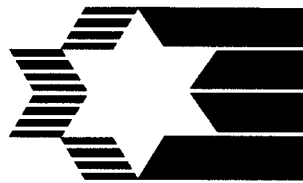


***ANNUAL REPORT 2003***  
**Planning Council**



JEWISH  
FEDERATION  
OF GREATER  
VANCOUVER

***January 2004***

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## JEWISH FEDERATION OF GREATER VANCOUVER PLANNING COUNCIL REPORT 2003

*Most of the things worth doing in the world had been declared impossible before they were done.*

**Justice Louis Brandeis**

*A nation needs its guides and shepherds, its scouts and leaders of the flock who will carry out the function of leadership: the ability to feel and the power to think.*

**Rabbi Adin Steinsaltz**

### 1. INTRODUCTION

As the umbrella community agency, the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver (JFGV) has a Planning and Community Development Portfolio with a Planning Council composed of the chairs of the Federation's committees that focus on seniors, housing, special needs, poverty, Jewish education and demographics. Additional members at large serve in an advisory capacity and help provide a wider perspective on the community's needs and key priorities and draw from areas related to fundraising and endowments, outlying communities, social services, program assessment, community planning, teens and singles.

Since 1998, the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver's Planning and Community Development Portfolio has prepared an annual report in order to provide direction to the Federation's governing bodies including the Allocations Planning Committee on emerging community priorities.

The overall framework for our work is guided by the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver's mission:

“The Federation is committed to building a strong, vibrant and enduring Jewish community in the Lower Mainland, in Israel and throughout the world by nurturing those values, practices and traditions which sustain and enrich Judaism and the Jewish people.”

The Federation serves the Greater Vancouver Jewish community by working in partnership with community members and other agencies to:

- strengthen Jewish identity, Jewish continuity and participation in Jewish communal life;
- identify and respond to the community's present and emerging needs;
- raise funds through the Combined Jewish Appeal and allocate funds through the Allocations Planning Committee for programs and services locally, nationally, in Israel and worldwide;
- develop and sustain leadership to carry the community into the future;
- make community life accessible and inclusive to Jews from all walks of life in the Lower Mainland;
- enhance mutual cooperation and sharing of resources between community agencies.

- Since the overall role of the Planning Council is to address both the short and long-term needs of the Jewish Community of Greater Vancouver, and to provide an overview of the community's priorities, we continuously seek input about a broad range of community issues from constituent agencies and our community partners.

The Planning Council regards planning from a two to five year perspective. It is the Planning Council's role to provide insight and direction to the leadership of Federation and the Jewish community by looking into the current and future trends and developments taking place both within the Jewish community and outside of it. As the nature of planning is more long term in its nature, certain key community priorities from previous years are brought forward with progress noted.

## 2. KEY COMMUNITY PRIORITIES

The Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver's Planning Council recognizes that there are many areas deserving of our community's attention and resources. Over the past year many critical themes and issues have arisen in our discussions. While it is clear that though movement has begun on some of these areas since the last report, there is still much work to be done. Many of the areas introduced as priorities last year remain relevant as priorities that our community needs to address in the coming two to three years. This report will review areas and update them. It is important to recognize that our community's institutions and leadership have accomplished a great deal in the past few years. The areas highlighted in this report have emerged as priorities through consultations with the lay and professional leadership of many community organizations as well as with the leadership and committees of the Federation.

What follows are key priorities relating to populations and processes taking place within the Jewish community. Although this report evidences progress made towards attaining these key community priorities during the past year, this report by no means includes progress made by all community agencies and organizations over the past year.

### **Aging:**

- Progress made in 2003:
  - i. The Jewish Seniors Alliance (JSA – formerly the Seniors Advisory Council) has emerged as a newly energized organization focused on educating the community about and advocating for the needs of seniors.
  - ii. The Weinberg Residence was opened by the Louis Brier Home and Hospital with 40 assisted living units (including 15 agency and government subsidized units under the Independent Living BC program) and 20 multi-level care beds.
  - iii. A strategic planning session of key agency professionals was held in January 2003 to begin discussing directions for developing a continuum of care\* approach, and to foster coordination of services to seniors in the Jewish community across agencies. A continuum of care is a comprehensive, client-based integrated system of services for the elderly that supports an individual from independence to dependent care

- requirements. The Jewish Family Service Agency (JFSA) has looked into options for upgrading its levels of service in light of government cutbacks.
- iv. A Council on Aging is now being convened by the Federation. It will deal with strategic planning for the community's present and future senior population and advise the Planning Council and local agencies on future directions for community development.

**Short term priorities:**

- v. Home care services and housing are areas that have become increasingly important as the government changes its methods of service delivery through initiatives like the Independent Living BC program for semi-independent assisted living. Allowing more members of the Jewish community to remain in independent living settings will require a higher level of coordination and intervention from service delivery agencies as well as a planned approach to connecting these people to Jewish cultural, social and recreational services.

**Long term priorities:**

- vi. The community will need to develop more resources to meet the complex needs of the community's aging population as it reviews its current deployment of assets.. Creating a community wide strategic plan for services to seniors is an important building block for the future.

## **Housing**

Progress made in 2003:

- Hiring of a housing coordinator by JFSA to aid the connection of community members to existing affordable housing opportunities in the Lower Mainland.
- Members of the Non Profit Housing Society joined the Board of Directors of the Shalom Branch 178 Building Society which operates the Maple Crest apartments in Kitsilano – a 102 unit facility for low income seniors.

**Short term priorities:** There is widespread agreement that affordable housing opportunities are needed, particularly for congregate care type facilities where seniors and people with special needs can live independently with some support. The community should consider how it can maximize current housing opportunities and properties that exist in areas of more concentrated Jewish settlement.

**Long term priorities:** Planning for the creation of an intergenerational affordable housing development will require the community to commit sufficient planning resources and equity to allow it to begin new, modest mixed housing projects.

## **Outlying areas:**

- Progress made in 2003:
  - i. The Community Program for Youth –the “Consortium” program was launched in winter 2002 after receiving \$30,000 in funding from Federation/Combined Jewish Appeal (CJA). This allowed the Jewish Community Centre of Greater Vancouver (JCCGV) to hire staff on behalf of the Burquest (Burnaby, Coquitlam, New Westminster, and Port Moody) and Har'El (North Shore) Jewish communities to conduct youth and teen

activities. Funding also supported winter and spring camps in Richmond. A steering committee was established by the JCC together with the outlying communities with the support and guidance of Federation.

- ii. The Kehila Society received a CJA allocation for the first time.
- iii. The White Rock South Surrey Jewish community opened its first permanent facility (WRSSJCC) with the help of the Jewish Community Foundation and other individual donors.

**Short term priorities:** Leadership of central Jewish agencies in Vancouver need to address and understand the service needs of the outlying Jewish communities in collaboration with their local leadership

**Long term priorities:** Representing close to half of our area's Jewish population, the community organizations in these areas will play an increasingly significant role in reaching out to and caring for members of our community. They will need help to develop programs which will cater to a diversity of populations - from preschool to seniors, from teen programs to adult Jewish education. There is a need to support the development of the organizational capacity of those communities without paid executive staff- in particular the Burquest Jewish Community Association (BJCA) and WRSSJCC.

## Poverty

Progress made in 2003:

- Allocations from the CJA campaign to poverty relief programs and services have increased by about \$165,000 over the past two years. These funds have helped expand services for basic needs financial assistance, job match, nutrition services and scholarship programs.
- The Federation engaged a part-time coordinator for Yad b'Yad – the Coalition on Poverty. This new position will enable the Coalition to continue and expand its work of connecting members of the Jewish community living on limited income and examining ways to make the community and its services more accessible.
- The Mapping and Mobilization interview project, funded by private donors and the Federation, met with 50 members of the community living on limited income and explored barriers to accessing the Jewish community. The project revealed information about the community's perceptions of people living on limited income and conversely it revealed information about the perceptions that these people have of the Jewish community.

**Short term priorities:** Yad b'Yad has identified three areas of concern that warrant attention and are linked to alleviating the impact of poverty: transportation, creation of a central assessment mechanism and starting an outreach project in the West End of Downtown Vancouver.

**Long term priorities:** Although a greater awareness of the impact of the components of poverty has developed in our community, there is a need to increase awareness and develop additional services. Due to continued government downsizing of social assistance programs community agencies need to coordinate their efforts and

establish clear achievable goals for addressing and reducing the effects of poverty. Even though additional funds have been allocated to poverty relief/basic needs in the past two years, the community has not been able to keep up with the impact of the high cost of living in Greater Vancouver, the weak local economy, and further government cutbacks.

### **Special needs:**

Progress made in 2003:

- Community services presently available for the special needs population include the Bagel Club operated by the JCCGV, JFSA's Very Important Persons volunteer program (VIPP) which has started various "hands on" projects for adults with special needs, and limited programs at some of the day schools.
- The Jewish Community Foundation awarded funding to the JFSA to pilot programming for parents of children with special needs and an advocacy initiative in collaboration with the APSN. This programming should help JFSA play a more significant role in service delivery and advocacy for special needs populations in the Jewish community.

**Short term priorities:** We are receiving more requests for help from community members with special needs (mental, cognitive and physical disabilities). Confirmation of numbers of community members with special needs would be important for the planning of future services.

**Long term priorities:** Needs exist in the areas of personal advocacy, public awareness, and educational services for children with special needs. The availability of such services will take a few more years, their pace being governed by the amount of public and community funding that can be accessed. Planning for populations with special needs should be integrated into community planning for housing, educational, recreational and/or cultural services.

### **Youth, teens and young adults**

Progress made in 2003:

- The Jewish Community of Greater Vancouver began its second year as part of a North American initiative to learn more about Jewish teens called the Partnering Communities program. An executive committee was formed and the name JTIGV – the Jewish Teen Initiative was chosen. This program is being led locally by the JCC with the support of the lay and professional leadership of JFSA, Federation, and Jewish Education Services of North America professionals. A series of successful community meetings and forums on the needs of Jewish teens were held in September 2003 with two open community meetings taking place one in Vancouver, one in Richmond. Led by two professionals from JESNA, these meetings allowed lay leaders, parents, communal professionals and teens alike to express their views on the perceived needs of teens in the community. Funding from the Jewish Community Foundation has helped enable this to proceed.

- An environmental scan was conducted that showed that less than 20% of the teens in Greater Vancouver are involved in any kind of Jewish teen activities.
- A Vancouver Jewish Youth Professionals group was established and has begun to hold training sessions.
- More camperships were given out this year to Jewish summer camps than in the past 5 years
- A needs assessment to collect data to support planning around better reaching the engaged and under engaged teens in our community has been undertaken.
- A JTGV (Jewish Teens of Greater Vancouver) website and online calendar of events has been developed.

**Short term priorities:**

- The present deployment of financial resources to teen related programs and activities needs to be reviewed in order to ensure the viability of the Jewish teens initiative.
- New strategies for connecting teens to the Jewish community must be developed in collaboration with as wide a group as possible including the teen population and the Jewish Youth Professionals.

**Long term priorities:**

- The Vancouver situation needs to be seen in the context of the developments across North America.
- It is necessary to develop more structured opportunities for training Jewish teens and young adults as youth leaders

**Jewish Education**

Progress made in 2003:

- Consultation on strategic planning and fundraising has begun with the leadership of Vancouver Talmud Torah Elementary School, Vancouver Hebrew Academy and Richmond Jewish Day School through the Partnership for Excellence in Jewish Education (PEJE). These efforts have been funded by the Jewish Community Foundation, CJA and private foundations.
- The Federation has reinstated staff resources for coordination of Jewish educational services, particularly focused on professional development for teachers. Through this effort local school directors are being convened to begin doing joint planning around professional development and other areas of potential collaboration.
- The Pacific Torah Institute, a new regional yeshiva, has opened this year serving boys in grades 10-12.
- The Federation began working with the Jewish day schools on alternative approaches to organizing the delivery of their programs that might enhance the quality of the school programs and enable the schools to qualify for increased government funding support.

**Short term priorities:**

- The new staff resources devoted to central Jewish education services should help the schools and the community better understand the need for additional services and resources, and should result in a plan for expansion of services.
- We need to continue to explore ways to make our Jewish day and supplementary school education more accessible, attractive and responsive to the needs of Jewish families. The planning, marketing and development efforts of the day schools warrant support. There is a need to strengthen the support of our supplementary schools by providing resources and input, particularly in the outlying areas.
- The development of the new high school/community facility on the JCC campus should foster planning around new educational partnership to expand formal and informal educational programming in our community.

**Long term priorities:**

- The developments outlined above should lead to a more formal community plan to develop a central agency for Jewish educational services.

**Community Planning**

Progress made in 2003:

- Two briefs prepared by the Census Consultative Committee interpreting census data (“Focus for the Future”) have been distributed to the community and 2 presentations have made to Council of Presidents this year. The first full report was released in November 2003 on Basic Demographics.

**Short term priorities:**

- i. All of Census reports (8 in total will be released) are important tools for community organizations to use in their planning for the future.
- ii. The Planning Council’s structure should be revised to ensure a broad representation of the various needs and constituencies of the community.

**Long term priorities:**

- iii. Supporting the culture of accountability being fostered by the Allocations Planning Committee.
- iv. Holding discussions with constituent agencies and organizations in order to maintain a joint community planning agenda.
- v. Community surveys of select target population need to be conducted once every two years.
- vi. Increased opportunities for professional development aimed at Jewish communal professionals

## **Community capacity building**

- **Short term priorities:**
  - i. Leadership development: important efforts that are being invested in preparing our lay leaders for the challenges of the future will strengthen our community
  - ii. Partnerships and joint ventures: it is in our community's best interests to foster partnerships and joint ventures between donors, target populations and community organizations as a way of meeting the growing community needs more effectively through programs and projects
  - iii. Grassroots interest groups: supporting grassroots efforts of different groups to partner with communal agencies to offer programs for special needs families, seniors, gays and lesbians, singles and intermarried families can strengthen our community's ability to be more inclusive.
  - iv. Arts and culture: Community-wide arts and culture programs such as the Vancouver Jewish Film Festival and the Chutzpah Festival enable members of our community to more positively identify with their Jewish identity and to be drawn into Jewish community life.

## **Members of the Jewish Federation of Greater Vancouver Planning Council 2003:**

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- Rita Dilek
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- Jana Glassman
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