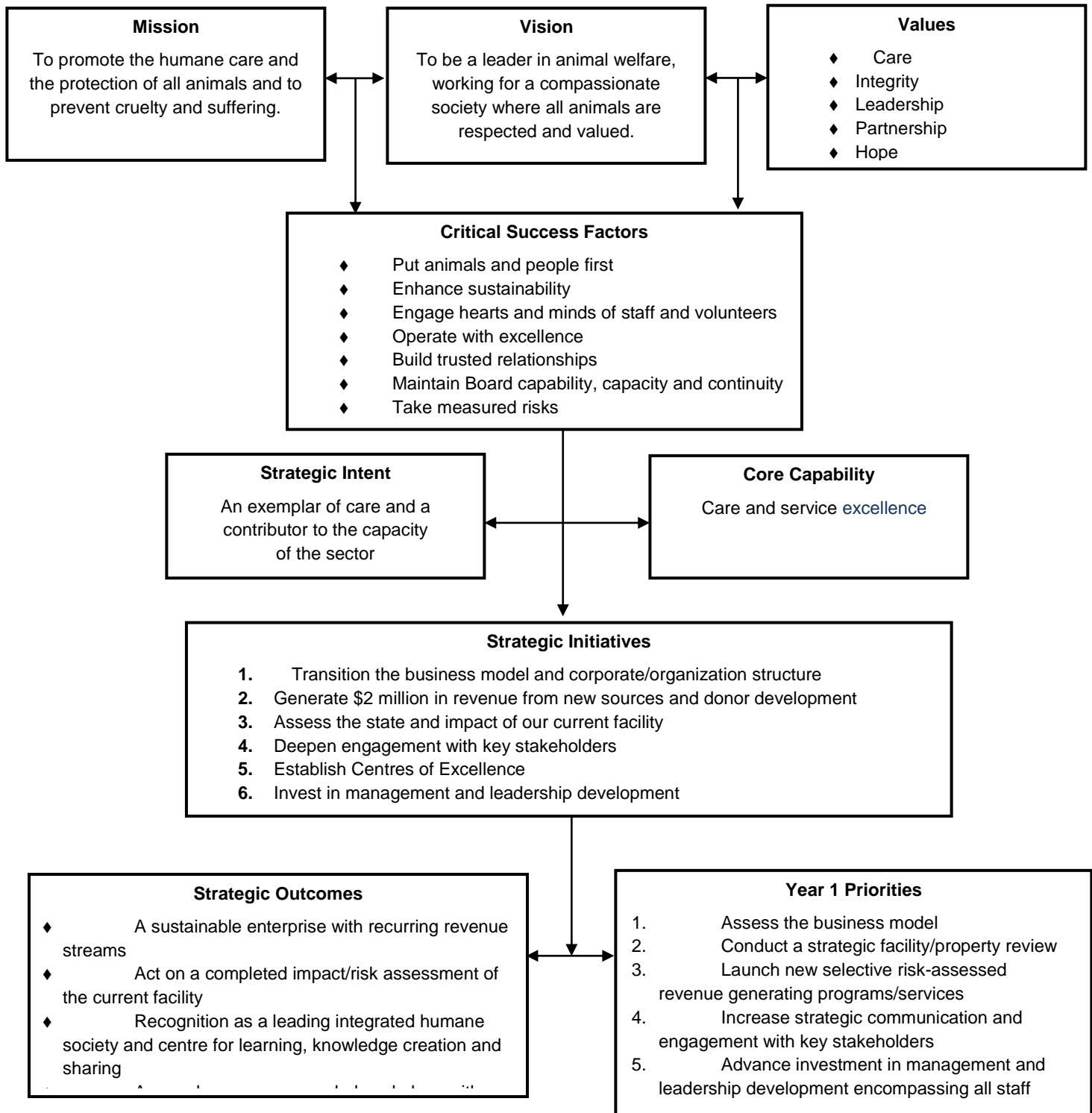
This plan has evolved through a rigorous process of discussion and debate. The result is a way forward which builds on the exceptional work of the past decade and the history of THS. Properly risk managed, this new plan will serve to improve the lives of even more animals and advance the Society's Vision, approved by the Board in 2017, *To be a leader in animal welfare, working for a compassionate society where all animals are respected and valued.*

A synopsis of this plan appears on the following page.

Strategy 2020-2025



2.0 Plan Synopsis



3.0 Key Business Drivers

Key business drivers are the factors or forces in the internal and external operating environments which will have a material impact on an organization going forward.

The following have been identified as germane to THS.

3.1 External

- More difficult funding environment.
- Fewer strays in Toronto and the GTA
- Increasing cost of veterinary care.
- Vet practice consolidation.
- Animal shelter/humane society consolidation and re-development.
- An increasing animal friendly Canadian population.
- Decreasing membership.

3.2 Internal

- Cost of operations.
- Improved organization climate and culture.
- An increasingly expert workforce and experienced management cadre.
- A committed, knowledgeable, supportive Board.
- Need for enhanced engagement of volunteers.
- Need for enhanced investment in infrastructure and information technology.

4.0 Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (SWOT)

Following is a synopsis of a SWOT analysis undertaken as part of the planning process which has served to inform plan development.

4.1 Strengths

- Expert leadership
- Expertise in shelter operations and veterinary medicine
- Recognized research capability
- Innovation and entrepreneurship
- Committed skilled staff and volunteers
- Growing partnerships
- Culture of continuous improvement and learning

4.2 Weaknesses

- Decreasing member and donor base
- Sub-optimum business model
- 'Long tail' of public perception about THS dating back to 2008

Strategy 2020-2025

4.3 Opportunities

- Expanded existing and new revenue generating programs/services
- New intake alliances/partners
- Expansion of human shelter partnerships to advance THS' vision
- Leveraging of successes for enhanced public perception
- Enhanced advocacy to inform government policy
- Increasing value of the property concurrent with need to address limitations of an aging infrastructure

4.4 Threats (aka Risks)

- Increasing competition
- Rising costs
- Decreasing donor/member funding
- Cyber security
- Changes in government policy/legislation which could impact animal welfare and structure of the sector.
- Loss of expertise and staff to other organizations

5.0 Mission and Vision

While the foregoing provides the backdrop for the strategic plan, Mission and Vision serve as the cornerstones.

Our Mission

To promote the humane care and the protection of all animals and to prevent cruelty and suffering.

At its essence, the Mission is about *improving the lives of animals*. This means providing an opportunity for a better life for animals in our charge; and for animals everywhere who may be able to benefit from THS' experience and capabilities, directly and through partnerships.

Our Vision

To be a leader in animal welfare, working for a compassionate society where all animals are respected and valued.

Leadership requires bold action and active engagement with many stakeholders. Working for a compassionate society means contributing to the welfare of non-human *and* human animals in ways which preserve the integrity of the human animal bond and enrich the lives of both.

The Mission and Vision are synergistic. Taken together, they frame an expansive space for THS to consider a range of options strategically, and from which the Society can continue to contribute to making the world a better place.

6.0 Critical Success Factors

Critical success factors (CSF's) are the few things an organization must do well to fulfil its Mission and attain its Vision, with due regard for the realities of its internal and external operating environments.

The following CSF's have been identified for the next strategic planning horizon. Note that we are currently operationalizing several already.

- Put animals and people first.
- Enhance sustainability.
- Operate with excellence.
- Engage hearts and minds of staff and volunteers.
- Build trusted relationships with customers, members, donors, partners, governments, communities.
- Maintain Board capability, capacity and continuity.
- Take measured risks.

7.0 Key Assumptions

To distil these myriad considerations and coalesce around a new strategic direction, the following assumptions are put forward.

- Our business model will need to change
- We will continue to operate a shelter at our quality standards and maintain a prominent facility in Toronto
- Our current facility need will need a risk and impact assessment completed
- Partnerships will play an increasingly important role.
- Our multi-faceted composition will continue to be enhanced

8.0 Strategic Intent

This plan incorporates an intentional strategic shift as follows:

From		To
Reacting to animal vulnerability	→	Influencing and eliminating the <i>causes</i> of vulnerability
Delivering core animal welfare programs and services	→	Providing animal and contributing to <i>human</i> welfare programs and services
Serving the City of Toronto	→	Expanding beyond Toronto proper in program/service provision <i>and impact</i>
Being a member/donor-dependent non-profit	→	Becoming a self-sufficient revenue-based <i>social enterprise</i>

Strategy 2020-2025

This is a five year strategic plan. However, this strategic shift encompasses a considerably longer time frame with outcomes that will endure for generations.

By 2030, THS will have had a demonstrable impact directly and through partners on the advancement of the human-animal bond and the betterment of lives for human and non-human animals (metrics to be determined). Through our and others' efforts, the need for shelters will have become far less; and the understanding of animal sentience and animals' contribution to human health and wellbeing will have become mainstream.

By 2040, THS will have shifted from being primarily a shelter with auxiliary services to being a prominent provider of public veterinary services, a leading educator and advocate, and a capacity building for other shelters, in addition to operating a shelter for animals in need.

By 2050, THS will be a social enterprise, leveraging revenues from public services to offset the cost of our own operations and build capacity throughout the sector *and* the human services sector – 'back to the future' of our 1887 charter addressing the plight and rights of animals, children and the disadvantaged.

In a phrase, the strategic intent of THS can be summarized as: **An exemplar of care and a contributor to the capacity of the sector**, improving the lives of animals and people and shaping a better world.

9.0 Core Capability

Pursuant to extensive discussion, it was determined that THS' core capability is **care and service excellence**. It encapsulates everything THS stands for and needs to have to operate effectively in an increasingly crowded marketplace and to ensure a sustainable future. We have a number of the elements of this capability currently and are lacking in others; *these must be built out strategically*.

The following chart outlines the status of these elements.

Element	Have currently	Need to develop and/or acquire
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Skilled staff and volunteers 	Continuous staff training and development	Greater utilization of volunteers for basic aspects of care and for strategic initiatives
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer management 	Adoption and clinic operational processes	Customer relationship management (CRM) system Expert adoptions and clinic scheduling system
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Best in class facilities 	Continual space optimization	Completed risk/impact assessment of our current facility
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strategic partners – infrastructure, supplies, animal sourcing, 	Infrastructure and supplies partners	Enhanced funding through new donors and new sources of revenue streams

Strategy 2020-2025

donors/funders	Expanding animal sourcing network	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Expertise in veterinary medicine, behavioural training, clinic management, education, advocacy, management and leadership	Repository of technical expertise Strong senior leadership and technically competent mid management	Supervisory skills Leadership capability throughout the ranks

10.0 Strategic Initiatives

These initiatives represent the directions and actions for THS for the life of the strategic plan.

They derive directly from all that has preceded: key business drivers; SWOT assessment; critical success factors; assumptions; core capability and related analysis.

These are by definition the high level actions THS will undertake over the next five years. Specific tactics and plans are the domain of annual goal setting and operational business planning.

10.1 – Strategic Imperatives

In developing this plan, several imperatives became clear. To recap, THS must:

- **Address the inherent instability of its business model.**
- **Proactively confront key factors in the operating environment,**
- **Come to terms with the significant constraints of the facility.**
- **Continue to build a committed cadre of staff, volunteers, members, donors and other stakeholders,**
- **Reposition THS as a brand**
- **Enhance tolerance for risk**

10.2 – Strategic Initiatives

In light of these imperatives, the following strategic initiatives are put forward for actioning over the course of the five year strategic plan time frame.

- **Transition the business model and corporate/organization structure.**
- **Generate \$2 million in revenue from new sources/ventures and donor development.**
- **Assess the state and impact of our current facility**
- **Deepen engagement** with staff, volunteers, members, donors, the public, and government
- **Establish Centres of Excellence** inclusive of veterinary care, shelter management, behavioural training, and the human-animal bond.
- **Invest in management and leadership development.**

Strategy 2020-2025

11.0 Strategic Outcomes

The following outcomes are anticipated as a result of these strategic initiatives:

- ◆ A sustainable enterprise with recurring revenue streams
- ◆ Act on a completed impact/risk assessment of the current facility
- ◆ Recognition as a leading integrated humane society and centre for continuous learning, knowledge creation and sharing
- ◆ An employee recommended workplace with a repository of stellar management and leadership talent

12.0 Summary

Toronto Humane Society is at a key juncture in its history.

Notwithstanding its achievements, it faces strong headwinds from a sustainability perspective due to the realities of resource allocation and increasing cost of operations internally; and realignment of intentions and directions of other humane societies externally.

Strategy 2020-2025 builds on our strengths and provides for bold yet appropriately risk-managed initiatives which will take THS to the next level. It will see THS improve the lives of more animals; become a living lab of continuous learning, best practices, and knowledge exchange; enhance work life for staff and the interface with THS for others; contribute to the capabilities and capacity of the sector; and importantly, secure its future through deepened relationships and enhanced sustainability.

In the aggregate, this is a plan for the generations. Its impact as a 'force for good' will be felt considerably beyond the next five years.

The time is ripe to seize this unique moment in our evolution.