eliminating racism
empowering women
ywca
clark county

to: **ywca** Stakeholders and Interested Community Members

from: Kathy Kniep, Executive Director

re: **ywca** Strategic Plan FY 2010-2011 and Beyond

date: June 24, 2010

Thank you for your interest in **ywca clark county's** strategic plan. We appreciate that many of you participated in the process of developing this plan, and we welcome your feedback. The purpose of this memo is to provide some brief background and contextual information.

Sections:

A. About the Plan's Purpose, Format, and Ongoing Development
B. Context for Current Strategic Goals
C. Other Recent Accomplishments
D. Future Goals
E. Comments and Questions

A. About the Plan's Purpose, Format, and Ongoing Development

This plan guides **ywca clark county's** strategic direction for the future. The plan itself is succinct and in grid form, with the intention of making it easy to read, track, and evaluate. It is not intended to be a detailed work plan, though we attempted to include enough specifics to give meaning to the stated goals and clearly direct our work for the upcoming year and beyond. We consider it to be a "living document" that we revisit at our twice-annual board-staff retreats and update as needed. We evaluate our progress in meeting our "indicators of accomplishment" and goals at least every six months.

The original plan was developed in the spring of 2006 using input from program participants, volunteers, partner organizations and agencies, financial supporters, staff, and board members, as well as statistics and reports on Clark County. The general direction was set forth at the February 2006 Board-Staff Retreat, and the Strategic Planning Committee subsequently worked with the board and staff to draft and hone this document, which was formally approved by the board at its June 2006 meeting. Updated versions were approved at the June 2007, 2008, 2009, and 2010 board meetings.

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B. Context for Current Strategic Goals

Our current goals focus our work on shoring up our organization's foundation, as well as striving to do more violence prevention and positive social change work. In many cases, we have already met some of our "indicators of success."

Goal 1: Maintain current programs, which offer crisis intervention services that focus on empowering women, children, and youth.

We have a long history of providing programs that offer life-saving and life-changing services to victims of domestic violence, sexual assault, child abuse, and homelessness, as well as unique leadership and development opportunities for women and girls. All of our programs are built on a foundational philosophy of empowerment, and our staff is trained to employ methodologies that help people, especially women, help themselves. We will continue our current social services and social change programs, which help more than 10,000 people each year, and regularly evaluate how they can best meet the changing needs in our communities.

Current Programs: *Please visit our website for more information* – **ywcaclarkcounty.org**.

- CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates for children)
- Independent Living Skills (For foster youth)
- SafeChoice Domestic Violence Program
- Sexual Assault Program
- WORTH (Women Offenders' Rehabilitation through Training and Help)
- Y's Care Children's Program
- Social Change Program

Goal 2: Work toward greater financial sustainability for the ywca.

As with most nonprofits, we expect financial stability to be an ongoing challenge, particularly as the number of nonprofits continues to grow, grant applications become increasingly competitive, and the need for our services persists. Because some of our programs are growing, we are focusing on developing a fifteen-year vision for the **ywca clark county**. This has fed into the process of creating a campus plan that will accommodate our growth, the details of which will be released later this year.

Indicators of Success for Accomplishments since 2006:

- Analysis of current fundraising strategies was conducted to determine fundraising capacity for future. Viable alternatives were identified and adopted by board.
- Quarterly financial strategic discussions are now held and feed ongoing strategic planning, helping to achieve financial sustainability.
- **ywca** receives increased revenues from private and corporate foundations.
- The number of donors, sponsors, and volunteers increased.

- A campus plan was developed, with input from experts and **ywca** stakeholders, to accommodate growth over the next 15 years while maintaining and getting the most out of **ywca** buildings and property.

Goal 3: Increase activities that work toward the elimination of racism and other forms of oppression.

When you walk in our doors, you see our national motto, "Eliminating Racism / Empowering Women" – in that order. Though many may think of the **ywca** as a "women's organization" or just a social services organization, our mission is in fact much broader. We are proud of the work we are currently doing to eliminate racism and other forms of oppression, but we are challenged by our national office and our own local mission to do more. We gladly accept this challenge and have already made significant strides toward achieving this goal, including holding regular "Steps to Eliminating Racism" workshops. We now employ a Social Change Program Manager who is leading us in achieving this goal.

<u>Indicators of Success Accomplishments since 2006:</u>

- People who work for, volunteer for, and seek services from the **ywca**, no matter their cultural or ethnic background, feel welcome at the **ywca**. (We recognize that we always have room for improvement in this area, and we continue to make this a regular part of our work.)
- The number of staff and volunteers who identify as being part of non-majority populations increased.
- Board is comprised of people from diverse backgrounds, including significant representation from non-majority populations.
- The **ywca** has a stronger engagement with local cultural organizations such as the NAACP, the Sexual Minority Leadership Roundtable, the Battle Ground Cultural Task Force, and the Vancouver Police Department's Diversity Advisory Committee.
- Staff, the Board of Directors, and other volunteers continue to participate in cultural competency training.
- A tiered list of oppression issues (as we have for public policy) was adopted to help us determine how best to use our limited resources to fulfill our mission. For now, *racism* is the first priority issue, and *sexual minority oppression* is the second priority issue.
- **ywca** continues to offer "Steps to Eliminating Racism" workshops.
- **ywca** website offers easily accessible and up-to-date "eliminating oppression" information.
- Our Annual Meeting & Celebration became known as a local social justice event. Starting in FY 2010-11, we will hold a new and bigger social change event, where we will honor the Val Joshua Racial Justice and **ywca** Youth Social Justice award recipients, as well as honor local women leaders.
- A Social Change Program Manager was hired and leads internal and external work to eliminate racism and other forms of oppression.

Goal 4: Increase prevention work to decrease the number of people who need ywca services.

Though our programs focus on serving people in crisis, we want to do more in the way of prevention work, to prevent people from finding themselves in crisis in the first place. We have hired additional staff in the Sexual Assault and SafeChoice Domestic Violence Programs to significantly increase our organization's prevention activities.

Indicators of Success Accomplishments since 2006:

- The number and visibility of awareness activities (e.g., as part of Week without Violence and Domestic Violence Awareness Month) are increased, and more people are reached with anti-violence messages.
- We have continued to build on programs' current prevention work, e.g., trainings and presentations in schools, churches, civic organizations, etc.
- Prevention staff are hired and domestic violence, sexual assault, and child abuse prevention work is increased.
- **ywca** is working "upstream" with youth in middle and high schools, as well as their teachers, parents, and counselors, to prevent violence – raising awareness, giving them tools, inspiring them to get involved.

Goal 5: Increase access to ywca programs in North and East County.

Because of our location in the southwest corner of Clark County, we are not as easily accessible to people living in North and East County. In 2009, we established a part-time presence in Battle Ground. We will be monitoring the opportunities and challenges presented by having a satellite office before opening another in Washougal, which is planned for FY 2011-12. North County was selected to be the first office primarily because domestic violence rates are higher than in East County, and there are fewer transportation options for people living in the more rural areas.

Indicators of Success Accomplishments since 2006:

- SafeChoice and Sexual Assault Program advocates are stationed in the Battle Ground office at least one day per week. The advocates assist victims on site and help refer people to other **ywca** programs.

Goal 6: Make strategic planning an ongoing part of our work.

We've included this in our plan to remind ourselves of the importance of keeping the momentum going with strategic planning. We are resolved that this plan will not become a

document that collects dust on a shelf, but rather a tool that helps us to continually plan, implement, monitor, evaluate, and begin again. (See the diagram that maps out this ongoing process.)

C. Other Recent Accomplishments

1. We established a staff compensation package that reflects ywca values and positions the organization as an "employer of choice."

As is the case with many other nonprofit organizations, we struggle with the challenge of wanting to serve as many people as we can with limited resources. At the same time, we aim to attract and retain a highly qualified workforce and to compensate employees in a way that models our own values of equity and empowerment. In December 2006, the board approved a three-year plan for increasing staff salaries, and the organization completed the implementation of the third and final phase this past year. Ultimately, we want to be a local "employer of choice," an organization known for both the quality of its services *and* for being a great place to work.

Indicators of Success for Recent Accomplishments:

- General salary and benefits goals that reflect **ywca** values have been adopted by board.
- A plan to meet additional revenue targets (to implement the plan) was developed and adopted.
- Due to its reputation of implementing policies of fairness and good business practices, the **ywca** has become a local "employer of choice," as indicated by increased applications and anecdotal information collected by Human Resources.

2. We reconstituted and re-energized the Public Policy Committee to lead the ywca in effectively advocating for positive change.

Our organization – nationally and locally – has a rich history of advocating for racial justice, civil rights, and support for those in need. This committee developed a set of policies and procedures for operation, as well as a prioritized list of issues to focus on (hate crimes and incidents and women's economic advancement; more issues and information available on our website). Through the leadership of this committee, we continue to educate ourselves and our community about issues important to our mission and take action to effect positive change.

Indicators of Success for Accomplishments since 2006:

- The PPC has active members that meet specified criteria, a chairperson, and a regular meeting schedule.
- Board operates according to PPC and board policies and procedures.
- Board adopted prioritized list of issues.
- **ywca clark county** is able to respond in a timely way to advocacy issues, as evidenced by the Referendum 71 campaign (Fall 2009) and the LGBTQ Inclusion Rally (June 2010).
- PPC leads the organization in learning about and advocating for key issues.
- The membership approved adding a new officer position, Vice President of Public Policy, to the board of directors.

D. Future Goals

We have a list of potential goals to add to the list for future years. Though we have many projects we would like to take on, we believe it's important to set out a plan that is feasible and attainable, and to maintain focus on our organization's top priorities. We invite you to share your ideas with us.

E. Comments and Questions

Please contact me if you have comments or questions.

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*On behalf of the board and staff of **ywca clark county**, thank you for your partnership. Together, we are **empowering women, eliminating racism**, and promoting **peace, justice, freedom, and dignity for all**.*