



YMCA of Greater Toronto Climate and Sustainability Report

2024-2025



About this report

The YMCA of Greater Toronto has prepared this 2024-2025 Climate and Sustainability Report, our seventh report, in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Sustainability Reporting Standards: Core/ Comprehensive option, including the non-governmental organization (NGO) supplement and International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS).

Data and metrics reflect our 2024-2025 Financial Year (ending March 31, 2025). Report content has not been subject to external assurance, except for content taken from the annual financial statements.

The YMCA engaged the climate consulting firm Mantle Climate to coordinate, develop, and prepare this report. Mantle supports the creation of climate-resilient communities by providing industry expertise around embodied carbon, scope 3 emissions, and sustainability disclosure.

To provide feedback, ask questions, or enquire about further information regarding this report, please contact:

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Message on Sustainability

As one of the largest YMCAs in the world, with about 500 locations across the Greater Toronto Area (GTA), we recognize the responsibility and opportunity we have, to lead on climate sustainability and community resilience.

As a charity that focuses on the health and well-being of our communities, we strive towards leadership in environmental sustainability and community resilience to support these neighbours, especially those most vulnerable and marginalized. We believe it is important to share the progress and learnings of our sustainability journey and be accountable and transparent on the climate-related risks and opportunities of our activities to the stakeholders and communities that we engage. We continue to work towards leadership as an environmentally conscious charitable organization through our adoption of global climate and sustainability reporting frameworks and standards.

While no single organization can solve the global climate crisis alone, collective action is essential and our Y is committed to doing our part. As a charitable organization, we remain focused on reducing our environmental footprint while supporting communities in becoming more resilient in the face of increasingly frequent and severe climate-related events.

This year marks the release of our seventh Climate and Sustainability Report, which charts our progress, deepens our accountability, and reflects our continued learning. Highlights from the past year include:

- Circular building practices implemented in the planned relocation of our Mississauga YMCA, reducing waste and maximizing material reuse.
- A comprehensive asset review of our entire portfolio in 2024, with a focus on mechanical and electrical systems to inform our 2025 retrofit and renewal strategy.
- Expanded climate resilience planning, including adapting our two outdoor education centres to serve as forest fire refuges for nearby Indigenous communities, and assessing all 16 of our owned facilities for future designation as Climate Resilience Hubs (CRH).



- Leadership on the broader Canadian and global stage through the participation in YMCA Canada's National Sustainability Council, the North American YMCA Green Network (hosted by YMCA of the USA), and supporting the work of the broader World YMCA's Vision 2030 Sustainable Planet pillar.
- Achievement of Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC) at eight of our facilities, reinforcing our commitment to inclusive, barrier-free design.

We remain committed to transparency, collaboration, and continuous improvement as we work to reduce environmental impact, foster community leadership, and catalyze positive change. As always, we recognize that our progress is shaped not just by our own actions, but also by what we learn from others along the way.



Akosua Matthews
Chair, Board of Directors
YMCA of Greater Toronto



Lesley Davidson
President & CEO
YMCA of Greater Toronto



Alex Versluis
Senior Vice President, Property
Management and Development,
YMCA of Greater Toronto



Reporting on Material Aspects

The environmental topics in the following sections of this report are limited to 16 YMCA-owned facilities, plus our leased facilities, where possible. However, we currently do not have access to metrics associated with the energy, emissions, and water used by most facilities we lease, and therefore, these facilities are not included in this report.

Our Senior Vice President of Property Management and Development is responsible for the implementation, monitoring, and reporting of environmental initiatives across all facilities. We also have a dedicated Energy Management and Facilities Systems team which works to reduce resource use and associated emissions, with a dedicated Facility Manager who oversees on-site issues.

In addition to donations, we receive funding for specific programs from various levels of government, endowment funds, organizations, etc. A complete set of financial statements is available online at ymcagta.org/annualreport or can be requested by contacting us directly. For a full list of our donors, please refer to our Annual Impact Report.

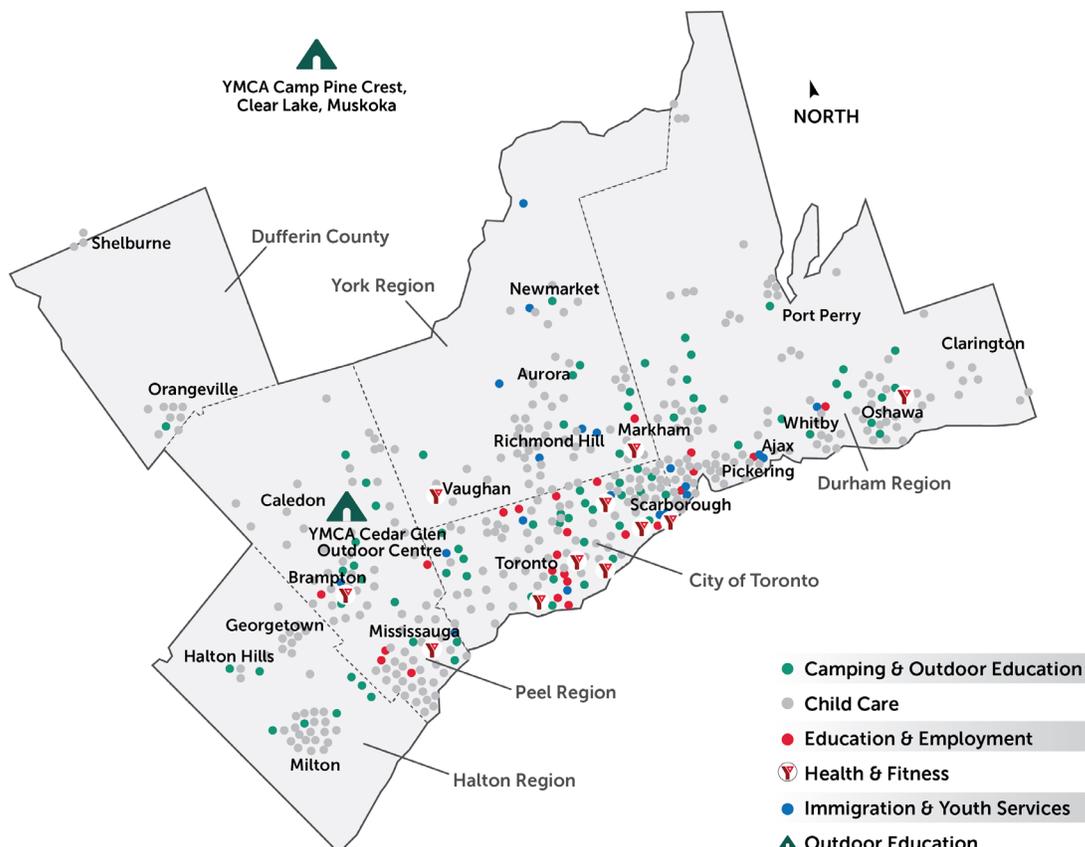


Figure 1: Map of YMCA of Greater Toronto locations



Environment

The YMCA of Greater Toronto is working to be an environmental leader, and we believe that a great future is a green future. Our investments in new technology, climate resilience, waste conservation initiatives, and energy retrofit projects will help to ensure that we operate in a sustainable way.

As we focus our efforts on environmental initiatives that will deliver both carbon reductions and operational cost savings, we can reinvest funds to support even more sustainable and social initiatives.



Carbon Emissions

The YMCA of Greater Toronto tracks and reports all direct (scope 1) and indirect (scope 2) energy emissions created at YMCA-owned facilities. Our major scope 3 (indirect) emissions categories include the purchase of goods and services, operational waste, employee commuting, and operation of YMCA-leased assets. While we recognize that scope 3 (indirect) emissions are an important aspect of Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emissions reporting, to date, we have been unable to effectively quantify these emissions.

We set a goal to reduce total GHG emissions by 33% by 2020 from 2009 levels. We surpassed this GHG reduction goal by 2015, five years ahead of schedule. As part of our upcoming strategic plan, "Greater Together," we will generate new emissions-reduction targets with the goal of achieving them by 2030.

Scope 1 & 2 Emissions

Ontario's electricity grid, a significant contributor of scope 2 emissions, has seen significant decarbonization since 2009. Since then, Ontario has phased out the use of coal as a fuel in the provincial grid and added renewables. This is responsible for most of the decrease seen in our scope 2 emissions.

Building on this, we have continued our efforts to become even more efficient through building automation, consumption analysis, equipment upgrades and renewable technology.

Key figures :

Emissions Intensity

FY2025:

55.39

kgCO₂e/m²

58% ↓

Reduction since 2009

Total GHG Emissions

FY2025:

6,322

tCO₂e

49% ↓

Reduction since 2009

Case Study: Green Will Initiative

The Green Will Initiative (GWI) is a program by the City of Toronto that partners with building portfolio owners to accelerate the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions from buildings, which are the largest source of emissions in the city. Participants commit to developing a pathway to net-zero emissions, receive support such as strategic carbon management workshops and expert training, and are recognized for their achievements. The initiative fosters collaboration and shared learning among members to achieve mutually beneficial goals.

The YMCA of Greater Toronto is a member of the Green Will Initiative, demonstrating our commitment to sustainability and climate resilience. Our organization has implemented various environmental initiatives, including energy-efficient building upgrades, waste conservation efforts, and the development of green spaces like natural playgrounds and green roofs. These actions align with the GWI's objectives and contribute to the YMCA's goal of operating in a more sustainable manner.

Through our participation in the Green Will Initiative, the YMCA of Greater Toronto is actively working towards reducing our environmental impact and promoting a healthier, more sustainable community.



Groundbreaking on the Y's low-carbon transitional housing initiative

Scope 3 (indirect) Emissions

Many other sources of scope 3 emissions are not yet tracked by the YMCA. These include the purchase of goods and services, operational waste, employee commuting, and operation of YMCA-leased assets. We are exploring ways to better measure our scope 3 emissions. Once we can accurately quantify these, we will set reduction targets and create implementation plans for minimizing our material scope 3 emissions.



Car-based business travel:
907,950 km



Gross indirect (scope 3) emissions:
227 tCO₂e

Case Study: Circular design at Mississauga Square One

We will be relocating our Mississauga YMCA to a new modern space at Square One Shopping Centre in early 2027. This new facility will form part of the visionary new mixed-use neighbourhood in the Square One District. This unique opportunity to be in an existing shopping mall offers many ways to reuse the existing constructed space, as well as repurpose existing equipment and materials, target waste diversion to promote circular building principles, and continue to be climate leaders within the GTA.

The YMCA's circular reuse initiative is inspired by efficiency and modularity of design and logistics principles. We are working on identifying opportunities for disassembly, reuse, and adaptability, and applying these to the YMCA's building infrastructure—recovering, storing, and redeploying equipment and materials from decommissioned sites to new or renovated YMCA locations. To ensure safety, traceability, and alignment with project schedules, we are working in collaboration with project contractors, facility managers, and internal YMCA operations teams.

Under this initiative, salvageable building components such as furniture, fixtures, gym and play equipment, lighting, appliances, and select mechanical and electrical systems are carefully decommissioned, catalogued, and stored. Recovered assets are then assessed for condition and compatibility and redistributed for reuse across other YMCA facilities in the region. This approach reduces construction and demolition waste, extends the lifecycle of valuable resources, and supports the YMCA's climate and resilience goals by lowering embodied carbon associated with new procurement.

Key materials under consideration include concrete, steel and miscellaneous metals, vinyl, gypsum, and insulation. Crushed concrete may be redirected into road base or other infrastructure applications, supporting both diversion from landfill and lower embodied carbon.

Our targets for this project are centred around four key pillars:

- Construction Waste Diversion
- Material Circularity
- Material Tracking
- Education and Engagement

While the Mississauga project is a building retrofit, we will be building a new North York YMCA on the same site and will also deconstruct our existing North York YMCA in a similar way in the coming years. This will be an opportunity for us to implement the lessons learned at Mississauga Square One on a large scale. It will also provide a large influx of materials, with the potential to jump-start the many small-scale reuse marketplaces that now exist in the GTA but lack regular supply and material volume.



Location of the new Mississauga YMCA



Energy

Energy Consumption

The 16 facilities owned by the YMCA of Greater Toronto use a mix of natural gas, grid electricity, solar power, and district energy to provide heating and cooling and electricity. Most YMCA sites generate heating and cooling using natural gas and electricity. Our two rural sites, YMCA Camp Pine Crest and YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre, do not use natural gas, and instead rely on a combination of electrical heating, propane, gasoline, and diesel. Currently, only the Markham YMCA purchases a portion of its heating and cooling directly from a district energy system. The “purchased heat and cool” values in this report correspond to these district energy purchases at the Markham YMCA.

Energy Intensity



Total Energy Use



The overall downward trend in energy consumption since reflects the effectiveness of our energy reduction strategies which include technology improvements, such as the inclusion of variable speed drives, enhanced building control and scheduling of building usage were the major contributors to these improvements. We expect to see a continued decrease in energy intensity as we roll out additional energy conservation programs that include further technology changes, alongside ongoing employee training to maximize the “free-cooling” opportunities and heating, cooling, and lighting unoccupied spaces.

Case Study: 2024 Retrofit Program

In 2024, we undertook a detailed asset review across our entire portfolio, with a targeted focus on mechanical and electrical systems. This review informed our planning for 2025 capital renewals, where we received grants to complete deep energy retrofits at our Central, West End, and Oshawa YMCA Health and Fitness locations. We remain actively involved in pursuing available grants and incentive programs to help fund further energy upgrades across our portfolio.



HVAC unit retrofit upgrade



Renewable Energy

We operate several renewable energy systems across our locations, including Markham, Cooper Koo, Central, and Scarborough YMCAs. The electricity generated by these systems is generally used on-site, however, we sell electricity generated by our Photovoltaic (PV) panels at our Markham YMCA back to the grid. In 2024, we made repairs to the PV generation unit at the Markham YMCA to restore the system back to full capacity, which increased our annual generation amount roughly 10x.



2024-2025 Total PV Generation:

131,953 kWh

Case Study: Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations

In 2023, we received a \$205,000 grant from Natural Resources Canada to add another 33 EV charging stations, bringing the total to 41 EV chargers installed across our facilities. Given the locations of our centres, this offers thousands of community members convenient access to a low-carbon solution.

At Cooper Koo Family YMCA, these charging stations are connected to the solar panels located on the centre's green roof in addition to the city's power grid. This system has been described as "a first-of-its-kind microgrid solution using solar, energy storage, and electric vehicle charging that can address current challenges while providing cost-saving opportunities and resiliency to the facility owner." A similar EV charging station project was deployed at Markham YMCA, which has five charging stations, including a fast-charging station.

We are now building on the success of this demonstration project and scaling up to create similar systems at our other sites throughout the GTA. This scaling-up effort involves turning new YMCA locations currently in development into microgrids, similar to Cooper Koo Family YMCA, with solar power, battery energy storage, EV charging stations, green roofs, and combined heat and power (CHP), which is a highly efficient technology that produces electricity and thermal energy concurrently on-site and is capable of supporting the centre even in the event of an emergency which shuts down the electrical grid.



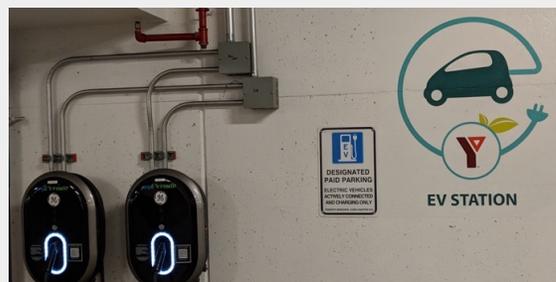
Total YMCA chargers

41



Total charged

96,986 kWh



EV Chargers and Cooper Koo YMCA



Resource Efficiency

Water

Each of the 14 YMCA-owned urban facilities uses municipal drinking water. Our owned rural locations do not use municipal drinking water: YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre draws its water from a well and YMCA Camp Pine Crest draws its water from a combination of well water and nearby surface water.

Replacing and leveraging low-flow water fixtures and optimizing the frequency of pool water replacement beginning in 2012 has yielded some positive results. We have also reduced the frequency of emptying the main pools and increased our laundry water efficiency. We continue to identify and implement water reduction opportunities as well as explore future participant engagement strategies to reduce our water use and improve efficiency.



Total municipal water
withdrawn:

336,584 m³



Total ground and
surface water withdrawn :

29,706 m³

Waste Reduction and Recycling

Minimizing the amount of waste, we send to landfill is a top priority. Reduction, reuse, and recycling are the preferred methods of waste minimization; however, when solid waste cannot be eliminated, we are committed to careful management and disposal.

We are committed to:

- Reducing the amount of waste we send to landfill, through increasing our use of recyclable products and promoting the reuse of furniture and other fixtures;
- Recycling paper, cardboard, glass, plastic and metal throughout the YMCA;
- Disposing of electronic equipment and devices in an environmentally responsible manner, including computers, ink cartridges, cell phones, batteries, and other items;
- Properly disposing of hazardous materials.



*Total Waste:
207.12 MT



*Diverted Waste:
45.40 MT



*Diversion rate:
22%

*These figures cover YMCA-owned sites where data is currently available, 69% of total GFA.



Battery Recycling

The YMCA of Greater Toronto has been recycling batteries since 2011, with 15 of our YMCA facilities across the GTA having battery recycling bins. This program, funded through Stewardship Ontario, has upcycled roughly 21 tonnes of batteries since program inception, with 0.96 tonnes recycled in 2024-2025. One of the battery disposal bins is prominently displayed at our Central YMCA location. The display features all the various elements of the battery available to be upcycled, including zinc, manganese, and potassium, which can be recovered as micronutrients for crop production. By recovering steel and nickel from batteries, we can reduce the demand for mining of critical minerals.



Tonnes recycled in 2024-2025: **0.96 tonnes**
Total tonnes recycled since 2011: **21 tonnes**

Climate Resilience

Since establishing our Climate Resilience strategy with Mantle in 2018, the YMCA of Greater Toronto has demonstrated national leadership in climate resilience through climate-ready physical assets and community capacity-building. For instance, in addition to our two summer camps being adapted to serve as forest fire refuges for nearby Indigenous communities, all 22 of its owned facilities are being assessed to act as Climate Resilience Hubs (CRHs) in the future (see p.16 for more).

Case Study: Winter Storm Damage at Camp Pine Crest

Our Camp Pine Crest site experienced severe climate-related impacts this past winter, with heavy snowfall and a March 2025 ice storm causing significant damage. One employee accommodation building sustained structural damage, the deck of a washroom building collapsed, and several roofs sustained damage due to falling trees and snow accumulation. High winds and the ice build-up also felled more than 100 trees.

The resulting repair costs are estimated to be more than \$200,000, with tree-clearing operations still ongoing as of August 2025. While harsh winter conditions are not new to our facilities, climate change is expected to increase the frequency and severity of such events. Adapting and mitigating these risks is essential to protect both our community members and our infrastructure.



YMCA Camp Pine Crest

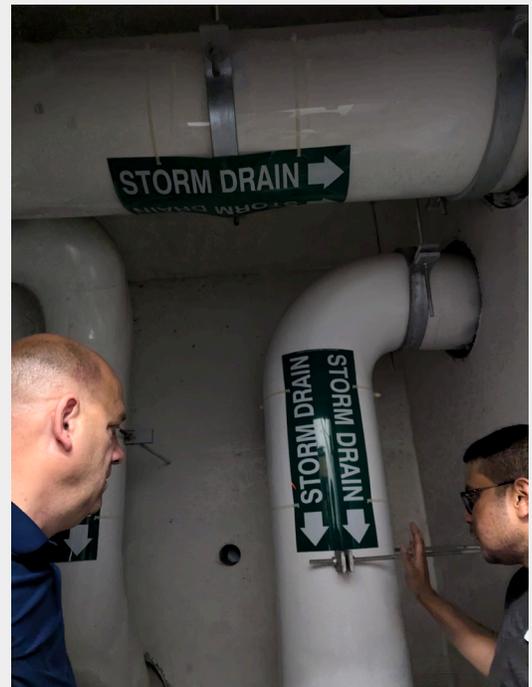
Case Study: Flood Resilience Measures

Flooding is a significant climate-related risk in the GTA. We must prepare for both river and pluvial flooding. River flooding occurs when rivers overflow, while pluvial flooding is from land overflowing due to heavy rainfall. We are working to ensure our facilities are flood-proof and always operational for community members during times of flood disturbances.

We have assessed all our owned sites and operational practices for opportunities to further protect our facilities and employees against climate events. This included considering past events, the current state of buildings, the expertise of employees, and the facility's geographic vulnerability to flood. For example, we assessed what would happen in the event of a flood-induced power outage, roof leakage, etc. As a result of these assessments, we are beginning to implement further flood reduction measures across our facilities. Our Cooper Koo Family YMCA and Markham YMCA facilities are great examples of some of the flood resilience work we're doing.

Cooper Koo Family YMCA employees are equipped with emergency management and business continuity plans. These ensure a thorough response in case of a flood-related incident that protects the facility, prioritizes members' safety, and allows for the facility to continue operating as a place that community members can rely on. This is possible partly because of the centre's ability to continue operating even if there is a power outage. If the electrical grid goes down, it can rely on its backup generators and go into "island mode."

The Markham YMCA is also equipped with an emergency preparedness plan – one that has specific protocols for flooding events. This includes deploying portable water pumps and temporary flood barriers, and preparing emergency supplies in the employees designated emergency operations area. The Markham YMCA facility also has waterproof shielding around key electrical and mechanical equipment secured to the wall to protect them from water damage and prevent them from washing away.



Flood Checklist Surveys

At the Markham YMCA, elevators are programmed to rise to an upper floor in the event of a flood, protecting the elevator system and its occupants. We are also utilizing nature-based solutions to mitigate against flooding. Bioswales are landscaped depressions along curbs and sidewalks with vegetation designed to capture, slow, and filter stormwater.

They are a natural addition to traditional drainage systems, preventing stormwater from overflowing and causing a flood. A backup generator is currently being installed to power the entire building in the event of an electrical grid failure. This will keep the water pumps running and allow us to offer a space to the community.



Operational Readiness

Employees are being trained in emergency management protocols, facilities are prepared to be emergency food drop-off centres, 72-hour emergency management kits are available on-site for employee use, and the Y is using tools like Geographic Information Systems (GIS) modelling to better coordinate responses during emergencies. By combining physical upgrades with community-centred planning and training, the Y is demonstrating how existing infrastructure can be repurposed to meet the challenges of a changing climate. Our model offers a compelling blueprint for how other cities and organizations can build resilience from the ground up.

Facility Resilience

The Y's owned sites have been evaluated and upgraded to endure extreme weather events. This includes backup power generation, strengthened building envelopes and thermal performance, and flood risk reduction measures.

Partnerships

We have mobilized our facilities to support communities during a range of emergencies, including the COVID-19 pandemic, flooding events, heat waves, and ice storms through partnerships and coordination with municipalities, healthcare facilities, local Indigenous communities and non-profits.

Electricity Demand Reduction

We have joined a program to help reduce our electricity consumption during periods of peak demand across the city. Under this program, our electricity supplier can request that we lower our use on short notice. In return, we receive financial incentives for our participation.

This initiative provides a new revenue stream for our organization while also strengthening community resilience. By temporarily reducing electricity use during critical periods – a process known as load shedding – we help maintain grid stability and prevent blackouts that could affect residential areas or essential services. We expect to be fully operational within the program by the end of 2025.

Case Study: Community Resilience Hub (CRH)

A CRH is a facility or hub designed to help communities prepare for, respond to, and recover from climate-related events. This could include acting as a cooling centre during heatwaves, providing internet and facilities during power outages, and safety during extreme weather events.

Ultimately, CRH help ensure continuity of essential services, such as child care, food access, health services, and more, when regular systems are compromised. As climate impacts become more frequent and severe, CRH play an increasingly important role in protecting communities and keeping essential services running during disruptions.

Resilience requires a community-centred approach. Trusted local institutions are well placed to step into this role. We have demonstrated how an organization can prepare its physical assets for climate-related events.



Electrical switchboard at Cooper Koo Family YMCA

Biodiversity

Canada is a signatory to the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), a United Nations treaty established in 1992 that seeks to integrate biodiversity conservation into national development strategies.

The CBD promotes sustainable development, addresses threats such as habitat destruction and climate change, and calls for nations to consider biodiversity in their economic and policy decisions. As of this writing, the Convention has been signed by 196 countries, including Canada.

Canada has committed to conserving 30% of its lands and oceans by 2030. We are eager to play our small part in achieving these targets. Biodiversity is managed at all 16 YMCA-owned facilities and all leased facilities where possible. As of 2024, we have had a tenfold increase in green space. Much of this work is taking place at our 263-acre YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre, where we are continually conducting reforestation work, among other smaller green space initiatives. This includes maintaining three bee hives and participating in a tomato-seed-saving program with Seeds of Diversity.

Case Study: Cedar Glen – Forest Management

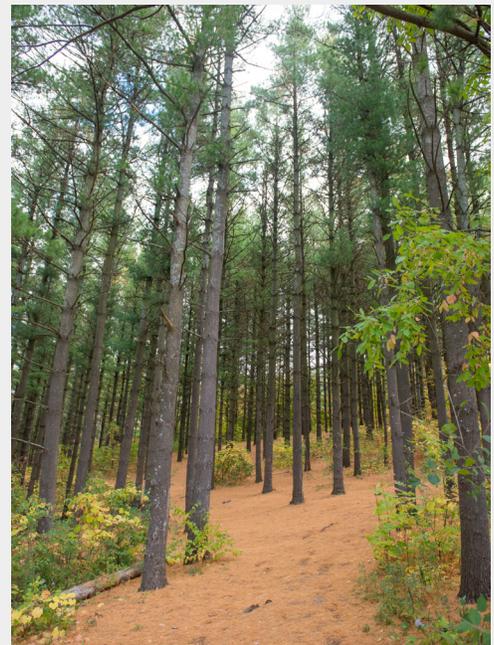
At YMCA Cedar Glen, forest management activities are guided by a detailed Forest Management Plan that balances ecological restoration, education, and recreation. All forestry operations are carried out by Registered Ontario Professional Foresters to ensure practices meet the highest standards of ecological integrity and regulatory compliance. Short-term objectives include periodic thinning to improve timber quality while promoting the natural regeneration of native hardwood species. Long-term goals focus on converting compartments to native woodland to enhance biodiversity and climate resilience.

Silvicultural prescriptions in mature forest areas involve the creation of small canopy gaps to support the planting of native hardwoods, with support from restoration funding. The site's educational potential is also prioritized through the development of interpretive areas and opportunities for community involvement, including citizen and school group participation in restoration projects.

The Cedar Glen forest also accommodates 50-100 Students enrolled in the Humber College Arboriculture program. Led by Humber College instructors they learn hands-on skill sets onsite through the fall and winter. They are directed to key areas on-site that met the needs of both their learning and ensure sustainable forest management practices for the existing forest area.

Given YMCA Cedar Glen's high recreational use, all forest compartments are regularly monitored for standing hazard trees, blowdown, root diseases, and invasive species, particularly buckthorn, with control measures applied as needed. Wildlife protection is integral to site operations, with special attention to Species at Risk (SAR) and nesting birds. Operations avoid wetland habitats and adhere to the Migratory Birds Convention Act (MBCA), ensuring that harvesting only occurs outside of the nesting season and that buffers are maintained around active stick nests.

This forest management work forms a key part of the YMCA's broader efforts to enhance biodiversity, increase carbon sequestration, and foster long-term environmental resilience across its properties. Through these efforts, YMCA Cedar Glen demonstrates a strong commitment to professional land stewardship, ecological health, and public safety.



Green Roofs and Pollinator Support

One solution which enhances both green space and biodiversity is green roofs. In addition to numerous benefits such as reducing flood risk to city infrastructure and providing enhanced spaces for our members, these also provide critical habitat to increase the biodiversity of insects, birds, and pollinators in urban areas.



Most of our facilities are located in densely populated areas to provide easy access to community members. By leveraging existing, dense urban environments, we minimize further negative impacts on local biodiversity. In contrast, we view our two rural facilities, YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre and YMCA Camp Pine Crest, as excellent opportunities to further enhance local wildlife and biodiversity.

We work to create natural environments and increase green space throughout our portfolio of owned properties by restoring natural habitats, converting child care playground facilities to natural playgrounds, and installing green roofs.

The Y recognizes the vital role that pollinators such as bees play in our global ecosystem and food production. Honeybees help to pollinate 70% of the world's crops, and approximately 1 out of three bites of food people eat comes from plants pollinated by bees.

We are supporting pollinators in our urban locations via designated biodiversity areas on our green roofs and green spaces. We are also planting flowers and shrubs that are food sources for bees and other insects. We plan to introduce educational signage and tours in the future to highlight the importance of this.



Beehive at YMCA Cedar Glen

Green Teams

Green Teams were first introduced in 2008 and developed in line with the strategic goals from our previous 10-year strategic plan, *Strong Start, Great Future*. It included a focus on environmental stewardship, employee and youth engagement, and diversity and social inclusion.

We have a history of Green Teams which is now being reviewed for a renewal, and we hope to share more information on that next year. These teams were composed of employees, members, and volunteers from the community, bringing forth a diversity of backgrounds, talents, and interests.

In 2024, we have been organizing volunteers around green roof and green space maintenance and renewal. We are also working with the City of Toronto and the Region of York to strengthen site-specific teams to support educational opportunities around community resilience, emergency planning and supporting local equity-deserving people during acute shock events.



Our Communities

At the YMCA of Greater Toronto, we are dedicated to physical, mental, and social well-being. Communities are at the core of our mission, vision, and values, and are behind everything we do as a charity. We serve local populations through our programming and activities across the GTA with the aim of creating vibrant communities where everyone can shine.

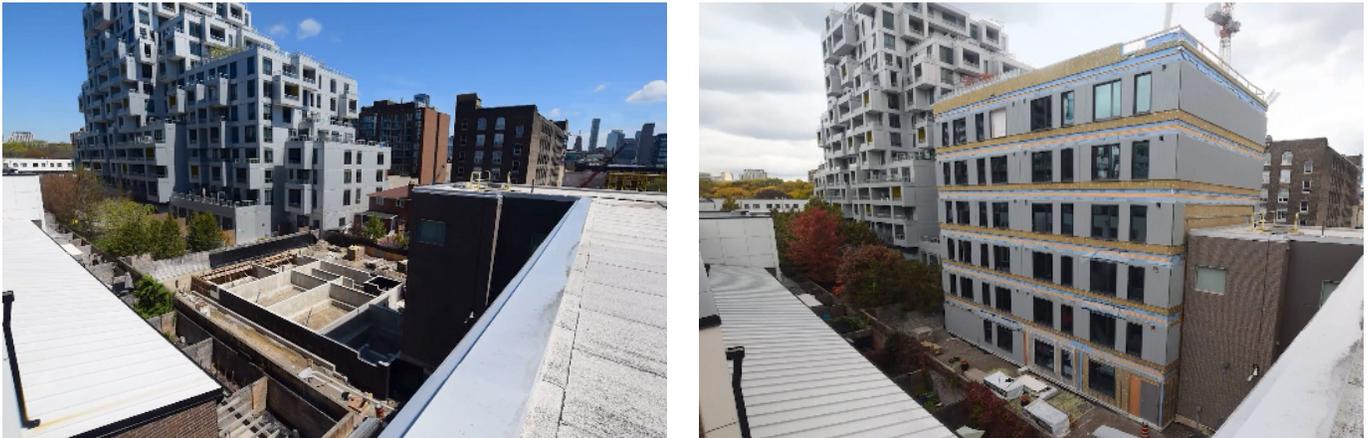
Our approach is extensively covered in our [Annual Impact Report](#).



Centres of Community

New YMCA Transitional Housing Project

The YMCA of Greater Toronto is building a new transitional housing project that integrates leading-edge sustainability practices. This initiative is being designed to achieve net-zero operational carbon and incorporates a whole building life cycle assessment (LCA) to ensure low embodied carbon across construction and materials. The project also features a geothermal energy system to provide efficient, renewable heating and cooling. Through this work, our YMCA is not only addressing urgent housing needs but also setting a precedent for climate-resilient, low-carbon transitional housing in Toronto.



YMCA transitional housing project construction

What sets this project apart architecturally is its six-storey mass timber design. By replacing traditional concrete or steel with sustainably sourced wood, the building dramatically lowers its embodied carbon footprint the emissions associated with materials and construction. Mass timber also stores carbon, making it a climate-smart choice.

Ontario manufacturer Element5 is supplying the cross laminated timber (CLT) used for the floors, roof and one exterior wall. All other walls have been prefabricated off-site by Fab Structures in Quebec which is installing the structure. This is a great example of supporting Canadian manufacturers and the Canadian forestry industry.

Beyond its environmental benefits, this project serves as a pilot for other developers looking to incorporate mass timber into community housing. It's helping pave the way for more widespread adoption of this innovative, low-carbon construction method in Toronto and beyond.



Achieving Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) Platinum Designation

The McDonald Family YMCA in the King and Spadina neighbourhood of Toronto was under construction during this fiscal year (opened in July 2025). This newest Centre of Community is in the historic Waterworks building. This YMCA has now achieved LEED platinum certification and was designed with accessibility as a priority, exceeding the AODA (Accessibility for Ontarians with Disabilities Act) requirements. This facility will also act as a community resilience centre to support people during severe climatic events. A backup generator complements the facility's efficient energy and lighting systems to ensure people have access to basic needs during extreme events.



The McDonald Family YMCA

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB)

The YMCA of Greater Toronto continues to evolve in its diversity and inclusion journey. In 2022 we launched our new Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging (DEIB) Strategy to reflect the shift in our approach toward equity and social justice.

We are committed to taking an intersectional approach to address overlapping systems of oppression that compound barriers and inequities that shape the lived experiences (including experiences of discrimination) of our participants, volunteers and employees. We believe in coalition-building, where groups identify that they may have different goals and priorities, but understand that all forms of oppression are connected and harm everyone, and therefore work collaboratively to achieve shared objectives. At the YMCA, we're working toward more equitable outcomes for everyone in the GTA.

Case Study: Indigenous Reconciliation – Medicine Garden Initiative

In 2023, the YMCA Cedar Glen farm team continued our collaboration with a Mohawk Medicine worker, to establish a medicine garden that provides traditional Indigenous herbal medicines for her street outreach program, Giwaabamin Free Herbal Street Clinic. It provides culturally appropriate medicines for unhoused people in the GTA. Through hands-on experience, YMCA employees learned about Indigenous ancestral medicines while actively contributing to the planting, cultivation, and harvesting of the sacred Indigenous plants. We were able to prepare, fertilize, transplant and manage a 50-foot medicine garden full of Indigenous medicines such as sweetgrass, valerian, mullein, white sage and many more. This initiative deepens the Y's connection to Indigenous ways of knowing while actively supporting the health of unhoused Indigenous individuals.

While no planting activities took place in 2024, we plan to resume activities in the 2025/2026 planting season.



Perennial herb bed at Downsview farm

Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification (RHFAC)

The Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification is a recognized rating and certification system that assesses how meaningfully accessible a building or site is for people with disabilities. RHFAC is a third-party rating system (similar to LEED for green buildings) but focused on accessibility evaluating things like door widths, pathways, washrooms, signage, lighting, and more. Sites are scored based on a detailed survey (500+ criteria), and then receive a rating (Gold, Certified, Uncertified) based on the results.



In total, eight of our health and fitness facilities are now Rick Hansen certified, with our Cooper Koo Family YMCA achieving RHF Accessibility Gold Certification. Some of the positive feedback we received from the assessors included:

Cooper Koo Family YMCA

- Excellent availability of sheltered parking for both standard and extra-high accessible wheelchair vans, located just steps from an accessible entrance.
- Availability of an arm cycle exercise machine for wheelchair users, supporting accessible physical activity options.
- Handrails at two different heights on both main staircases, improving safety and ease of use for people of all ages and abilities.

Central YMCA

- An inclusive exterior front entrance approach with dual ramps and stairs.
- All rooms are marked with signage that includes high contrast large tactile characters, with braille in the appropriate location.
- Roll-in availability of wet and dry saunas and showers.

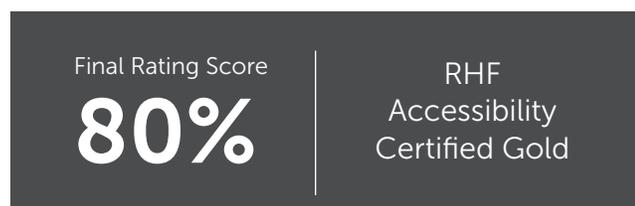
Brampton YMCA

- The accessibility of the main information desk is excellent.
- The area surrounding the pool is outstanding.



YMCA of Greater Toronto
Cooper Koo Family YMCA
461 Cherry Street, Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Certification Level



Rick Hansen Foundation Accessibility Certification



Case Study: YMCA of Greater Toronto – YMCA Black Achievers Mentorship Program

Program Overview:

Our YMCA Black Achievers Mentorship Program is designed to support Black youth by providing meaningful opportunities for academic and social development. A central component of the program is its mentorship model, which connects participants with Black mentors and role models. These relationships help youth envision and pursue their aspirations while receiving guidance on achieving personal and professional goals.

Recent Activities and Community Engagement: The program has engaged in several community service initiatives with environmental and social impact.

- o Summer 2024: Youth volunteers contributed to the maintenance and enhancement of a local community garden, participating in clean-up and planting activities.
- o Winter 2024: During the holiday season, program participants organized a donation drive, collecting and distributing essential items – including clothing, food, and sanitary products – to unhoused individuals at the YMCA Wagner Green shelter and drop-in centre.

Future Plans and Sustainability Initiatives:

Looking ahead, the YMCA Black Achievers Mentorship Program aims to expand its involvement in sustainability-focused initiatives. Planned activities for the upcoming year include:

- o a community garden and food scarcity awareness project
- o a community clean-up day, and
- o additional programming aligned with environmental and social sustainability goals.

These initiatives will serve to both deepen community impact and provide youth with further opportunities for leadership and engagement in causes that matter.

Healthy Living

Fitwel: Low-carbon Transportation and Shared Spaces

Alongside our commitment to environmental sustainability through LEED certification, we have also begun integrating Fitwel certification into the planning of our new centres. Fitwel is a building standard focused on promoting the health and well-being of occupants and surrounding communities. It supports organizations in assessing a range of design



elements that contribute to a healthier workplace environment, including access to public transit, availability of bike parking, indoor air quality, healthy food options, and stairwell design. We are actively incorporating Fitwel principles into the design of a new transitional housing development in downtown Toronto. It is being evaluated using the 12 Fitwel strategies under the design certification pathway, with the building receiving a score and a 1- to 3-star rating based on how well the strategies are implemented.

The new transitional housing development is targeting a 2-star rating and is including measures such as 34 long-term bicycle parking spaces, located within covered, secure shelters and four short-term visitor bicycle parking spaces. Other Fitwel-compliant initiatives implemented are all indoor and outdoor areas being designated as tobacco and smoke-free, acoustic control measures to minimize interior and exterior-sourced noises, and detailed emergency preparedness plans.

Local Food

YMCA Cedar Glen and Downsview Farms

Our YMCA Cedar Glen and Downsview farms are an important link between our urban and rural facilities. They provide valuable opportunities for employment, skills development, access to fresh produce, and help our participants develop their knowledge and respect for food production and the natural environment. This year we have continued to improve and expand our farm activities across both sites. In 2024, we created more intentional programming for our Farm Camps with more of a focus on experiential learning opportunities (collecting ladybugs for the greenhouse, using vinegar to make calcium-rich fertilizer with chicken eggs, etc.). Other activities included creating signage for our farm store and maintaining garden planter boxes. Overall, we held nine weeks of Farm Camp, with one group of eight-15 participants per week at both locations.

Downsview Farm

This marked our third season at the Downsview farm. It is now one of the largest urban farms in Canada following the creation of a new legal entity “Many Hands Urban Farm Collective” which allowed us to take on a master lease with Canada Lands Corporation along with five other farm partners.



Aerial view of Downsview farm



YMCA Cedar Glen Farm

This year Sundance Commons and YMCA Cedar Glen's farm team partnered to provide land access to four aspiring farmers. **Sundance Commons** is an agricultural non-profit that provides land access, training, mentorship, equipment, market access and more for no cost to new farmers. A lack of affordable land access is one of the biggest barriers for new farmers. We provided some basic land management help and resource-sharing. Sundance Commons ran several workshops on-site during the growing season and covered some costs for our Community Garden Members, such as water use and fridge space.

Sustainability Initiatives - Reducing Food Waste

At our YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre, we have a two-acre farm where we have an extensive education program as well as organics bins. We also have a significant composting program at YMCA Cedar Glen that was built by volunteers in 2015 and is incorporated into our farming education and farming work.

From April to December, the farm was able to divert 100% of the food scraps at YMCA Cedar Glen from going to a landfill – roughly 2,500 lbs. We had many strategies dependent on the specific food scrap: some went to on-site chickens, and some were composted using wood chips obtained through our partnership with Humber College. We also used food scraps to attract black soldier flies. The adult soldier flies see the food scraps as a great home to lay eggs. Once the larvae have fed on the food scraps they escape to pupate and are captured as a free, high-protein food source for the chickens.



Chickens at our YMCA Cedar Glen farm

Case Study: Harvest Share

It is important to us that our community members have access to fresh fruit and vegetables. We operate a harvest sharing program which delivers vegetables produced from our YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre and farm. This includes over 30 different seasonal vegetables between late spring and late fall, available to members across seven YMCA locations across the GTA. This program also aligns with our Fitwel certification to ensure that our community members have access to fresh fruits and vegetables.

In 2024, we had 39 Summer members for our Harvest Share program and we extended the Fall Harvest Share to eight weeks with 23 participants, continued farm stores at Downsview, harvested roughly 15 gallons of honey from our three bee hives at YMCA Cedar Glen and added 12 laying hens to the farm. We also donated over \$300 worth of farm vegetables to the North York Harvest Food Bank in the fall.



YMCA Downsview farm camp

Employee Development

At the YMCA of Greater Toronto, we're committed to lifelong learning and growth. We offer both on-the-job training and financial support to help employees strengthen their skills, advance in their careers, and thrive in their roles. Our focus is on providing innovative, engaging learning experiences that spark potential and empower every team member to grow with confidence.

Professional Development Funding

We provide financial support through our professional development funding program. We offer three funding streams – one on leadership development, one for in-role development, and a third with a focus on well-being. In 2024-25, we approved \$113,000 to 71 employees. We provided additional funding for five Health and Fitness leaders to become champion trainers for a new Y Way Experience Program for members. Of employees who received funding from 2021-2024, 35% of funding recipients advanced in their careers at the Y into more senior roles.

Employee Orientation

Bright Beginnings is our employee orientation program designed to help new employees feel connected, informed, and supported from day one. Through online mYlearning, employees are introduced to our mission, values, programs, and workplace supports, with a focus on long-term engagement and success.

Within an employee's first year, they are invited to attend a full-day in-person event that brings together about 100 of the newest members of our Y team for Bright Beginnings, alongside Shining Stars – colleagues who are celebrating a milestone of 10+ years of service.

Newly Launched Inspire Black Leaders Program

The first cohort of our new leadership development program began as a pilot in June 2024 with a group of 12 Black employees at various levels. This cohort-based program, Inspire Black Leaders, was co-designed with our Black Experience Employee Advisory Committee. By enhancing leadership skills in a culturally responsive space, participants connected with Black peers and leaders who bring lived experience in navigating leadership roles. Participants customized a learning plan, participated in leadership assessments to guide their development, attended a series of leadership workshops, a networking event and were matched with a mentor.

Introducing the Y Way Experience Program

The Y Way Experience Program, launched in late 2024 nationally in partnership with Ys across Canada, is both a philosophy and an approach that guides how YMCA employees and volunteers serve the community, focusing on building trust, delivering quality, and offering choice through service that shines. What makes it more special is how we enhance the experience by focusing on meaningful moments, making members and employees feel like they belong at the Y year over year. The success of creating the Y Way experience begins with employees. To truly bring the Y Way to life, employees need to first feel and embody what it means. While communications to all employees were shared in our weekly employee newsletter, the launch in the GTA began with Health and Fitness Centres and People and Culture teams.

Canada's Greenest Employers

The YMCA of Greater Toronto was proud to be selected as one of Canada's Greenest Employers for the 16th consecutive year.



Governance

As a Canadian charity with a 170-year history, the YMCA of Greater Toronto has a robust governance structure, summarized in our Governance Guidelines. We believe that good corporate governance is not just about rules and regulations but about nurturing the culture and ensuring ethical behaviour within our organization. Culture and ethical behaviour, in addition to policies and procedures, are cornerstones of effective governance.

The Board of Directors of the YMCA of Greater Toronto retain the overall responsibility for governance and accountability of the organization. The board is a group of community volunteers who provide vision, strategic leadership, and stewardship and ensure that we are in line with our commitments to operate ethically and responsibly. A full list of our Board of Directors can be found in our [Annual Impact Report](#).



Climate Risk and Governance

Case Study: YMCA Green Network

The YMCA of Greater Toronto has played a key role in helping to establish a YMCA Green Network (formerly called the Sustainability Co-Lab) in collaboration with U.S.-based YMCA organizations and the World YMCA. This international working group was formed to share expertise, pool resources, and foster collaboration across borders in support of the World YMCA's Vision 2030 Sustainable Planet pillar.

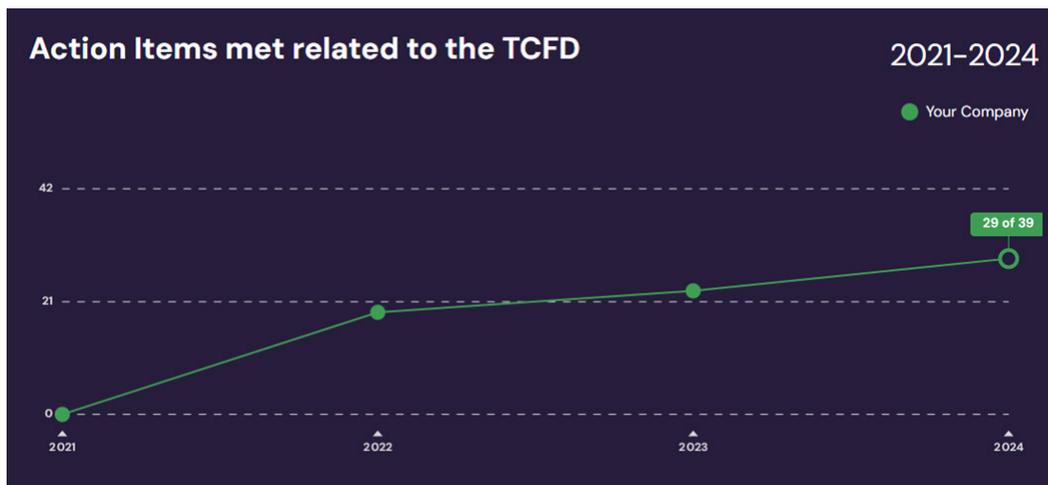
The YMCA Green Network serves as a platform to accelerate climate action across YMCAs around the world by aligning efforts, amplifying impact, and creating space for innovation. Central to its aims is empowering young people, channelling their passion for climate justice and sustainability into tangible community-led solutions that advance environmental resilience on a global scale. We have been centrally involved in the creation of a [YMCA Sustainable Toolkit](#), which is digitally available globally.

This is part of a new initiative called the [YMCA Green Space](#), which is an online platform that aims to encourage new partnerships and knowledge sharing among North American and global YMCAs.



Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD)

The TCFD was formed in 2015 to improve and increase reporting of climate-related financial information. The disclosure recommendations are structured around four thematic areas: governance, strategy, risk management, and metrics and targets. The themes are interrelated and supported by 11 recommended disclosures that build out the framework to help interested parties understand and assess climate-related risks and opportunities. In 2024, the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Foundation took over the implementation of climate-related financial disclosures (IFRS S2). Organizations that apply IFRS will continue to meet the TCFD recommendations by providing, as robust inputs for decision, comparable and verifiable climate-related information.



YMCA of Greater Toronto TCFD annual progress

We have made significant progress since we began disclosing in 2022. We have improved from 19 to 29 disclosures, out of a total 39. This year, we aimed to improve our IFRS/TCFD score with a focus on the following:

1. Materiality Assessment Process

- o To define our material topics, we used Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) standards and other relevant public information from peer organizations. An initial list of 20 topics was narrowed down by senior leadership and reviewed by key stakeholders.
- o The two climate risk categories deemed material were:
 - i. Environment/Greening risks arising related to sustainability or non-compliance with environmental laws impacting the Y's brand and credibility (Compliance Risk).
 - ii. Climate Change/Severe Weather risks and impacts on property, program delivery, infrastructure, supply chains, and adequacy of organizational preparedness and resiliency (Operational Risk).

2. Risk Integration

- o We carried out a robust assessment of our owned facilities' flood risk. Through this, we generated a Flood Checklist that identifies the facilities most at risk and identifies mitigation and/or adaptation measures.



3. Organizational Decision-Making

- o Our board is directly connected to climate-related matters and how they affect key areas of organizational decision-making. Climate-related issues are now structured into board meetings to ensure they are prioritized and given time for discussion and engagement. Any actionable items are fed to management teams for input and implementation, including:
 - i. Making major acquisitions and divestitures
 - ii. Setting annual budgets and/or financial oversight
 - iii. Setting overall organizational performance objectives
 - iv. Monitoring overall organizational performance

4. Scenario Analysis

- o The Y has done climate-related scenario analysis to test the resilience of our organization's climate strategy. This has included resilience planning for flooding and power outage events. The results are being implemented into future planning, generator installation, coordination with utility providers Toronto Hydro and Independent Electricity System Operator (IESO), and broader community coordination with municipalities.

5. Information Sharing (Board)

- o Climate-related matters are now included in Board meetings as part of our process to share, discuss, and prioritize climate and sustainability initiatives across our YMCA. The board also oversees climate goals/targets, which are communicated and implemented throughout our charity.

6. Organizational Time Horizons

- o We have incorporated the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi) principles to guide our climate strategy and organizational goal setting. Using the SBTi framework, we can anchor our emissions reduction targets in climate science while strengthening our forward-looking risk assessment. These time horizons inform our strategy across key areas such as facility upgrades, energy procurement, and community resilience and allow us to track our progress and adjust our actions to meet ambitious decarbonization goals.



Appendix A - GRI content index

The following is a complete list of the required reporting covered in this report. It includes all mandatory reporting (GRI 102 and 103), all topics deemed material (including those from the NGO-specific disclosures), and all applicable environmental topics.

GRI Standard	GRI Standard Title	Disclosure Number	Disclosure Title	Section	Page
GRI 102: General Disclosures	GRI 102: Organizational Profile	102-1	Name of the organization	About this report & Message on sustainability	2-4
		102-2	Activities, brands, products, and services		
		102-3	Location of headquarters		
		102-4	Location of operations		
		102-5	Ownership and legal form		
		102-6	Markets served		
		102-7	Scale of the organization		
	102-8	Information on employees and other workers	2024-2025 Annual Impact Report		
	102-9	Supply chain	-	-	
	102-10	Significant changes to the organization and its supply chain	-	-	
	102-11	Precautionary Principle or approach	-	-	
	102-12	External initiatives	-	-	
	102-13	Membership of associations	-	-	
	GRI 102: Strategy	102-14	Statement from senior decision-maker	Message on Sustainability from the Board and CEO	3-4



GRI Standard	GRI Standard Title	Disclosure Number	Disclosure Title	Section	Page
				Board and CEO	
		102-15	Key impacts, risks, and opportunities	Governance	30-33
	GRI 102: Organizational Profile	102-16	Values, principles, standards, and norms of behaviour	About this report & Message on sustainability	2-4
		102-17	Mechanisms for advice and concerns about ethics	-	-
	GRI 102: Strategy	102-18	Governance structure	<u>Governance Guidelines</u>	
		102-19	Delegating authority		
		102-20	Executive-level responsibility for economic, environmental, and social topics		
		102-21	Consulting stakeholders on economic, environmental, and social topics	Reporting on Material Aspects	5
		102-22	Composition of the highest governance body and its committees		
		102-23	Chair of the highest governance body		
		102-24	Nominating and selecting the highest governance body		



GRI Standard	GRI Standard Title	Disclosure Number	Disclosure Title	Section	Page
			the highest governance body	<u>Governance Guidelines</u>	
		102-25	Conflicts of interest		
		102-26	Role of highest governance body in setting purpose, values, and strategy		
		102-27	Collective knowledge of highest governance body		
		102-28	Evaluating the highest governance body's performance		
		102-29	Identifying and managing economic, environmental, and social impacts		
		102-30	Effectiveness of risk management processes	-	-
		102-31	Review of economic, environmental, and social topics	Governance	30-33
		102-32	Highest governance body's role in sustainability reporting	Governance	30-33



GRI Standard	GRI Standard Title	Disclosure Number	Disclosure Title	Section	Page
		102-33	Communicating critical concerns	=	=
		102-34	Nature and total number of critical concerns	=	=
		102-35	Remuneration policies	=	=
		102-36	Process for determining remuneration	=	=
		102-37	Stakeholders' involvement in remuneration	=	=
		102-38	Annual total compensation ratio	=	=
		102-39	Percentage increase in annual total compensation ratio	-	-
	GRI 102: Stakeholder Engagement	102-40	List of stakeholder groups	Reporting on Material Aspects	5
		102-41	Collective bargaining agreements	-	-
		102-42	Identifying and selecting stakeholders	Reporting on Material Aspects	5
		102-43	Approach to stakeholder engagement		
		102-44	Key topics and concerns raised		
	GRI 102: Reporting Practice	102-45	Entities included in the consolidated financial statements	2024-2025 Annual Impact Report	



GRI Standard	GRI Standard Title	Disclosure Number	Disclosure Title	Section	Page
			financial statements		
		102-46	Defining report content and topic Boundaries	Reporting on Material Aspects	5
		102-47	List of material topics	Reporting on Material Aspects	5
		102-48	Restatements of information	-	-
		102-49	Changes in reporting	-	-
		102-50	Reporting period	About this Report	2
		102-51	Date of most recent report		
		102-52	Reporting cycle		
		102-53	Contact point for questions regarding the report		
		102-54	Claims of reporting in accordance with the GRI Standards		
		102-55	GRI content index		
		102-56	External assurance		
GRI 400: Social	GRI 103: Management Approach	103-1	Explanation of the material topic and its Boundary	Reporting on Material Aspects & Governance	5, 34-43
		103-2	The management approach and its components		
		103-3	Evaluation of the management approach		



GRI Standard	GRI Standard Title	Disclosure Number	Disclosure Title	Section	Page
			management approach		
	GRI 404: Training and Education	404-1	Average hours of training per year per employee	Employee Development	28-29
		404-2	Programs for upgrading employee skills and transition assistance programs		
		404-3	Percentage of employees receiving regular performance and career development reviews	-	-
	GRI 405: Diversity and Equal Opportunity	405-1	Diversity of governance bodies and employees	-	-
		405-2	Ratio of basic salary and remuneration of women to men	-	-
	GRI 413: Local Communities	413-1	Operations with local community engagement, impact assessments, and development programs	Our Communities	20-28
		413-2	Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities	-	-



GRI Standard	GRI Standard Title	Disclosure Number	Disclosure Title	Section	Page
			negative impacts on local communities		
GRI 200: Economic	GRI 103: Management Approach	103-1	Explanation of the material topic and its Boundary	2024-2025 Annual Impact Report	
		103-2	The management approach and its components		
		103-3	Evaluation of the management approach		
	GRI 201: Economic Performance	201-1	Direct economic value generated and distributed	2024-2025 Annual Impact Report	
		201-2	Financial implications and other risks and opportunities due to climate change	Climate Risk & Governance	31-33
		201-3	Defined benefit plan obligations and other retirement plans	-	-
		201-4	Financial assistance received from government	2024-2025 Annual Impact Report	
	Ethical Fundraising	NGO8	Sources of funding by category and five largest donors and monetary value of their contribution		



GRI Standard	GRI Standard Title	Disclosure Number	Disclosure Title	Section	Page
			of their contribution		
GRI 300: Environmental	GRI 103: Management Approach	103-1	Explanation of the material topic and its boundary	Reporting on Material Aspects & Governance	5, 34-43
		103-2	The management approach and its components		
		103-3	Evaluation of the management approach		
	GRI 302: Energy	302-1	Energy consumption within the organization	Energy	10-11
		302-2	Energy consumption outside of the organization		
		302-3	Energy intensity		
		302-4	Reduction of energy consumption		
		302-5	Reductions in energy requirements of products and services		
	GRI 303: Water	303-1	Water withdrawal by source	Water	12
		303-2	Water sources significantly affected by withdrawal of water		



GRI Standard	GRI Standard Title	Disclosure Number	Disclosure Title	Section	Page
		305-5	Reduction of GHG emissions		
		305-6	Emissions of ozone-depleting substances (ODS)	-	-
		305-7	Nitrogen oxides (NOX), sulfur oxides (SOX), and other significant air emissions	=	-
	GRI 306: Effluents and Waste	306-2	Waste by type and disposal method	Waste Reduction and Recycling	12-13