

# Climate & Sustainability Report

2023-2024



# About this Report

The YMCA of Greater Toronto has prepared this 2023-2024 Climate and Sustainability Report, our sixth such report, in accordance with the Global Reporting Initiative (GRI) Sustainability Reporting Standards: Core/Comprehensive option, including the non-governmental organization (NGO) supplement and Task Force on Climate-Related Financial Disclosures (TCFD).

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.

Data and metrics reflect our 2023-2024 Financial Year (ending March 31, 2024). Report content has not been subject to external assurance, except for content taken from the annual financial statements.



The YMCA of Greater Toronto engaged the climate risk and opportunity strategic consulting firm Mantle Developments ("Mantle") to coordinate, develop and prepare this report. Mantle aims to accelerate the decarbonization of the built environment and support the creation of climate-resilient communities, providing industry expertise around embodied carbon, scope 3 emissions, and ESG 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 more than 500 locations across the Greater Toronto Area, we believe it's important to prioritize climate sustainability and resilience.

Although no one organization can make a global difference alone, collectively we can minimize our impact on the environment. Our Y is committed to doing our part. As a charity, we also continue to focus on helping communities be more resilient in the face of more frequent and severe weather events.

This year marks the publication of our sixth Climate and Sustainability Report, which documents our sustainability journey over time. It includes recent highlights such as:

- Two of our Centres of Community – The Steve & Sally Family YMCA and The YMCA at The David Braley Vaughan Centre – were awarded LEED Platinum certification in recognition of their sustainable design.
- We developed plans to redevelop our North York YMCA with salvaged and reused material from the current building.
- We expanded sustainability and resilience training for employees.
- Our YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre farm team collaborated with Cathy Walker, a Mohawk Medicine worker, to establish a medicine garden that provides traditional Indigenous herbal medicines for her street outreach program.

- We developed a flood checklist to identify the level of flood risk posed to each YMCA facility.
- We installed eight new electric vehicle charging stations, bringing our total to 41.

We remain committed to sharing our efforts to reduce our environmental impact, foster community leadership, and spark positive change to date. Importantly, we also look to and learn from others as we continue our journey.



Akosua Matthews  
Chair, Board of Directors  
YMCA of Greater Toronto



Lesley Davidson  
President & CEO  
YMCA of Greater Toronto

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# About the YMCA of Greater Toronto

At the YMCA of Greater Toronto, we tackle the most critical social issues in the Greater Toronto Area. Operating for more than 170 years, we are a charity that offers children, teens, young adults, and families the opportunity for personal growth, community involvement, and leadership. Through childcare services, education and training programs, employment and immigrant services, family and youth services, and health and fitness programs, we are helping to build healthy communities across our region.

We take a holistic approach to community health that embodies all aspects of physical, mental, and social well-being. We engage with the community to provide customized programs that support local needs while embracing diversity. We are dedicated to making our communities home to healthy, active people across all age groups.

Being a community-focused charity, environmental sustainability has long been a pillar of our strategy. We work to boost the well-being of our communities and strengthen the social fabric of our neighbourhoods. We are committed to igniting the potential in people, helping them grow, lead, and give back to their communities, embracing our core values of Inclusiveness, kindness, Integrity, optimism, respect and well-being. We root our programs, services and YMCA Centres of Community in the Social Determinants of Health framework, a leading health-focused framework to reduce inequity.

## Impact at a Glance

Read our latest [Annual Impact Report](#). See page 2 for a summary of our impact in 2023-2024.

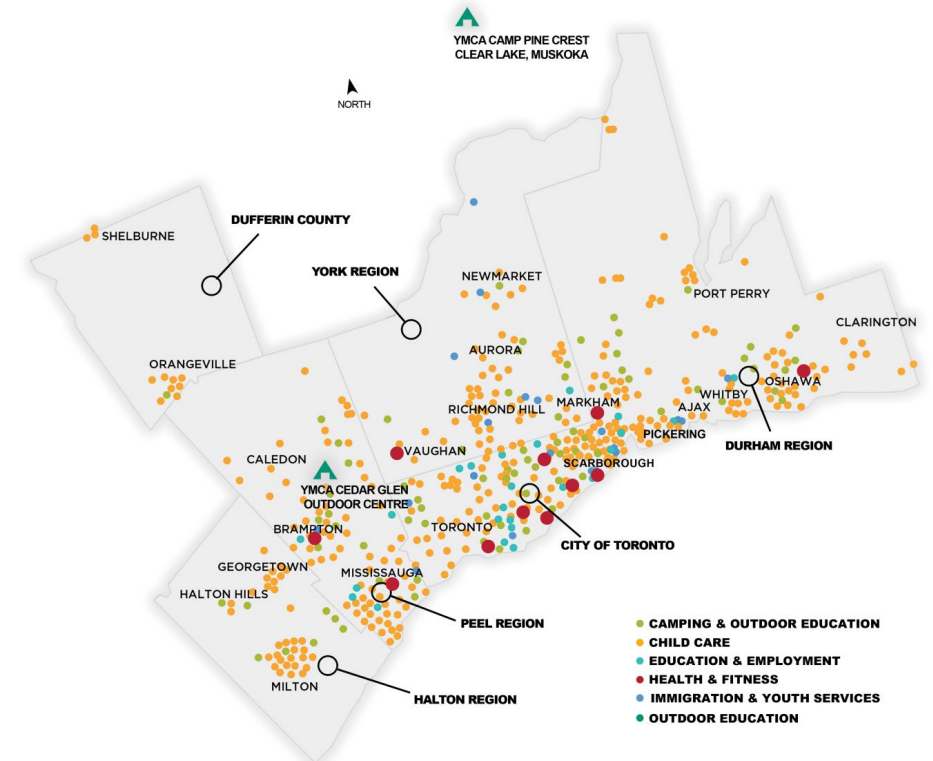


Figure 1: Map of YMCA of Greater Toronto locations

# Our Approach

1

## Social Determinants of Health Framework

The Social Determinants of Health framework, a concept endorsed by numerous leading health-focused organizations in Canada and around the world, underpins how our programs, services, and Centres of Community contribute to the well-being of the communities we serve. The framework identifies 12 key determinants, and while our programs touch on all of them, our strategic program goals are focused on the following four: (1) Social Support Networks; (2) Healthy Child Development; (3) Personal Health Practices and Coping Skills; and (4) Income and Social Status.

We are excited to continue utilizing this framework to sharpen our focus on building vibrant communities across the Greater Toronto Area, where everyone can shine.

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## Climate Resilience Strategy

We established our [Climate Resiliency Strategy](#) in 2019, having engaged in discussions since 2017. This was a strategic initiative to assess our organization and strategies through a climate resilience lens, and to clarify our role in helping communities minimize the effects of chronic stresses that add to climate vulnerability (e.g., poverty) and respond to and recover from acute climate-related shocks (e.g., extreme weather).

A summary of key priorities is outlined below and continues to inform our strategic priorities.

Figure 2: Climate Resiliency Framework



**01 Foster connected and prepared community**

*Society & Economy*



**02 Promote clean technology and the efficient use of resources**

*Environment & Infrastructure*



**03 Adapt to the impacts of climate change**

*Environment & Infrastructure*



**04 Improve health and well-being**

*Health & Well-Being*



**05 Support and integrate vulnerable populations**

*Society & Economy*



**06 Work with government to better serve the community**

*Leadership & Strategy*



**07 Catalyze innovation and private sector action**

*Environment & Infrastructure*



**08 Build regional resilience**

*Leadership & Strategy*



# Governance

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.

As a Canadian charity with a 170-year history, the YMCA of Greater Toronto has a robust governance structure, summarized in our [Governance Guidelines](#).

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 [2023-2024 Annual Impact Report](#).

## Climate Governance

The YMCA of Greater Toronto has increasingly emphasized discussions on climate and resilience, marking it as a priority since 2008. Environmental stewardship and sustainability have been strategically integrated into our operations, outlined within the Champion diversity, social connection, and belonging strategic goal of our [Ignite the Light Strategic Plan 2020-2025](#). We demonstrate our commitment to climate governance by allocating resources and appointing senior leadership positions to facilitate action and foster change. Oversight of the Climate Resilience Strategy falls under the responsibility of our Senior Vice President of Property Management and Development, who also chairs the Sustainability Advisory Council, a vital role in steering initiatives across our facilities in collaboration with the senior leadership team.

Internally, we've established governance bodies dedicated to environmental sustainability, including the Environmental Sustainability Advisory Council, the Environmental Sustainability Leadership Team, and Green Teams. Since 2010, we've adhered to an environmental policy aimed at understanding and minimizing our environmental footprint. Our approach encompasses various aspects of our operations and infrastructure, integrating sustainable practices into both our work processes and asset development strategy. We partner with Mantle Developments, specializing in net-zero construction and whole building life cycle carbon management, to advance environmental initiatives in facility design and construction.

## Climate Risk

To enhance our approach to climate considerations, we've engaged with [Manifest Climate](#), a Climate Risk Planning (CRP) solution, aligning our practices with the Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (TCFD) and Task Force on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD). Benchmarking against leading organizations and sectors, we've refined metrics and targets to strengthen Board oversight and decision-making on climate- and nature-related issues.

Our annual review of organizational risks includes comprehensive assessments of physical locations, workforce, policy, market, technology, and reputational risks, integrating a climate lens into these considerations. Regular evaluations of risks and opportunities associated with climate change, extreme weather events, and environmental initiatives further inform property management and relevant teams' strategies. During this annual review, Board members and senior leaders engage in a wide assessment to ensure that we are appropriately applying a climate lens to these considerations. Risks and opportunities associated with climate change, extreme weather events, and greening and environmental initiatives are also assessed on a regular basis as it relates to property management and other relevant teams. Read more on how we are managing such physical risks under [Local Communities: Climate Resilience](#).

<sup>1</sup> We are aware that TCFD's climate-related reporting will consolidate under the International Sustainability Standards Board (ISSB) beginning in 2024 and are following the transition to ensure that we are following the most up-to-date guidance.



# TCFD and IFRS

The Task Force on Climate-related Financial Disclosures (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 Fall 2024, the International Financial Reporting Standards (IFRS) Foundation will take 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 assurable climate-related information.

This year we aim to improve our TCFD score with a focus on the following:

## 1. Enhanced Board oversight of climate goals and targets

- Organization strategy days now a workshop on the YMCA's environment and climate pillar of work. This involves roundtable discussions on how best to integrate climate-related matters into each function of the organization. We intend to continue to expand and improve these discussions further in 2025.
- Climate related issues are now structured into board meetings to ensure that they are prioritized and given time for discussion and engagement. Any actionable items are fed to management teams for input and implementation.

## 2. Integrate processes to identify, assess, and manage climate risks

- In early 2024, we started the process of planning for a more robust assessment of our facilities in relation to flood risk. Through this work, we intend to generate a Flood Checklist, which identifies the facilities that are most at risk and begins to identify mitigation and/or adaptation measures. This will be advanced throughout 2024 and 2025 with a focus on implementation across our most at-risk facilities. We are also continuing the development of

resilience centres to serve our community members. This work includes backup generators, CHP, emergency communication measures, knowledge sharing, and emergency response plans, among other initiatives. Our partnership with the City of Toronto on their "Beat the Heat" program to provide shelter to the public who are experiencing heat stress is also in response to the identification of the physical risks associated with climate change, and we plan to strengthen the communication and structures to work together with the City of Toronto and other municipal partners.



## TCFD and IFRS

### 3. Set up a process to share climate information with Managers

- We continued to pursue improved integration of climate issues into the company's broader business strategies, including with respect to risk management and oversight. This starts at the board level but is being integrated into management decisions relevant to each facility. Strategic climate measures are agreed upon at the board level, with feedback and specific issues identified by facility management are reported and integrated into future planning.

### 4. Assess and manage climate-related reputational risks

- As a charitable and community-serving organization, the YMCA strives to ensure that we are making tangible progress on our climate initiatives. Our work to turn our facilities into resilience hubs and reception centres during extreme weather events speaks to our commitment to climate adaptation and to ensuring our community members have access to safe and reliable infrastructure when they need it most.
- We are deepening our building development planning to reduce the embodied carbon of our new facilities through a combination of material selection and carbon circularity. We are also improving energy efficiency with modernized technology that include Institution level Air Source Heat Pumps and geothermal. This is part of our net zero strategy and will include transition plans for complete electrification of our buildings.

### 5. Conduct climate-related scenario analysis to test the resilience of the organization's climate strategy

- The YMCA of Greater Toronto are in the process of planning for a detailed assessment of our climate related transition risks and opportunities. We have made strong progress to date on assessing the physical risks to our organization. This helped up to identify the need to become a resilience hub for our community members during climate related events such as extreme heat, storms, flooding etc.





## Reporting on Material Aspects

We conducted our initial materiality assessment during our 2018-2019 financial year. To help define our material topics, we used GRI standards as well as other information relevant to our stakeholders based on publicly available documents of peer organizations.

We created a shortlist of 20 topics, which were narrowed down by senior leadership and reviewed by key stakeholders to prioritize topics most important for reflecting our economic, environmental, and social impacts. Refer to [past Sustainability Reports](#) for a more comprehensive discussion of the stakeholder consultation and materiality assessment process.



Ribbon-cutting ceremony at the new The Steve & Sally Stavro Family YMCA

## Economic Performance and Fundraising

As a registered charity, the YMCA of Greater Toronto relies on the generosity of our donors who play a vital role in ensuring that we can provide critical services for children, adults, and families across the Greater Toronto Area. These services include child care, summer camps, outdoor education, safe spaces for teens, youth leadership development, support for youth without housing and 2SLGBTQIA+ youth, access to health and fitness programs, and more. Charitable support from individuals and families, charitable foundations, and corporate partners means that children, teens, young adults, and families can access the programs they need to reach their potential.

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 are available online at [ymcagta.org](https://ymcagta.org) or can be requested by contacting us directly. For a full list of our donors, please refer to page 11-15 of our [2023-2024 Annual Impact Report](#).

# Training and Education for Employees

YMCA staff and volunteers play an integral role in the delivery of our services across the region. We take pride in providing our employees and volunteers with opportunities to make meaningful contributions to our communities. As of our 2023-2024 financial year, we employ 6,539 staff members. We invest in our staff and volunteers by providing extensive training and education programs that support them in delivering high quality services.

## Employee Development

As part of our efforts to ensure lifelong learning opportunities for our employees, a new Learning Management System was introduced in early 2023 to track employee learning more effectively and enables employee feedback on available courses. We have also developed Professional Development Funding programs to ensure both the Y's success and individual success. There is a specific stream focusing on sustainability at leadership levels available to all employees. We have a robust employee orientation program which includes self-directed learning about the Y, our mission, vision, values and commitment to equity and well-being before compliance requirements are fulfilled, followed by locally-delivered role-specific training before new employees are invited to an in-person orientation in their first year.

A Diversity, Inclusion, Equity and Belonging learning series is available to all employees. All employees complete training on Dismantling Anti-Black Racism, and all supervisors complete training on fostering mental health. Additional training includes a new Gender 101, Land Acknowledgement Bundle and a Mental Health online learning toolkit. LinkedIn Learning also provides on-demand access to a range of courses led by industry experts.

Specialized training is offered in each area of the Y to meet the needs of program delivery. Here are a few examples reflecting each program area:

- Job Developers in Employment & Community receive training on topics like the Ontario Labour Market, and Ontario Disability Employment Network.
- Aquatics employees received specialized training to upskill and develop more supervisors.
- Leadership Development is a core part of how Camps and Outdoor Education staff are trained every year.
- Child and Family Development employees receive specialized training in 2023-24 with a focus on Supporting Children's Journey to Self-Regulation.
- In 2023-24, a new performance management program was core to organization-wide training for supervisors enhanced by a variety of program-area specific supervisor learning and mentoring programs, especially in Health and Fitness and Child and Family Development.

# Volunteers

Our volunteers are shaping lives through their positive attitude, leadership, and willingness to help others reach their potential while supporting their own growth. [Read more](#) on how our volunteers are making their communities a healthy place to live. As of our 2023-2024 financial year, 2,636 volunteers donated their time at YMCA locations across the Greater Toronto Area.

## Green Teams

The 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, which prioritizes environmental stewardship, along with staff and youth engagement and diversity and social inclusion.

Green teams projects are composed of employees, members and volunteers from the community, bringing forth a diversity of backgrounds, talents, and interests. When we combine all employees and other volunteers, we have historically had a team of over 250 individuals.

### Case Study: Sustainability at Central YMCA

One staff-led project included using a local grant to add bicycle parking and renewing the gardens with locally biodiverse plants and shrubs. This was a collaboration with local volunteers from the Toronto Master Gardeners who provided their advice and training around the most appropriate native plants.

### Case Study: Spring Clean Up

Our Spring Clean Up events in May allow for staff and local volunteers to come together and prepare our green spaces for the year ahead. Projects include cleaning up, weeding and restoring our green roofs, green terraces, day camp properties, and ground level green spaces around our fitness centres.

## Canada's Greenest Employers

The YMCA of Greater Toronto is proud to be selected as one of Canada's Greenest Employers for the 15th consecutive year. This year, we were recognized for efforts including:



- Development of a program to naturalize playgrounds, maintenance of urban farming sites including rooftop and balcony gardens.
- Our Green teams which have involved over 250 employees have dedicated thousands of hours supporting initiatives that ensure we operate in a more sustainable manner, from internal operations to green initiatives we undertake.
- The YMCA Cedar Glen location, which includes a large certified organic garden, two honey bee apiaries, facilities to produce maple syrup, and a greenhouse built from recycled and reused materials -- a new 89 space daycare centre was recently constructed, providing younger generations the chance for an early, hands-on understanding of nature and outdoor play

In addition to being among Canada's Greenest Employers this year, the YMCA of Greater Toronto was also recognized as one of Canada's Top Employers for Young People (2023) and one of Greater Toronto's Top Employers (2024).

# Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Belonging (DEIB)

The YMCA of Greater Toronto continues to evolve in its diversity and inclusion journey. In 2023 we launched our new [Diversity, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging \(DEIB\) Strategy](#) to reflect the shift in our approach toward equity and social justice. In line with our overall *Ignite the Light* strategic plan, we aspire to meaningfully reduce barriers and build a sense of belonging through targeted equity initiatives and inclusive partnerships with Indigenous Peoples and with equity-deserving communities. This includes meaningfully engaging both internally among employees and volunteers, and more broadly among participants and community members. We recognize that equitable access to opportunities and services is what ultimately allows people to experience inclusion and belonging.

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 Greater Toronto Area.

Since its release, teams have been planning and prioritizing how they will implement the strategy. Noted as our tenth goal, we are accountable for this strategy by being reflective and learning-oriented, formally tracking the progress of DEIB and Indigenous-focused initiatives, and being transparent in our reporting on intended and unintended outcomes. Key metrics have been included in the public DEIB Strategy document and progress will be reported through an annual DEIB report available to all stakeholders. Read more on our approach and goals in the [DEIB Strategy](#).

## Indigenous Reconciliation

*Case study: Medicine Garden Initiative*

In 2023, the Cedar Glen Farm team collaborated with Cathy Walker, 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. Through hands-on experience, YMCA employees learned about Indigenous ancestral medicines and while actively contributing to the planting, cultivation and harvesting of the sacred Indigenous plants. This initiative deepens the Y's connection to Indigenous ways of knowing while actively supporting the health of unhoused Indigenous individuals.



# Local 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 Greater Toronto Area with the aim of creating vibrant communities where everyone can shine.

Our approach is extensively covered in our Annual Impact Reports. For more details, please refer to our [2023-2024 Annual Impact Report](#).



## Centres of Community

Based on the Social Determinants of Health Framework, we prioritize enabling social support networks whereby all of our programs aim to help create a sense of community and belonging. Where this overlaps with our Climate Resiliency Strategy is in our physical buildings also known as our Centres of Community.

An integral part of serving our community is maximizing accessibility to our programs, services, and facilities to residents of the Greater Toronto Area. As such, we aim to continue providing access to high quality, state of the art facilities that will increase accessibility and will support the growing population in the region. During this past year, the YMCA of Greater Toronto opened two new Centres of Community: The Steve & Sally Stavro Family YMCA and The YMCA at The David Braley Vaughan Centre, increasing our overall number of locations to more than 460.

In addition to the two new centres opened in 2023, work is continuing on three additional facilities: Bridletowne Neighbourhood Centre in Scarborough, our supportive housing project, and the McDonald Family YMCA. These new YMCA buildings are being developed with sustainability and the environment at the forefront. Bridletowne is being developed with the aim of becoming LEED Platinum certified, Fitwel certified, and attaining the Toronto Green Standard v3 Tier 2 performance certification. Our supportive housing project at our Wagner Green YMCA shelter, will target the same standards and certifications as the Bridletowne YMCA, and will also include a geothermal field, mass timber construction, and target the Zero Carbon Building Design certification. The McDonald Family YMCA in the King and Spadina neighbourhood is a new development which is due to open its doors in early 2025. We are also targeting LEED Platinum certification for this facility.

As we build new centres, we are following industry-leading sustainable building practices by achieving Platinum or Gold LEED certification (the highest levels) and incorporating lower carbon design and technologies. Examples of green design features include high energy efficient lighting, heat recovery ventilation, water-efficient plumbing fixtures, and low volatile organic compound (VOC) building materials.



## Climate Resilience

Outlined in our [Climate Resiliency Strategy](#), we recognize the role YMCA facilities can play in protecting and enhancing the resilience of local communities. To date, we've completed an initial assessment of our portfolio to understand how weather events and temperature changes associated with climate change may impact each of our YMCA-owned facilities and surrounding communities.

### Flood Checklist

As part of our efforts to increase the climate resiliency of our facilities we have developed a flood checklist with our partners Mantle Developments. Each of our buildings will be surveyed by our facility managers, with the results of this will be used as part of a climate risk assessment process to categorize the level of flood risk posed to each YMCA facility. The next project phase is to develop a set of recommended actions and strategies specific to the site in question. This will then be followed by a strategy of implementation that will seek to further engagement with specialists in the field to implement these.

### Community Resilience centres

Our [Climate Resiliency Strategy](#) alongside our annual Sustainability Report, outlines our various environmental and social initiatives to decarbonize our health and fitness centres and camps, while building both community and organizational resilience against climate disruptions. One such initiative is our Community Resilience Centre **(CRC) project**, which aims to increase our centres' resilience against the impacts of acute shocks like extended power failures, extreme weather or other high-impact events; chronic stresses such as extended periods of minor service disruptions; and other emergencies such as pandemics.

Our CRCs provide resilience-boosting benefits to communities where our centres are located, through infrastructure upgrades to our facilities such as the installation of high-efficiency energy systems, including solar generation and Combined Heat and Power (CHP) energy systems.

We are also implementing programs to empower and educate community members. We are part of the City of Toronto's "Beat the Heat" program, which maximizes the use of existing air-conditioned spaces, shaded areas, and other cool spaces during extreme heat events. The program features various cooling spaces that are open throughout the summer, including days when heat warnings are issued by Environment and Climate Change Canada. Four YMCA locations are included in the program, with plans to add a fifth in the near future. As part of this initiative, we have committed to the following:

1. Posting a notice at our front entrances identifying us as a Network facility
2. Inclusivity and availability to all members of the public
3. Activating our sites from May 15 to Sept 30 – not just during extreme heat days
4. Allowing Toronto Public Health to publish hours of operations and available amenities on its "Cool Spaces Near You" map
5. Permit residents to access the facility per normal operational protocols to cool down
6. Inform and educate staff about the role of our location as a Cool Space within the Heat Relief Network

We are also exploring how to improve our role as a knowledge centre to share information and build capacity as it relates to climate practices and resiliency, to better prepare and support community members during such events.

# Healthy Living

Increasingly, there is a growing focus on understanding and addressing climate effects on health. According to the centres for Disease and Control and Prevention (CDC), existing health threats may intensify for some while new threats may emerge for others. Recognizing that not everyone is equally at risk, we believe that YMCA facilities can support those that are most vulnerable and marginalized.

## Fitwel

In addition to achieving LEED certification to demonstrate environmental sustainability, we have also started to apply Fitwel certification to our new centres. Fitwel focuses on enhancing and strengthening the health and well-being of building occupants and surrounding communities. It aims at helping employers evaluate all the design factors that go into creating a healthy workplace, from proximity to public transit, bike parking, indoor air quality, healthy food access, and stairwell design. We are currently incorporating Fitwel considerations into the design of the Bridletowne Neighbourhood Centre and the supportive housing project at our Wagner Green YMCA shelter to improve the health and well-being of staff, volunteers, and visitors. These planned facilities are assessed under the 12 Fitwel strategies of the design certification pathway. The building is scored on its adherence to the strategies and receives 1 to 3 stars depending on performance.

## Low-carbon Transportation and Shared Spaces

**Cycling & Walking:** There are multiple requirements to facilitate cycling and walking as a mode of transport to and from your building within the Fitwel certification strategies. These include providing regular occupants access to bicycle parking, providing regular occupants access to an outdoor walking trail; and providing regular occupants access to showers and lockers, among others.



## Local Food

We proudly operate a four-acre ecological farm at our YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre in Schomberg where we're able to both run educational experiences through our programming and offer healthy, locally grown vegetables to our Harvest Share members. We use a gentle, low-tillage method to farming which allows for the natural processes in soil to occur, such as the growth of microbes and small critters, and improves the soil structure. Our aim is to let the ecosystem regenerate and flourish with as little disturbance as possible. We produce over 30 different seasonal vegetables between late spring and late fall available to members across seven YMCA locations across the Greater Toronto Area.

In 2023, we continued to develop our 5 different plot areas to be uniform in size at Cedar Glen farm (100ft bed lengths, 30 inch wide, 12-18 inch pathways). In terms of planted areas, we have 0.35 acres in production at Downsview Park and 0.75 acres at Cedar Glen, with an additional 0.5 acres in cover crops and 12 layer hens. We had a very positive food harvest which resulted in:

- An additional \$5000 in vegetable sales to local residents
- A 6-week fall harvest share program with 21 participants,
- Continued of our collaboration with the YMCA Basic Culinary Skills Training Program at Metro Hall.
- The opening of farm stores at Downsview and Cedar Glen
- Employment for 8 people including a farm coordinator on a part-time basis from May-November.

## Sustainability Initiatives

From April to December the farm was able to divert 100% of the food scraps at Cedar Glen from going to a landfill. We had many strategies depending on the specific food scrap: some went to the chickens, and some were composted using wood chips obtained through our partnership with Humber College. We also used some food scraps to attract Black Soldier Flies. The adult soldier flies see the food scraps as a great home to lay eggs, which they do in the small holes of cardboard pieces. Once the larva have fed on the food scraps they escape to pupate and are captured as a free, high protein food source for chickens.

In 2024, we have some exciting new and exciting projects for Cedar Glen and Downsview Farm. We will continue our work with Seeds of Diversity through their tomato seed-saving program and a crop breeding program to create ground cherries which grow more upright which will allow for an easier harvest. In addition to this we are planning to participate in the Ecological Farmers of Ontario Association's (EFAO) research programming; specifically their no till potato research trials.





## Environment

The YMCA of Greater Toronto is working to be environmental leaders, and we believe that a great future is a green future. Our investments in new technology, 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.

## Materiality & Reporting Boundary

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. Most of our leased facilities are a small area within a larger building, for example a child care space within an elementary school. We are working towards estimating the above metrics used by these leased facilities and will include them in the future sustainability reports, where possible.

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.



# Environmental Targets

The YMCA of Greater Toronto first set environmental targets in 2008 with the goal of achieving them by our 2019-2020 financial year. We are preparing to set new environmental targets in the coming year as we shift our focus from pandemic response and re-emergence to action planning and implementation. To date, we have continued to improve on the 2020 targets.



## Clean Air

- **Target:** 33% reduction in carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) emissions (5,000 metric tonnes) by 2020 from 2009.
- **Status Update:** Goal surpassed. As of the end of our 2019-2020 financial year, annual emissions dropped by 47% below 2009 levels and continued dropping. As of the end of our 2023-2024 financial year, emissions dipped to 52% below 2009 levels.



## Natural Spaces

- **Target:** Increase natural spaces by 15% of land area (140 acres) by 2020 from 2009 levels.
- **Status Update:** We have accomplished 42% of our goal, as so far, 59 acres have been enhanced to improve the natural environment. No new green space enhancements were made in the past year.



## Fresh Water

- **Target:** 27% annual reduction in water consumption (92 million litres/year) by 2020 from 2009 levels.
- **Status Update:** As of the end of our 2023-2024 financial year, water use decreased by a total of 19% since 2009.



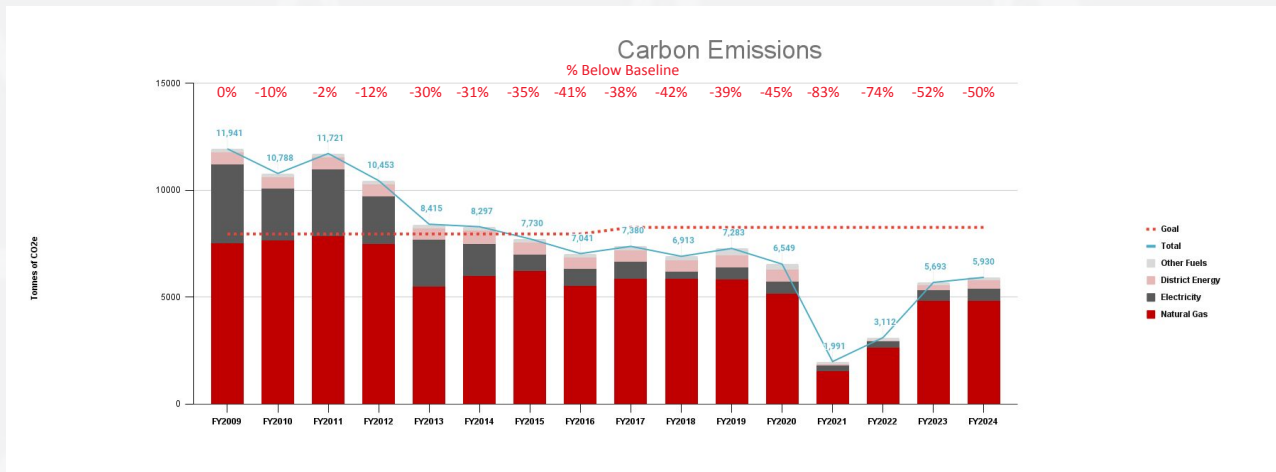
## New Developments

- **Target:** All newly constructed facilities will be certified to a minimum of LEED Gold or equivalent standard.
- **Status Update:** Our under construction facilities such as the Bridletowne Neighbourhood Centre in Scarborough, the support housing project at our Wagner Green YMCA shelter, and the McDonald Family YMCA are all targeting LEED Platinum certification.

# Carbon

The YMCA of Greater Toronto tracks and reports all direct (Scope 1) and indirect (Scope 2) energy emissions created at YMCA-owned facilities.<sup>3</sup> 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 GHG emissions reporting, to date, we have been unable to effectively quantify these emissions. For a more comprehensive definition of Scope 1-3 and a further discussion of our GHG emissions, please see below and refer to Appendix A.

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. We continually undertake additional energy efficiency projects, and thus our emissions keep dropping. We have a robust program to measure and reduce our energy use at all our owned facilities. We recognize that although most of our emissions are associated with our energy use, there are other sources of emissions that we should also measure and seek to reduce, including all of our Scope 3 emissions.



**Figure 3:** GHG emissions

The YMCA’s electricity usage reduced by 24% between 2009 and 2020, and by 22% between 2009 and 2024. We recognize that a large portion of the reduction in GHG emissions from electricity over the past decade is due to Ontario’s phase-out of coal-fired electricity generation, leading to a grid carbon content reduction of nearly 75% between 2009 and 2018. In addition, we have added 2 new centres in the last couple of years, which increases the values. The latter figure showcases the pandemic’s impact on the YMCA’s electricity consumption.

<sup>3</sup> The information in this section is generally sourced from *The Greenhouse Gas Protocol: A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard*, World Resources Institute, Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2001.

## Scope 1 and 2 Emissions

A significant contributor towards Scope 2 emissions reductions is the Ontario electricity grid, which 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 since the base year. Despite this we have continued our efforts to become more efficient through building automation, consumption analysis, equipment upgrades and renewable technology.

**Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions<sup>4</sup>: 4,978 tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalent (t CO<sub>2</sub>e)**

- Scope 1 emissions in base year (2009): **7,691 t CO<sub>2</sub>e**
- Scope 1 emissions reduction from base year: **2,717 t CO<sub>2</sub>e**

**Total Scope 1 emissions reduction: 35%**

**Indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions<sup>5</sup>: 952 t CO<sub>2</sub>e**

- Scope 2 emissions in base year (2009): **4,250 t CO<sub>2</sub>e**
- Scope 2 emissions reduction from base year: **3,298 t CO<sub>2</sub>e**

**Total Scope 2 emissions reduction: 78%**

**Scope 1 and 2 GHG emissions reduced since 2009:  
6,015 t CO<sub>2</sub>e (50% reduction)**



<sup>4</sup> This value includes emissions from all the natural gas used at YMCA-owned facilities, plus all fuels used at YMCA Cedar Glen and YMCA Camp Pine Crest.

<sup>5</sup> This value includes emissions from all the electricity used at YMCA-owned facilities, plus the emissions from district energy purchased at our Markham YMCA.



# Energy Efficiency in Operations

We are continually looking for ways to make our facilities more energy efficient and to reduce our scope 1 and 2 emissions. As such, we have identified and invested in the following energy efficiency measures:

## Heat Recovery from Air

We have renewed major mechanical systems at our Central YMCA and Scarborough Health and Fitness Centres, with significant heat recovery systems that take the heated air that is being exhausted, and use it to pre-heat the incoming outside air.

## Heat Recovery from Water

We have installed waste water heat recovery technology on our large pools that capture the heat from water that is being removed from the pool and it is then used to heat the incoming water that is being replaced.

## Pool Covers

Previously, we piloted a project using liquid pool covers in a few of our locations. We have now installed them across all sites and are seeing a significant reduction in energy consumption. These covers are also being used on our outdoor pools at camp facilities.

## Variable Speed Drives

We have added variable speed drives (VSDs) on our motors to reduce their use and extend their lives, typically 1 to 2 years.

## High Efficiency Boilers

We use high-efficiency boilers (condensing and non-condensing) that reduce our gas consumption throughout our centres. Enbridge grants have supported these projects. Additionally we have worked to optimize the run time of our boilers to ensure they are running efficiently.

## Lighting Retrofits

We have removed 99% of the old T12 fluorescent lights and updated them to modern high-efficiency lighting. We continue to seek upgrades to better electrical conservation, including LED and other current technologies. These improvements have reduced our annual electricity bill by \$52,000.

## Building Automation System

Our Building Automation System (BAS) is used to control the energy usage of our buildings to ensure the efficient operation of our systems. We have also upgraded our building controls which work in tandem with our BAS, to ensure the building as a whole is configured correctly and equipment setpoints and scheduling is optimized. Staff training and retrocommissioning of building systems and equipment such as inefficient pumps and motors has also helped to make our facilities more efficient.



## Indirect (Scope 3) Emissions: Embodied Carbon

As we look at how we develop new locations, we recognize that the general building and construction sector contributes to 39% of global annual GHG emissions. 28% of these emissions comes from operational carbon and 11% from embodied carbon – the emissions associated with the raw material extraction and manufacturing of building materials.<sup>6</sup> As we build new, or renovate existing, YMCA facilities, we want to do our part to reduce the embodied carbon footprint of our buildings.

One example of this is where we leveraged the construction of The Steve & Sally Stavro Family YMCA as a pilot case study to understand the embodied carbon emissions in construction in Ontario. The study has resulted in a *Policy Primer for Ontario* and provided lower carbon strategies for all future YMCA buildings, such as the use of lower carbon concrete and timber.

We are working with our partners to conduct whole building life cycle assessments (wbLCA) to calculate the building footprint at the design stage and identify opportunities to reduce embodied carbon. We do this by using low-carbon materials, reusing building materials, and implementing design changes among other initiatives. We carried out a wbLCA for our planned new facility in Bridletowne during the design stage. Our partners Mantle Developments were able to reduce the embodied carbon of the building by 30%. This was possible by calculating the carbon emissions associated with the initial or 'baseline' building design and then identifying suitable low carbon material alternatives. We are also in the early stages of conducting a wbLCA for our supportive housing project at our Wagner Green YMCA shelter, with the aim of minimizing embodied carbon in order to obtain the Zero Carbon Design Certification.

### Building Material Circularity

We are working on a building material circularity project to understand what materials we can salvage and reuse from our North York site, due for demolition in 2025. By reusing suitable building materials, we avoid the energy and resource intensive process of creating materials, which has a significant impact on embodied carbon.

To date we have carried out a reclamation audit which was conducted on the building slated demolition to identify building materials and products with high reuse potential. The audit includes information on the materials' and products' characteristics such as dimensions, quantities, conditions, and environmental impact.



## Other Indirect (Scope 3) Emissions

Gross other indirect (scope 3) GHG emissions: 205 t CO<sub>2</sub>e

Business travel:, 821,551 km of car-based business travel reported by YMCA staff (not including employee commuting)<sup>7</sup>

Many other sources of scope 3 emissions exist which are not yet tracked by the YMCA and are therefore not included in this report. 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 are able to accurately quantify these, we will set reduction targets and create implementation plans for minimizing our material scope 3 emissions.

<sup>7</sup> Assumes full-sized car with average fuel consumption of 11.9 L/100km and 34.2 MJ/L. Source: NRCan Fuel Efficiency Guide.

## Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi)

We are currently in the process of setting corporate GHG emissions targets for the YMCA for our scope 1, scope 2 and material scope 3 emissions. We will align our targets with SBTi standards to ensure our reduction targets are ambitious, yet achievable. SBTi requires that we set emission reduction targets to limit global warming to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels by 2050, in line with the latest climate models. Our senior leadership is discussing these targets prior to submission to the board for approval. This work forms part of the YMCA's upcoming 2025 strategy refresh and reaffirms our commitment to reducing our climate impact as an organization.

*The SBTi is a corporate climate action organization that enables companies and financial institutions worldwide to play their part in combating the climate crisis.*

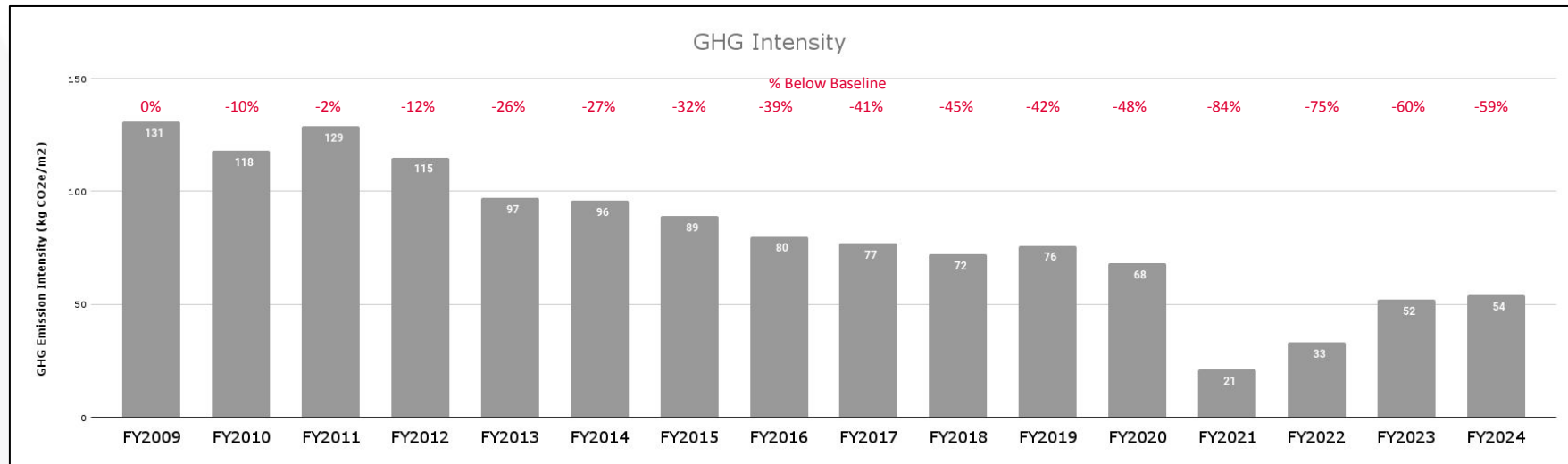


## Operational GHG Emissions Intensity

Since the size of our portfolio changes over time, one of the most important values to track and report is our operational GHG emissions intensity, which describes the operational GHG emissions per square meter of buildings. Our current operational GHG emissions intensity ratio is 54 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup>, which represents a 4% increase from last year's value of 52 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup>.<sup>8</sup>

This value has decreased by 59% since 2009 (131 kg CO<sub>2</sub>e/m<sup>2</sup>) and we have exceeded our 2020 target, as shown in Figure 4. We will continue to monitor our GHG emissions intensity to better enable future reporting and facilitate a better understanding of our energy use moving forward. We will endeavour to monitor and report on emissions-related items such as diesel used for emergency generators, refrigerant leakage, and emissions generated outside our organization, such as YMCA employees commuting.

**Figure 4:** Operational GHG emissions intensity



<sup>8</sup> This ratio is calculated by dividing all the Scope 1 and 2 emissions produced by our owned facilities by the total heated area of those buildings (currently 95,700 m<sup>2</sup>). This includes all emissions associated with natural gas, electricity, district energy, and fuel consumption (except emergency diesel). It does not include any emissions from outside the organization (Scope 3). Alternatively, the ratio could be provided based on total membership or other metrics such as total full-time equivalent staff, for example.

# Energy

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. The most carbon-intensive source of energy consumption is natural gas. At the end of our 2023-2024 financial year, our total energy use increased by 4% year-over-year.

Overall, we have seen a decrease in energy consumption by 30% since 2009, and by 7% since pre-pandemic levels. Some of the initiatives that have contributed to the reduction in energy consumption include the closure of the Charles Street location in 2013 and a multi-year energy reduction strategy that was implemented in 2015.



**Table 1:** Energy consumption of YMCA-owned facilities

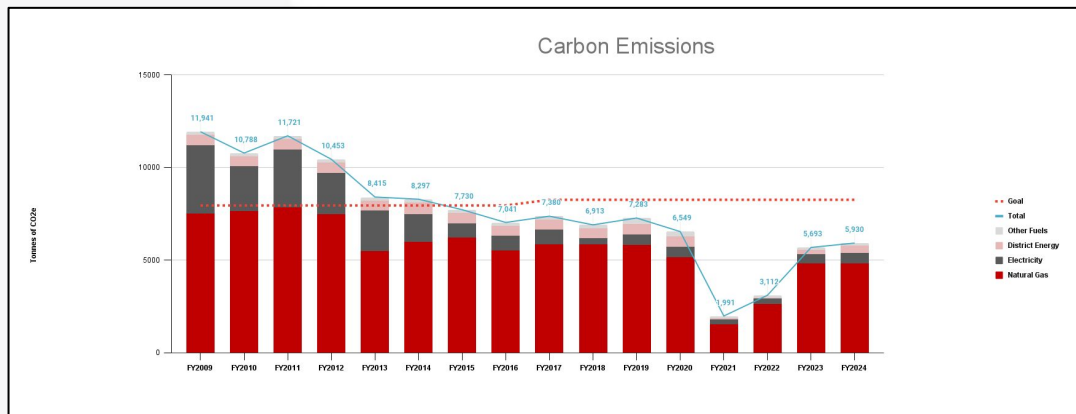
|  | 2022-2023 |       | 2023-2024 |       |          |
|--|-----------|-------|-----------|-------|----------|
|  | GJ        | GWh   | GJ        | GWh   | % change |
| Fuel consumption from non-renewable energy | 102,600   | 28.5  | 106,560   | 29.6  | +4%      |
| Natural gas                                | 93,240    | 25.9  | 93,240    | 25.9  | 0%       |
| District energy (heating + cooling)        | 7,200     | 2.0   | 10,800    | 3.0   | +50%     |
| Other fuels                                | 1,980     | 0.55  | 2,412     | 0.67  | +22%     |
| Electricity consumption                    | 58,320    | 16.2  | 60,840    | 16.9  | +4%      |
| Renewable energy production                | 259       | 0.072 | 50        | 0.014 | -80%     |
| Solar thermal*                             | 0         | 0     | 0         | 0     | 0%       |
| Solar photovoltaic                         | 259       | 0.072 | 50        | 0.014 | -80%     |
| Total energy consumed                      | 160,740   | 44.65 | 167,400   | 46.5  | +4%      |
| % reduction since 2009                     | 33%       |       | 30%       |       |          |

\*Solar thermal systems are not currently operating due to damage.

Our total energy intensity – total energy used (46,429,444.44 kwh) divided by our total owned floor area (110,128 m<sup>2</sup>) – is 422 kWh/m<sup>2</sup>. This is based on direct measurement (actual energy meter readings). Energy intensity has been reduced by 42% since 2009.

As our centres are now operating back at pre-pandemic levels, our energy consumption levels have increased back to similar levels to FY2020. Without the outlier years of FY2021 and FY2022, we still see a downward trend in our overall energy consumption, despite the addition of two new Health and Fitness centres last year.

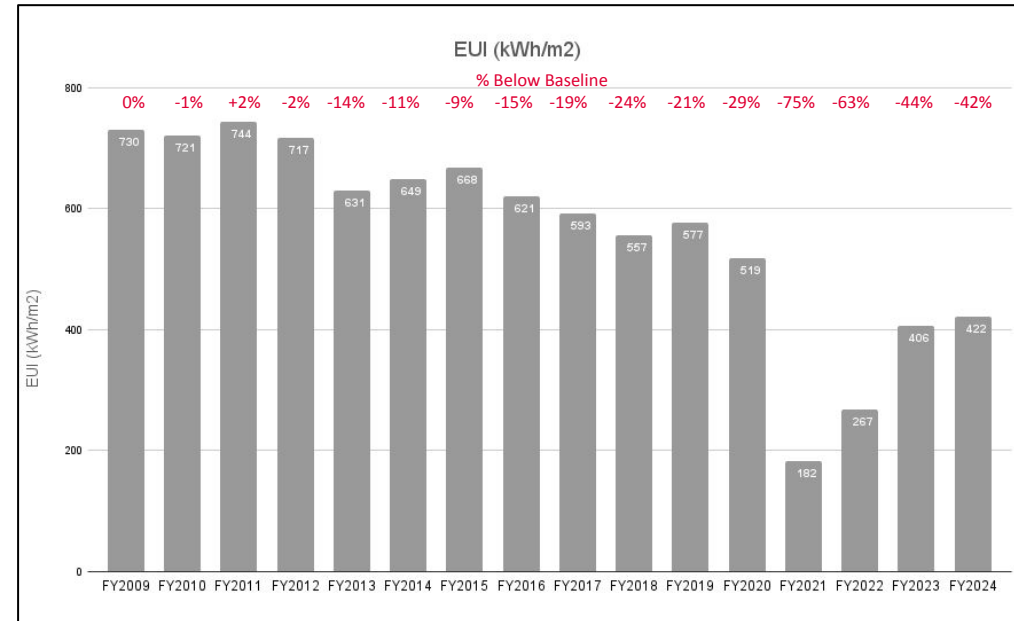
The downward trend in Figure 5 reflects the effectiveness of our energy reduction strategies which include technology improvements, such as the inclusion of variable speed drives, enhanced building control and scheduling of building usage were the major contributors to these improvements. We expect to see a continued decrease in energy intensity as we roll out additional energy conservation programs that include further technology changes, alongside ongoing staff training to maximize the “free-cooling” opportunities and heating, cooling, and lighting unoccupied spaces.



**Figure 5:** Energy consumption

Most YMCA sites generate heating and cooling using natural gas and electricity, respectively. 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 location 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.

We are continuing to improve upon our monitoring and reporting of overall energy consumption and generation by integrating new data, including thermal and solar photovoltaic (PV) electricity generation as well as wood consumption, across sites into our reporting on total energy consumption.



**Figure 6:** Energy use intensity

## Renewable Energy

We operate a number of renewable energy systems, all of which are listed below. The total energy generated by these systems is not yet integrated into our utility tracking. However, we hope to include these values in future reports. We sell electricity generated by our PV panels at our Markham YMCA in the amount of roughly 82 MWh annually. During the covid-19 pandemic many of these systems came offline. During 2023 and 2024 we have been in the process of bringing them back on-line and up to full capacity generation. During this work, hardware issues resulted in significantly less electricity production compared to previous years. We are in the process of repairing the system with the intent of returning to our previous energy production levels.

**Table 2:** Renewable energy production

| Renewable Energy System Type | Location                       | Description                       | 2023-2024 Financial Year Energy Production                   | Used On Site or Sold to Grid    |
|------------------------------|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|---------------------------------|
| Electric                     | Markham YMCA                   | 75 kW roof-mounted solar PV       | 50 GJ (14 MWh) - operating at reduced capacity due to damage | Sold to grid                    |
| Electric                     | Cooper Koo Family YMCA         | 3 kW roof-mounted solar PV        | N/A - to be tracked in future                                | Used on site for EV charging    |
| Thermal                      | Central YMCA                   | Unglazed solar thermal collectors | N/A - not currently operating due to damage                  | Used on site                    |
| Thermal                      | Central YMCA                   | 1 kW roof-mounted solar PV        | N/A - to be tracked in future                                | Used on site                    |
| Thermal                      | Scarborough YMCA               | Glazed solar thermal collectors   | N/A - not currently operating due to damage                  | Used on site                    |
| Thermal                      | YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre | Wood burning heat for greenhouse  | 0 - not used this financial year                             | Used on site to heat greenhouse |

## Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Stations

In 2023, we received a \$205,000 grant from Natural Resources Canada to add another 33 EV charging stations to our existing 8, 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 5 charging stations, including a fast charging station.

<sup>9</sup> Conversions Used: 1 MWh = 3.6 GJ and 1 m3 of natural gas = 0.0373 GJ

We are now building on the success of this demonstration project and scaling up to create similar systems at our other sites throughout the Greater Toronto Area. 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 co-generated 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.

## Methodology

Electricity, natural gas, district energy, and fuel use, where applicable, are tracked monthly at each site. The above energy consumption values are based on actual monthly energy bills from each of the 16 YMCA-owned facilities in our portfolio.<sup>9</sup>





# FY2024 EV Figures

**Table 3:** EV charging usage

|                                 | Cooper Koo Family YMCA | Markham YMCA | Steve & Sally Stavro Family YMCA | YMCA Sprott House | North York YMCA | Scarborough YMCA | Brampton YMCA | Oshawa YMCA | Total                  |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|---------------|-------------|------------------------|
| Level 2 EV Chargers             | 6                      | 4            | 4                                | 2                 | 4               | 4                | 4             | 4           | <b>32 (41 in 2024)</b> |
| Level 3/ DC Fast EV Chargers    | 1                      | 1            | n/a                              | n/a               | n/a             | n/a              | n/a           | n/a         | <b>2</b>               |
| Total Charging Sessions         | 821                    | 173          | 88                               | 5                 | 199             | 37               | 92            | 71          | <b>1486</b>            |
| Average charging Time (minutes) | 115                    | 87           | 166                              | 93                | 183             | 95               | 125           | 106         | <b>970</b>             |
| Total Charge Duration (hours)   | 1583                   | 252          | 245                              | 8                 | 606             | 59               | 192           | 126         | <b>3071</b>            |
| Energy Provided (kWh)           | 569                    | 1373         | 1301                             | 22                | 3065            | 356              | 998           | 793         | <b>8477</b>            |
| Emissions Savings (kg GHG)      | 756                    | 1824         | 1728                             | 29                | 4096            | 473              | 1327          | 1053        | <b>11286</b>           |
| Gasoline Savings (litres)       | 334                    | 730          | 763                              | 13                | 1638            | 209              | 585           | 465         | <b>4737</b>            |

# Resource Efficiency

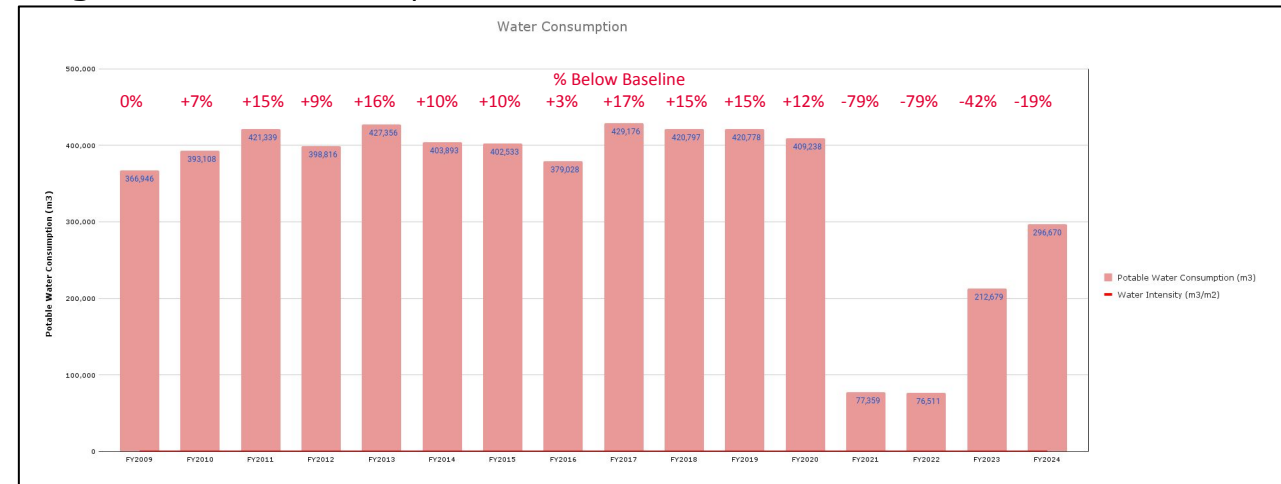
Based on our materiality assessment, water impacts are material but not waste. We however still believe it's important that we report on both topics for transparency and to continue to find ways to minimize our overall environmental impact where possible.

## Water

Each of the 14 YMCA-owned urban facilities use municipal drinking water. Our 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. We have engaged a third-party to verify the water usage from both Cedar Glen and Camp Pine Crest to ensure we are accurately capturing our consumption. We currently do not have metrics associated with water used by YMCA-leased facilities and therefore have not included water use from these sites in this report.

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 number of times the main pools are emptied and have increased our laundry water efficiency. Notably, water consumption dropped each year since our 2012-2013 financial year but rose again in our 2016-2017 financial year when the Cooper Koo Family YMCA opened, which is a fairly high-traffic facility. We continue to identify and implement water reduction opportunities as well as explore future participant engagement strategies as we find participant usage has a significant influence on water use and efficiency.

**Figure 7: Water consumption from urban facilities**



### Water withdrawal by source

Total volume of water withdrawn: 296,670 m<sup>3</sup>

Municipal drinking water is used at our 14 urban-owned facilities. Water bills show these facilities used a total of 296,670 cubic metres (m<sup>3</sup>) during 2023-2024.

An additional 19,610 m<sup>3</sup> of water was drawn from ground and surface water at our two rural locations.

## 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; and
- properly disposing of hazardous materials.

We have a culture of recycling and have developed a waste standard that encourages users to separate recycling from waste at the source. We are fortunate to live in a region where separate waste streams are collected for diversion from landfill. At sites where we prepare food in the service kitchen, we have organic composting.

At numerous child care centre sites and the YMCA Academy (a middle and high school for students with learning differences we support), we have small vermicomposting demonstration units to engage children and students and educate them on the food cycle. The worm castings are then used in our gardens and indoor food growing programs.



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

### Recycling Batteries

The YMCA of Greater Toronto has been recycling batteries since 2011, with 15 of our YMCA facilities across the Greater Toronto Area having battery recycling bins, including two new bins at The Steve & Sally Stavro Family YMCA and The YMCA at The David Braley Vaughan Centre. This program, funded through Stewardship Ontario, has upcycled roughly 20 tonnes of batteries since program inception, with 1.4 tonnes recycled in 2023-2024. One of the battery disposal bins is prominently displayed at our Central YMCA location. The display features all of 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.

# Biodiversity

Biodiversity is managed at all 16 YMCA-owned facilities and all leased facilities where possible.

Although no policies or goals exist specifically for biodiversity, we have set a goal of providing green (or natural) enhancements to an additional 15% of our owned portfolio footprint from 2009 levels by 2021. As of 2024, we have had a tenfold increase in green space since 2009 and are at 42% of our target which corresponds to approximately 6% of our owned portfolio.

Much of this work is taking place at our YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre, where we are continually conducting reforestation work, among other smaller green space initiatives. This includes maintaining three healthy bee hives and participating in a tomato-seed-saving program with Seeds of Diversity.

One solution which enhances both green space and biodiversity are 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.

## **Significant impacts of activities, products, and services on biodiversity**

The majority 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 greenspace throughout our portfolio of properties by restoring natural habitats, converting child care playground facilities to natural playgrounds, and installing green roofs.

Greenspace consists of vegetated exterior surfaces which help create more pleasant environments while also providing co-benefits such as reducing the urban heat island effect and stress on municipal sewers. These benefits include:

- green roofs at health and fitness centres;
- natural play spaces at child care facilities; and,
- forest area improvements at camp properties.

Major forest-based initiatives have taken place since 2009 at the YMCA Cedar Glen Outdoor Centre and YMCA Camp Pine Crest. Smaller urban initiatives like green roofs and natural play spaces have also accounted for incremental increases.



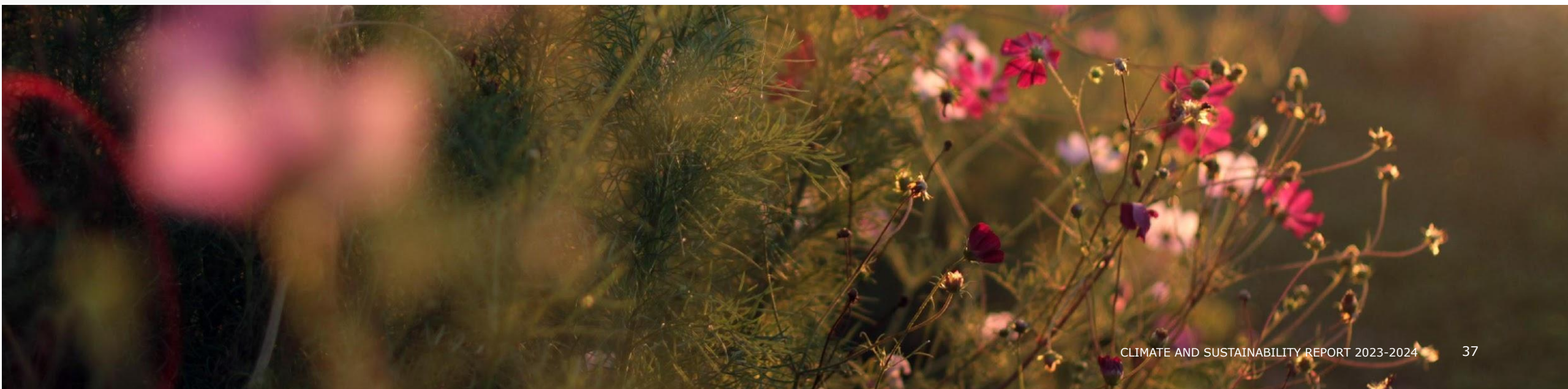
## Habitats protected or restored

Our habitat protection and restoration initiatives take the form of natural playgrounds, green roofs, forest restoration, and groundwater improvements. The restoration projects were not approved by independent external professionals.

*We thank TD Bank Group which has been the lead funder of our YMCA Centres of Community urban green spaces since 2015.*

## Incorporation of Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures

The Taskforce on Nature-related Financial Disclosures (TNFD) framework is a new tool for integrating nature and biodiversity into financial and business decisions. We are currently exploring how we can incorporate TNFD's principles to enhance the YMCA of Greater Toronto's commitments to resilience initiatives and ensure that nature-related issues are central in community programs. This involves assessing the relevance of nature to the YMCA's activities, enhancing existing efforts, and integrating nature-related strategies into broader sustainability goals.



# Appendix A: Key Terms

## Scope 1: Direct GHG emissions

Scope 1 accounts for direct GHG emissions from sources that are owned or controlled by the reporting company.<sup>11</sup> Scope 1 emissions are principally the result of the following activities:

production of electricity, heat, or steam;

- physical or chemical processing, e.g. cement, adipic acid and ammonia manufacture;
- transportation of materials, products, waste, and employees, e.g. use of mobile combustion sources, such as trucks, trains, ships, airplanes, buses, and cars; and,
- fugitive emissions: intentional or unintentional releases such as equipment leaks from joints or seals, methane emissions from coal mines, HFC emissions during the use of air conditioning equipment, and methane leakages from gas transport.

## Scope 2: GHG emissions from imports of electricity, heat, or steam

Scope 2 accounts for indirect emissions associated with the generation of imported/purchased electricity, heat, or steam.<sup>12</sup> Emissions attributable to the generation of exported/sold electricity, heat, or steam should be reported separately under supporting information.

<sup>11</sup> *The Greenhouse Gas Protocol: A Corporate Accounting and Reporting Standard*, World Resources Institute, Business Council for Sustainable Development, 2001

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

These emissions must also be included in Scope 1. To increase data transparency, emissions data associated with imported and exported electricity, heat, or steam should not be netted. The emissions associated with the generation of imported electricity, heat, or steam are a special case of indirect emissions. For many organizations, electricity usage represents one of the most significant opportunities to reduce GHG emissions.

Organizations can reduce their use of electricity and/or use it more efficiently by investing in energy efficient technologies. Additionally, emerging green power markets enable some companies to switch to less GHG intensive electricity suppliers. Organizations can also install an efficient co-generation plant on-site to replace the use of more GHG intensive electricity from the grid. Scope 2 facilitates the transparent accounting of such choices.

## Scope 3: Other indirect GHG emissions

Scope 3 allows for the treatment of other indirect emissions that are a consequence of the activities of the reporting company, but occur from sources owned or controlled by another organization, such as:<sup>13</sup>

- employee business travel;
- transportation of products, materials, and waste;
- outsourced activities, contract manufacturing, and franchises;
- emissions from waste generated by the reporting company when the point of GHG emissions occurs at sources or sites that are owned or controlled by another company, e.g. methane emissions from landfilled waste;
- emissions from the use and end-of-life phases of products and services produced by the reporting company;
- employees commuting to and from work; and,
- production of imported materials.

# Appendix B: Supplementary Information

## GHG Emissions

### Method (Scope 1)

Emission factors from previous years were taken from the GHG Protocol and Ontario Ministry of the Environment, Conservation and Parks (formerly Ministry of the Environment and Climate Change, MOECC). For the current reporting period, the emissions factors (EF) were updated with the latest figures released by the Government of Canada's [National Inventory Report](#). The emissions factors consist of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), along with methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) and nitrogen oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) converted to a total carbon dioxide equivalent (CO<sub>2</sub>e) figure.

| Fuel        | EF    | Unit                                |
|-------------|-------|-------------------------------------|
| Natural gas | 1.932 | kg CO <sub>2</sub> e/m <sup>3</sup> |
| Furnace oil | 2.755 | kg CO <sub>2</sub> e/L              |
| Gasoline    | 2.315 | kg CO <sub>2</sub> e/L              |
| Diesel      | 2.690 | kg CO <sub>2</sub> e/L              |
| Propane     | 1.548 | kg CO <sub>2</sub> e/L              |

The above emission factors were applied to direct consumption measurements in the form of energy bills. The YMCA's owned facilities are not shared with tenants. Therefore, no consolidation was required, and the full readings can be applied to the YMCA.

### Method (Scope 2)

Provincial electricity grid emission factors were taken from Environment Canada, for the baseline year, and the Toronto Atmospheric Fund (TAF), for the current year. Emission factors for district energy were provided by the district energy provider, Markham District Energy. Values provided below:

| Description                   | EF     | Unit                          | Source  |
|-------------------------------|--------|-------------------------------|---|
| 2008 Ontario electricity grid | 0.1707 | kg CO <sub>2</sub> e/kWh      | Environment Canada                                |
| 2020 Ontario electricity grid | 0.031  | kg CO <sub>2</sub> e/kWh      | TAF   |
| 2008 Markham District Heating | 195    | kg CO <sub>2</sub> e/MWh heat | Email correspondence with Markham District Energy |
| 2017 Markham District Heating | 150.7  |                               |   |
| 2008 Markham District Cooling | 40     | kg CO <sub>2</sub> e/MWh cool |   |
| 2017 Markham District Cooling | 11.5   |                               |   |

The above emission factors were applied to direct consumption measurements in the form of energy bills. The YMCA's owned facilities are not shared with tenants. Therefore, no consolidation was required, and the full readings can be applied to the YMCA.

# Appendix C: 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 #   | Disclosure Title                                     | Section  | Page   |
|------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|--|--|--|--------|
| GRI 102:<br>General<br>Disclosures | GRI 102:<br>Organizational<br>Profile | 102-1  | Name of the organization                             | About YMCA                                       | 5      |
|                                    |                                       | 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           |  |        |
|                                    | 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      |
|                                    |                                       | 102-15   | Key impacts, risks, and opportunities                | Our Approach, Governance                         | 6, 7-8 |
|                                    | GRI 102: Ethics and Integrity         | 102-16   | Values, principles, standards, and norms of behavior | About YMCA                                       | 5      |
|                                    |                                       | 102-17   | Mechanisms for advice and concerns about ethics      | -  | N/A    |



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| GRI Standard                       | GRI Standard Title     | Disclosure # | Disclosure Title  | Section                       | Page |
|------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|---|-------------------------------|------|
| GRI 102:<br>General<br>Disclosures | GRI 102:<br>Governance | 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 | 11   |
|                                    |                        | 102-22       | Composition of the highest governance body and its committees                 | <u>Governance Guidelines</u>  |      |
|                                    |                        | 102-23       | Chair of the highest governance body  |                               |      |
|                                    |                        | 102-24       | Nominating and selecting the highest governance body                          |                               |      |
|                                    |                        | 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                    | 7-9  |
|                                    |                        | 102-32       | Highest governance body's role in sustainability reporting                    | Governance                    | 8    |
|                                    |                        | 102-33       | Communicating critical concerns   | -                             | -    |
|                                    |                        | 102-34       | Nature and total number of critical concerns                                  | -                             | -    |
| 102-35                             | Remuneration policies  | -            | -   |                               |      |

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| GRI Standard                 | GRI Standard Title              | Disclosure #     | Disclosure Title   | Section   | Page     |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------------|--|---|----------|
| GRI 102: General Disclosures | GRI 102: Governance             | 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                                   | 11       |
|                              |                                 | 102-41           | Collective bargaining agreements                           | -   | -        |
|                              |                                 | 102-42           | Identifying and selecting stakeholders                     | Reporting on Material Aspects                                   | 11       |
|                              |                                 | 102-43           | Approach to stakeholder engagement                         | Reporting on Material Aspects                                   | 11       |
|                              |                                 | 102-44           | Key topics and concerns raised                             | Reporting on Material Aspects                                   | 11       |
|                              | GRI 102: Reporting Practice     | 102-45           | Entities included in the consolidated financial statements | <a href="#">2023-2024 Annual Impact Report</a>                  |          |
|                              |                                 | 102-46           | Defining report content and topic boundaries               | Reporting on Material Aspects, Materiality & Reporting Boundary | 8-11, 17 |
|                              |                                 | 102-47           | List of material topics                                    | Reporting on Material Aspects                                   | 11       |
|                              |                                 | 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      |                  |  |   |          |
| GRI 102: General Disclosures | GRI 102: Reporting Practice     | 102-52           | Reporting cycle  | About this Report   | 2        |
|                              |                                 | 102-53           | Contact point for questions regarding the report           |   |          |
|                              |                                 | 102-54           | Claims of reporting in accordance with the GRI standards   | Appendix C  | 40-44    |
|                              |                                 | 102-55           | GRI content index  | About this Report   | 2        |
|                              |                                 | 102-56           | External assurance   |   |          |
| GRI 400: Social              | GRI 103: Management Approach    | 103-1            | Explanation of the material topic and its boundary         | Each Social category  | 11-16    |
|                              |                                 | 103-2            | The management approach and its components                 | Each Social category  | 11-16    |
|                              |                                 | 103-3            | Evaluation of the management approach                      | Each Social category  | 11-16    |

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| GRI Standard           | GRI Standard Title                       | Disclosure #  | Disclosure Title   | Section                               | Page  |  |
|------------------------|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|-------|--|
| GRI 400: Social        | GRI 404: Training and Education          | 404-1   | Average hours of training per year per employee  | Training and Education                | 13    |  |
|                        |  | 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 | Local Communities                     | 16    |  |
|                        |  | 413-2   | Operations with significant actual and potential negative impacts on local communities   | -                                     | -     |  |
| GRI 200: Economic      | GRI 103: Management Approach             | 103-1   | Explanation of the material topic and its boundary                                       | Economic Performance and Fundraising  | 12    |  |
|                        |  | 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  | <u>2023-2024 Annual Impact Report</u> |       |  |
|                        |  | 201-2   | Financial implications and other risks and opportunities due to climate change           | Climate Risk                          | 8-9   |  |
|                        |  | 201-3   | Defined benefit plan obligations and other retirement plans                              | -                                     | -     |  |
|                        |  | 201-4   | Financial assistance received from government  | <u>2023-2024 Annual Impact Report</u> |       |  |
| Ethical Fundraising    | NGO8                                     | Sources of funding by category and five largest donors and monetary value of their contribution | <u>2023-2024 Annual Impact Report</u>  |                                       |       |  |
| GRI 300: Environmental | GRI 103: Management Approach             | 103-1   | Explanation of the material topic and its boundary                                       | Environment                           | 20-22 |  |
|                        |  | 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                                | 24-27 |  |
|                        |  | 302-2   | Energy consumption outside of the organization   |                                       |       |  |

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| GRI Standard                 | GRI Standard Title    | Disclosure #  | Disclosure Title  | Section       | Page  |
|------------------------------|-----------------------|---|---|---------------|-------|
| GRI 300: Environmental       | GRI 302: Energy       | 302-3   | Energy intensity  | Energy        | 28    |
|                              |                       | 302-4   | Reduction of energy consumption   | Energy        | 29-31 |
|                              |                       | 302-5   | Reductions in energy requirements of products and services  |               |       |
|                              | GRI 303: Water        | 303-1   | Water withdrawal by source  | Water         | 34    |
|                              |                       | 303-2   | Water sources significantly affected by withdrawal of water   |               |       |
|                              |                       | 303-3   | Water recycled and reused   |               |       |
|                              | GRI 304: Biodiversity | 304-1   | Operational sites owned, leased, managed in, or adjacent to, protected areas and areas of high biodiversity value outside protected areas | Biodiversity  | 36-37 |
|                              |                       | 304-2   | Significant impacts of activities, products, and services on biodiversity   |               |       |
|                              |                       | 304-3   | Habitats protected or restored  |               |       |
|                              |                       | 304-4   | IUCN Red List species and national conservation list species with habitats in areas affected by operations                                | -             | -     |
|                              | GRI 305: Emissions    | 305-1   | Direct (Scope 1) GHG emissions  | GHG Emissions | 24    |
|                              |                       | 305-2   | Energy indirect (Scope 2) GHG emissions   |               |       |
|                              |                       | 305-3   | Other indirect (Scope 3) GHG emissions  | GHG Emissions | 26-27 |
|                              |                       | 305-4   | GHG emissions intensity   | GHG Emissions | 28    |
|                              |                       | 305-5   | Reduction of GHG emissions  | GHG Emissions | 22-24 |
|                              |                       | 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   | 35            |       |



## Our Mission

The YMCA of Greater Toronto is a charity that ignites the potential in people, helping them grow, lead, and give back to their communities.

## Our Vision

Vibrant communities where everyone can shine.

## Our Values

Inclusiveness. Integrity. Kindness. Optimism. Respect. Well-Being.

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