

endpoverty
edmonton



2022



ANNUAL REPORT

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We acknowledge that we are on Treaty 6 territory, a traditional meeting ground, gathering place, and traveling route for the nêhiyawak (Cree), anishinaabe (Saulteaux), niitsitapi (Blackfoot), Métis, dene and isga Nakoda (Nakoda Sioux). We acknowledge all the many First Nations, Métis, and Inuit whose footsteps have marked these lands for centuries.



MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Eliminating poverty from a community is often described as an insurmountable task, but that is nothing more than a convenient narrative to justify not taking action. It is an ambitious goal, to be sure, but it is a reasonable goal. An attainable goal. It is entirely achievable when the community has the willingness to take it on.

In order to eliminate poverty from a community and keep it poverty-free, there are eight objectives that must be achieved and maintained: an economy that works for all; quality, affordable childcare; no discrimination; affordable housing; educational opportunities for all; adequate health services; sufficient, accessible transportation; and the embracing of indigenous worldviews and perspectives.

These are the objectives our community must accomplish if we are to eliminate poverty in Edmonton. They are gamechangers. Our role at EndPovertyEdmonton is not to help people navigate their way out of the poverty trap, but to take on these gamechangers, change the system, and dismantle the poverty trap altogether.

Through a significant, and ongoing investment in EndPovertyEdmonton, we have worked towards an inclusive economy, a system of quality, affordable childcare, the integration of anti-racism practices into policy, and the indigenization of our organizations and poverty reduction initiatives. Edmonton City Council has empowered us to attack the root causes of poverty so that, when we're successful in

our mission, Edmonton will be a community that does not manage poverty but eliminates it.

The year 2022 started a new path for EndPovertyEdmonton. We have started to position our organization as a catalyst of change. We know that EndPovertyEdmonton cannot end poverty alone, but Edmonton as a community can. That is why we will continue to bring community leaders together to attack our gamechangers, because ultimately it takes an entire community to end poverty.

**ERICK
AMBTMAN**

*Hé/Him
Executive Director,
EndPovertyEdmonton*



ABOUT EndPovertyEdmonton

EndPovertyEdmonton works to understand what system and policy changes need to occur to eliminate poverty from the root level. The organization coordinates and brokers innovative partnerships to develop collaborative approaches that will have significant impacts on poverty in our city when implemented. EndPovertyEdmonton is a space for agencies, service providers, people with the lived experience of poverty, and other Edmontonians to share their experiences and wisdom so that, as a community, we meet our goal of ending poverty in a generation. As an organization, we integrate indigenization, anti-racism, anti-oppression, and lived experience into everything we do.

We have identified gamechangers that must be addressed in order to eliminate poverty from Edmonton. Our work often impacts several of these gamechangers.

This report features several projects and accomplishments from 2022 that will continue to shape the work we do.



GAMECHANGERS



ANTI-RACISM

We can't end poverty without addressing racism.

Racism is a barrier that keeps people in the poverty trap. Out-dated colonial ideas are still present in a lot of our current systems because the systems were built with a colonial mindset. As a result, racialized people are disproportionately negatively affected by our systems, and in some cases, excluded from full participation in our society because of them.

It is our responsibility to eliminate these out-dated ideas and work towards a fairer system that includes everyone



INCLUSIVE ECONOMY

An Inclusive Economy is an economy that works for everyone. This means ensuring that all Edmontonians have access to meaningful economic opportunities whether through jobs, self-employment or benefits.

EndPovertyEdmonton strives to build an inclusive economy that provides equal opportunity to all, including those living in poverty.



EARLY LEARNING AND CARE

Ensuring everyone has access to affordable and high quality child care is critical because when low-income families have access to affordable, high-quality early learning and child care parents and caregivers are able to pursue educational and employment goals knowing that their children are well cared for and supported, which leads to greater financial security for a family, promotes gender equality, increases women's labour force participation and enhance children's well-being.



INDIGENIZATION

Historically, Indigenous Peoples' worldviews and perspectives have been discredited in favour of colonized viewpoints and ways of doing. Little by little, the languages, customs, cultures and protocols of Indigenous Peoples are being reclaimed and celebrated. EndPovertyEdmonton is committed to partnering and following the lead of Indigenous Peoples to bring Indigenous ways of knowing and doing into our strategies, processes and helping to guide our work.

The Indigenization game changer works with Indigenous Peoples to bring awareness to Indigenous worldviews, issues and perspectives and incorporate them into our shared systems.



AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Affordable housing means having a safe, affordable and appropriate place to live that meets the specific needs of people, that costs less than 30% of a family or individual's income. Without affordable, appropriate and safe housing, those experiencing poverty spend most of their income on a place to live, stay with others, or face homelessness.

Great work in this area is being done through the City of Edmonton's Affordable Housing Strategy, as well as Homeward Trust, Capital Region Housing and the many Indigenous owned, lead and operated housing agencies. EndPovertyEdmonton convenes all the affordable housing partners, the City of Edmonton and all those with lived experience to ensure collaboration in an effort to dismantle the poverty trap and create a system that works, so that affordable housing can be available to everyone who needs it.



EDUCATION

Education provides the knowledge and skills, not only to survive, but to move out of poverty and thrive intellectually, culturally, socially, and spiritually.

Education provides the pathway to future sustainability of a nation by supporting the development of social, emotional, mental, spiritual, and physical well-being and supporting communication skills.

This is particularly valuable for the most vulnerable and marginalized people in communities as education can help empower people.

As people, we should always be learning and have the opportunities to do so.



HEALTH SERVICES

Far too many people who experience poverty also experience mental and physical health challenges. EndPovertyEdmonton is working to strengthen people's access to culturally-sensitive, supportive and holistic health care, integrating Western and Indigenous approaches to what it means to be healthy.

Healthcare means access to resources and services that include both physical and mental wellness. Indigenous Peoples view health as physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual wellness. Yet, healthcare is not equitable for everyone, and can sometimes differ according to income, identity, culture, and background.



TRANSPORTATION

Access to Edmonton's bus, train, or DATS services makes it possible to get to work, school, daycare, medical appointments, or join community events and social activities. However, for individuals experiencing poverty, public transportation can be expensive and inconvenient.

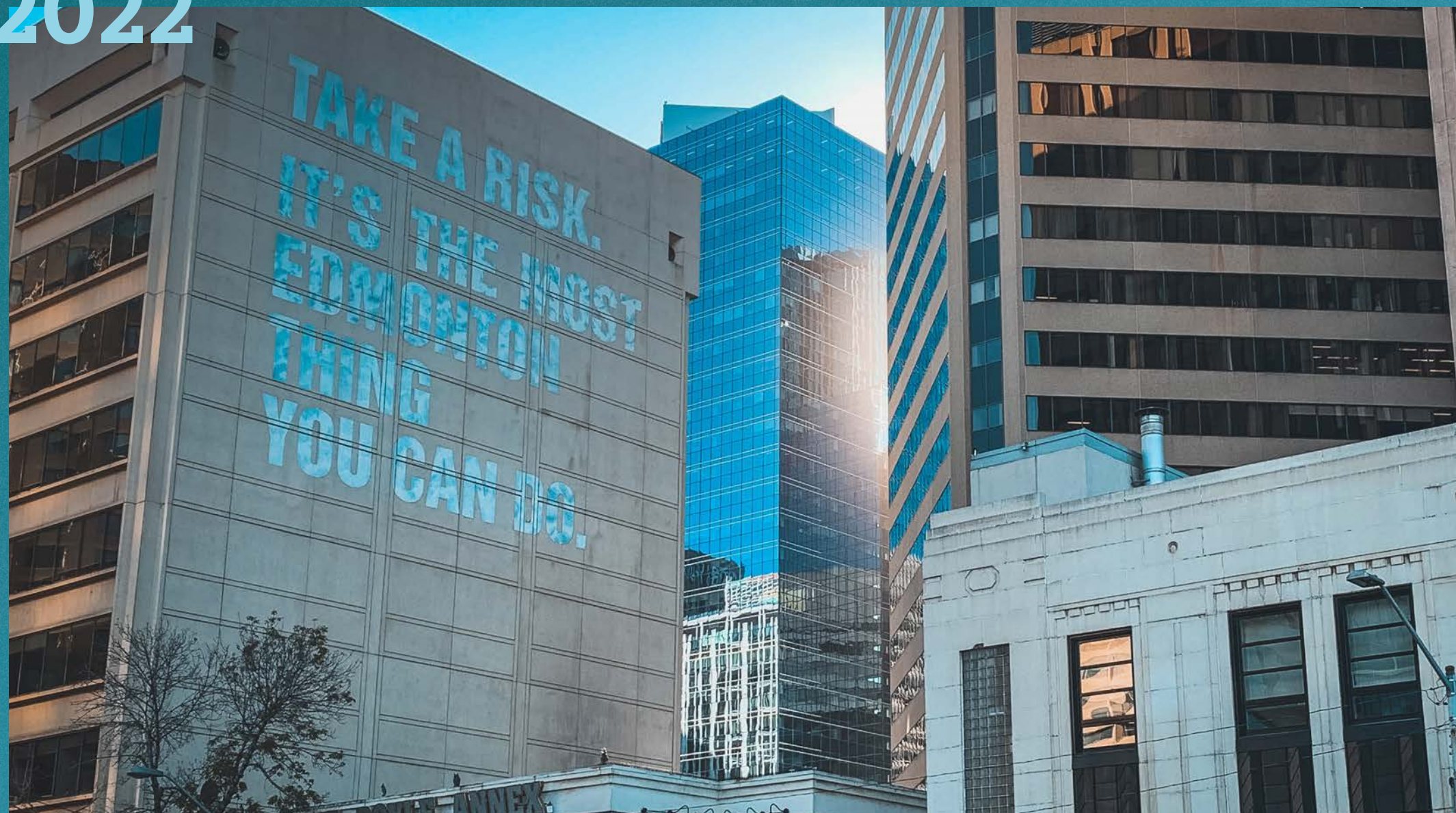
EndPovertyEdmonton has been involved in creating fare subsidies to make public transit affordable for low-income households, as well as, to work to provide equitable services to all Edmontonians living in every neighbourhood.



LIVED EXPERIENCE

Lived experience functions to bring multiple voices from the community to the policy table by representing the voices that otherwise might be absent. It highlights the experiences of people with lived and living experiences through evidence-based research, storytelling, analysis, report writing and public dialogue to inform policy and ultimately improve quality of life.

OUR WORK FROM 2022



01

Integrating Anti-Racism into EndPovertyEdmonton's Work



As a poverty gamechanger, anti-racism is being integrated into all of EndPovertyEdmonton's work. Our anti-racism purpose is to examine the relationship between racism and poverty, assess how racism perpetuates poverty, identify the populations that are impacted by poverty due to their racial background in Edmonton and the surrounding communities, identify strategies to address the impact of racism to eliminate poverty, and provide context in understanding poverty statistics.

Our Anti-Racism mandate was moved forward in 2022 and early 2023 through the hiring of a Director of Anti-Racism and a thorough literature review with the goal of defining the relationship between racism and poverty.

2021 CANADA CENSUS DATA (STATISTICS CANADA)

- Indigenous people were more likely than the Canadian-born population to live in the bottom income quintile. The proportion of those in the bottom income quintile was 28%, and 18%, respectively for First Nations living off-reserve and Métis.
- Among racialized groups, 10.8% of South Asian, 15.3% of Chinese and 12.4% of Black Canadians lived in poverty in 2020.

QUESTIONS FRAMING THE LITERATURE REVIEW

- What is the relationship between racism and poverty in the Canadian context and how does race perpetuate poverty in Edmonton and the Area?

- What populations are most impacted by poverty in Edmonton?
- What strategies can be used to address the impact of racism on poverty?

LITERATURE REVIEWED

- Reviewed theoretical and empirical literature that relates to poverty and racism
- Conducted an electronic search in academic databases
- Web search of relevant literature
- Electronic search of frequently cited articles
- Reviewed Statistics Canada website and publications from the non-profit sector in Edmonton

QUESTIONS FRAMING THE LITERATURE REVIEW

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does race perpetuate poverty in Edmonton and the Area?

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FINDINGS: THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN RACISM AND POVERTY DEFINED

- Structural racism ties socio-economic status to race and ethnicity creating marginalization and exclusion
- Structural racism operates within institutions such as the labour market
- Structural racism is also inextricably intertwined with capitalism, which requires, maintains, and reinforces the racial hierarchies that structural racism and white supremacy are used to establish
- Structural racism manifests in unequal access to power, resources, rights, and protections

- Access to, ownership, and control of the means of production are hierarchically distributed along racial lines with racial minorities at the bottom of the ladder
- The concentration of poverty within racialized groups and the consequent racial health inequities that result from racial inequality are all a direct product of the relationships between structural racism, white supremacy, and capitalism

NEXT STEPS FOR ANTI-RACISM AT ENDPVERTYEDMONTON

- Analysis of poverty in the Edmonton context
- Identify strategies for addressing poverty
- Inform the strategic direction of EPE's "Eliminate Poverty" game changer.

Our anti-racism purpose is to examine how racism perpetuates poverty among impacted populations in Edmonton, and identify strategies to address the impact of racism to eliminate poverty.



02

Building an Inclusive Economy

We have an economy that doesn't work for everyone. One in 10 Edmontonians are excluded from meaningful participation in the economy. That's 120,000 people in our city living in poverty, and those people are more likely to be women, racialized individuals, Indigenous people, single adults, the disabled, and single parents.

One of the gamechangers that will end poverty is to create economic opportunities for those living in poverty. To do this, EndPovertyEdmonton coordinates and brokers partnerships between people, community organizations, government, educational institutions, and industry.

EndPovertyEdmonton works to facilitate and bring together groups interested in the inclusive economy conversation. It encourages

innovative approaches to creating good jobs for a broader range of people.

INCLUSIVE ECONOMY OBJECTIVES

- To ensure that economic plans in the Edmonton region have inclusive growth at the core and that the needs and voices of those in poverty are integral to these plans.
 - To incorporate the economic reconciliation lens into Edmonton's economic plans indigenization
 - To incorporate the inclusive economy lens into Edmonton's economic plans
- Explore/test inclusive economy approaches/models to create systems change
 - To support our inclusive economy plans with supportive research and evaluation
 - Ensure the needs and voices of those living in poverty are

integral to economic plans through lived experience data and research

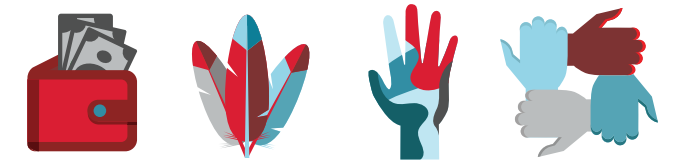
- To make the public aware of the role of an inclusive economy and related tactics in ending poverty in Edmonton

INCLUSIVE ECONOMY TACTICS

- Social procurement
- Workforce development
- Living Wage
- Basic Income

HOW WE WORK

Our work at EndPovertyEdmonton seeks to address systems-level barriers through research, ideation, and convening stakeholders to work towards common goals. This model illustrates how we work.



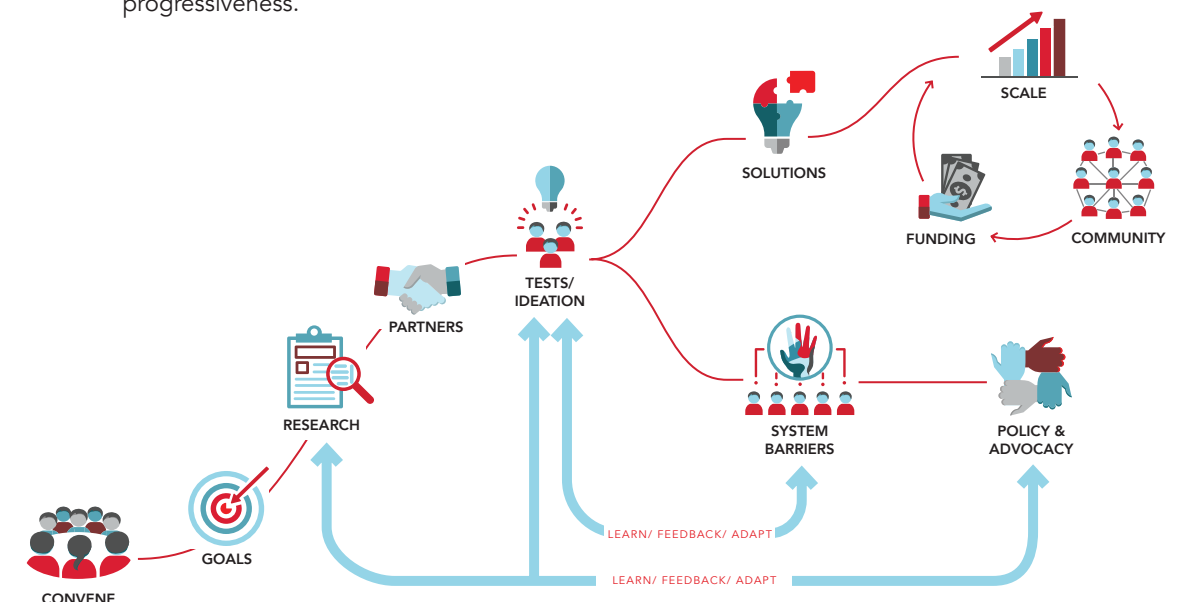
Inclusive Economy Gamechanger

Edmonton's competitive advantage will come from ending poverty. If Edmonton wants to be a globally competitive city, then eliminating poverty is one of the best avenues for this to occur.

EVIDENCE: Increasing retention and attraction of talent, new business development, increased innovation, increased productivity, engaged citizens, increased creativity, and ability to market our progressiveness.

What change do we want to see?

- * Poverty is central to the conversation of city economic and social health
- * All players in the economic system are involved, have the appropriate tools, and are working toward ending poverty
- * Edmontonians have equitable access to employment/ self-employment/a means of income generation that brings in a livable wage
- * A strong Indigenous economy



03

Community Employment Benefit

The Government of Canada operates the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program which funds large infrastructure priorities. Infrastructure projects supported by funding with the Community Employment Benefits (CEB) initiative offers an opportunity to promote increased employment opportunities to a broad array of people in Edmonton.

The CEB initiative aims to increase employment and skills development opportunities for a broader array of local community members. This benefits Edmontonians through:

- Gainful employment and socio-economic stability
- Increasing the supply and retention of a diversified workforce within the Edmonton market
- Development of skills

- Economic development through employment and contracting

In Edmonton, there is a CEB initiative as part of the Valley Line West LRT project, and there will be another CEB initiative as part of the Capital Line South extension.

EndPovertyEdmonton has identified the CEB as a tool we can use to end poverty through collaboration under our inclusive economy game changer. Large infrastructure projects, and by extension the CEB, have long project plans and timelines which provide opportunities for workers to have meaningful employment and targeted skills training. For example, the West Valley LRT project will take five to six years to complete, and will have identified project steps throughout these years. This allows a community organization or training institution working with a targeted population to identify appropriate timelines for training and engagement with subcontractors well in advance of labour needs.

With current and looming labour shortages the CEB becomes all the more relevant. It guides companies to think about less traditional employee groups as viable and crucial labour markets, while also capturing the internal and external process changes required to recruit and retain these individuals.

Marigold Infrastructure Partners (MIP), the successful bidder on the West Valley Line project, has been tasked with implementing, monitoring and reporting on the CEB targets. EndPovertyEdmonton has provided guidance on the implementation of the CEB, and has allocated a manager role to advise MIP staff on engaging with targeted groups and internal processes for successful implementation.

Although the CEB has enabled some opportunities for employment and local economic development, EndPovertyEdmonton has found several elements that pose barriers to successful implementation and

outcomes. Given that the City of Edmonton will be using the CEB for the Capital Line South in the near future, we made four recommendations.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR INCORPORATING CEBs IN THE BID PROCESS FOR FUTURE PROJECTS

- 1 In the project agreement, give companies qualifying to bid on projects with CEB components the contact information for an organization that can provide training or support to develop their CEB targets and implementation plan. CEB plans should be developed with appropriate local expertise and informed by impacted communities.
- 2 Ensure that CEB projects are appropriately resourced and accounted for within the budget of the overall project. This will likely include dedicated staff to achieve

CEB targets, dollars for convening and sharing knowledge with appropriate communities and subcontractors, amongst other community and subcontractor engagement tools.

- 3 Increase monitoring on CEB targets to monthly reports and mandate the inclusion of proposed improvements to achieve target areas. Monitoring needs infrastructure, training and tools for companies to realistically be able to report accurately on progress toward targets.
- 4 Develop project enforcement mechanisms to ensure companies are making a meaningful effort to achieve CEB targets. Meaningful intentions should be evaluated by impacted community groups, and demonstrated clearly in reporting. Examples of enforcement may include hold backs or withholding permits.



Community Employment Benefits (CEB) offer an opportunity to promote increased employment opportunities to a broad array of people in Edmonton.



04

Workforce Development Collaboratives



EndPovertyEdmonton has sought to enhance and increase the employment and retention of those facing barriers through collective, coordinated systems change. We created and hosted Workforce Development Collaboratives to test collaborative models amongst employment support organizations and their ability to create systems-level approaches to increase the employment and retention of Edmontonians facing barriers to employment. The Workforce Development Collaboratives were connected with industry and employers, as well as the West Valley LRT project, to understand and address barriers, share promising practices and knowledge, and advocate for and develop supportive policies.

Over 2022, we tested the ability of organizations to work together collaboratively, and sought to understand the limitations of these organizations to achieve their goals. With our research partners we identified several systemic barriers that were hindering the ability for organizations to be successful creating meaningful employment opportunities. These barriers include:

FUNDING STRUCTURES Funding often fosters competition instead of collaboration. “I see the biggest barrier [to the work of the collaboration] being the way organizations are funded. The funding structure is set up so that people can’t work together, so people don’t work together.”

SYSTEM VS. PROGRAM LEVEL SUCCESS Funding model reinforces program success (i.e., renewed funding for programs who met their deliverables). Each agency has different definitions and measurements of

success, making it difficult to share information and know the impact the collaboration is having at a systems level.

ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT AND DESIGN There is a lack of training and capacity for inter-organizational collaboration.

The Workforce Development Collaboratives informed several different outcomes of our work that continues into 2023. First, we understood the need for policy conversations around employment service funding and drafted position papers to inform policy changes. Second, while the collaboratives themselves did not facilitate systems change, it highlighted the need for employment organizations to continue to interact. As such, we created a Community of Practice for employment service organizations which provides an environment for these organizations to continue to

meet, build relationships, and discuss pressing issues. The Community of Practices also allows EndPoverty to continue to work and support these organizations.



05

Apprenticeships

Building a sustainable workforce will require Edmonton's construction and maintenance industry to increase recruitment from groups traditionally underrepresented in the current construction labour force, including women, Indigenous people, and new Canadians. Data shows that people who work in the industry have better-than-average incomes, lower unemployment rates, and decreased likelihood of needing social assistance. This suggests that increasing the number of Edmontonians working in construction could impact the lives of individuals experiencing poverty, address labour shortages experienced by Industry, and benefit the overall economy. The challenge facing the

construction industry going forward is determining the best way to attract under-represented groups to ensure the sector's long-term growth and sustainability.

INDUSTRY

EndPovertyEdmonton's Inclusive Economy team has partnered with the Edmonton Construction Association and several local employers to help them understand their role in making system level changes and exploring new ways of recruiting and retaining a more diverse workforce. While not all construction jobs require apprenticeships, apprenticeship opportunities offer a certification path that enhances long term employment outcomes and presents both a short and long term solution to eliminating poverty.

While barriers to entry and completion of apprenticeship remain, with industry and employers on board we

feel confident we are building the momentum to make lasting systems change that will significantly impact the lives of individuals and families currently experiencing poverty in our city.

THE SYSTEM

StatsCan reported 2019 apprenticeship completion rates for Alberta declined to 36%, and this was further negatively impacted by COVID-19. To attract Indigenous people and newcomers to the sector, systemic barriers must be addressed to ensure equitable access to apprenticeships and good jobs in construction.

Employers are hesitant to bring on apprentices with barriers to participating in apprenticeship because they take their responsibility as sponsors seriously and recognize that they are not equipped to address some of the barriers the system puts in place.

Access to/eligibility to participate in apprenticeship requires completion of specific highschool courses, which has proven to be a barrier for newcomers and many Indigenous people. Their alternative is to challenge a provincial entrance exam. Entrance exam preparation programs are extremely limited, expensive, and not delivered in a way that centers the learner at the beginning of a significant career journey.

This is where EndPovertyEdmonton has been able to help employers experiment while advocating for necessary support and policy changes to change the system. In September 2022, EndPovertyEdmonton supported the launch of the Alberta Construction Association's TradePathways program (funded by the provincial government). Over the summer, we ran an initiative with Delnor Construction to understand the barriers companies have connecting to and working with Community Employment Service Agencies, and in November 2022 we

kicked off a cohort hiring Initiative with A&H Steel and Ironworkers Local 720. Our A&H Steel Cohort Participants will need to pass the trades entrance exam by early 2024 in order to remain in the apprenticeship program. We have given ourselves until the end of 2023 to identify a solution for these folks and to address systemic gaps in academic upgrading for the purposes of challenging the trades entrance exam. We are working closely with community partners and educational institutions to understand where and how to make this happen as this work continues.



QUOTES FROM QUOTES FROM COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP RESEARCH*

Community Members

"In my experience with all of the folks that are in EPE, all of them, it's very, very open. Very willing to cooperate. Yeah, it's going really, really good. Really good."

"I know that I can call on EPE anytime and get a very, very positive response."

"What they're doing is really, really important. And all of Alberta in time will benefit. [...] the city of Edmonton is the only large city in Canada that is a living wage employer officially. That is huge."

"I think EPE is really what we needed in this province."

* Between November 1st, 2022 and February 22nd, 2023, CUP conducted 19 interviews with a total of 22 individuals representing 17 different EPE Inclusive Economy partners (community agencies/non-profit organizations, businesses, associations, unions, and municipalities). Each interview was between 50-60 minutes, and was of a semi-structured format - as the intention was to have meaningful conversations where pre-determined questions could be naturally inserted into each discussion. Questions focused on how participants came to interact or work with the inclusive economy team, if and how working with the inclusive economy team changed the organization's plans, practices, and/or policies related to an inclusive economy, and what they need from the inclusive economy team moving forward.

QUOTES FROM QUOTES FROM COMMUNITY-UNIVERSITY PARTNERSHIP RESEARCH*

Industry Members

"EPE connected the dots for us, provides some guidance and some explanation as we sorted through the process".

"I've said it probably half a dozen times, but EndPovertyEdmonton has played an absolutely essential role for us in its credibility, its experience, its network, its ability to advocate on our behalf. Like, they did good stuff and we're reaping the benefit of it. And hopefully so is the community."

"The biggest thing is awareness, and that is what EPE is doing".

"What I find most useful is they'll [EPE] connect organizations that are walking the path. And if I have a question along the path [EPE] is the first place I'll go to".

"They've been extremely helpful, actually. We didn't have any connections to the community, or potential service providers who could identify candidates for work readiness. So our project would actually not have been a success without the intervention of EndPovertyEdmonton."

"EndPovertyEdmonton was so important...because rather than me just trying randomly on my own, I decided that a group that specializes with newcomers and with other groups would be a better resource. And I'm kind of glad I did, because there's a lot of stuff that EndPovertyEdmonton points out, you know, different challenges, different things we need to think about, that I never would have thought about. I probably would have just been trying to recruit newcomers and then not knowing why it wasn't working."

06

Building an Integrated System of Early Learning and Care



EndPovertyEdmonton identified early learning and child care as a game changer that must be addressed if poverty is to be eliminated from Edmonton in a generation. In particular, EndPovertyEdmonton recognizes the need to work toward an integrated system of high-quality, inclusive, and affordable early learning and child care.

EndPovertyEdmonton is undertaking the work necessary to design, promote, and build an integrated system of early learning and care in Edmonton that will:

- Be publicly managed
- Be supported by public funding
- Consist of a workforce that is appropriately educated and well supported
- Coordinate the range of services needed to support young children and their families
- Contribute to poverty elimination

CHANGE WE WANT TO SEE

- Edmonton has a system of effective planning and management for early learning that conforms to the vision, mission, and principles of the Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care and that is supported by sufficient mechanisms, structures, and resources.
- The information needed to plan and manage a system is readily available and used on a regular basis to monitor and evaluate early learning and care in Edmonton. Targeted research is conducted as needed to address issues that arise in designing, implementing, and sustaining an effective system of early learning and care.
- Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care engages regularly with governments at all levels to promote and advance high-quality, affordable, accessible, and inclusive early learning and

care that meets the needs of vulnerable children and their families.

- Early learning and care in Edmonton is fully welcoming to and supportive of the range and diversity of young children and their families.
- The need for a system of early learning and care is well understood and broadly supported by Edmontonians, and the Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care is a widely recognized and credible source of information about early learning and care in Edmonton.

WHY WE SHOULD BUILD AN EARLY LEARNING AND CHILD CARE SYSTEM

Early Learning and Child Care (ELCC) is not just a “women’s” or parents’ issue. Benefits are much broader:

- For parents, increased opportunities to pursue educational and career goals

- For children, increased opportunities for learning and socializing that positively influence their development
- For employers, benefits from a larger and more diverse talent pool
- For communities, thriving families and a stronger economy (the economic case for the benefits of ELCC are well documented and strong)

OBJECTIVES

- To ensure the City of Edmonton economic and growth plans promote a system of high-quality, affordable, and accessible early learning and child care that all Edmontonians and families, and especially low-income and vulnerable families, can use.
- To incorporate a reconciliation lens into plans to promote a high-quality, affordable, and accessible early learning and child care system.
- To engage the City, local school boards, other levels of government,

and stakeholders, in building a system of ELCC in Edmonton.

- To develop understanding for the need for collective solutions and policies to respond to problems, challenges, and opportunities.
- To inform the public of the role a high-quality, affordable, and accessible early learning and child care system can contribute to ending poverty in Edmonton.
- To build community, institutional and political support for a system of early learning and care.
- To promote culturally responsive early learning and care services, curricula, and educational programs for service providers who work with Indigenous families, newcomer families and families living in poverty.
- Contribute to discussions and provide expertise at the federal, provincial and municipal level to support a national system of early learning and care.

Early learning and child care is a game changer that must be addressed if poverty is to be eliminated from Edmonton in a generation.



07

The Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care



The Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care (ECELCC) was created to pursue the work of EndPovertyEdmonton's Early Learning and Care gamechanger and comprises 18 institutional and community partners with expertise and experience in early learning and child care. It has created a vision, mission, and principles to guide this work. The Council has worked diligently to assess current conditions and needs, to explore options, and to identify paths for moving forward.

In 2022, the ECELCC released many briefs and reports, including:

Still Unaffordable for Low-Income Families? In Alberta's new child care system, out-of-pocket fee reductions are smaller for lower-income families

<https://www.ecelc.ca/publications-archive/still-unaffordable-for-low-income-families-a-discussion-paper-summary>

Exploring Licensed Early Learning and Child Care in Edmonton Day Homes

<https://www.ecelc.ca/publications-archive/exploring-licensed-early-learning-and-childcare-in-edmonton-day-homes-pslt6>

Exploring Licensed Early Learning and Child Care in Edmonton Day Homes: Interviews with Family Day Home Agencies

<https://www.ecelc.ca/publications-archive/exploring-licensed-early-learning-and-child-care-in-edmonton-day-homes-interviews-with-family-day-home-agencies-mm89n>

Headed Up, But Still Behind: Child Care Coverage Rates in Alberta's Top Ten Largest Cities, 2016 – 2021

<https://www.ecelc.ca/publications-archive/headed-up-but-still-behind-child-care-coverage-rates-in-albertas-top-ten-largest-cities-2016-2021>

Journeys through early learning and child care in Edmonton: The Experiences of ethnocultural families

<https://www.ecelc.ca/publications-archive/journeys-through-early-learning-and-child-care-in-edmonton-the-experiences-of-ethnocultural-families-nmz56>



08

Journeys Through Early Learning & Childcare in Edmonton



In January 2021, a collaborative project entitled *Journeys Through Early Learning & Childcare in Edmonton: The Experiences of Ethnocultural Families* was launched between the Multicultural Health Brokers, the Community University Partnership for the Study of Children, Youth, and Families, and the Edmonton Council for Early Learning and Care. The intention of the work was to gather first-hand accounts of the experiences of ethnocultural parents as they navigated the challenges involved in securing early learning and care for their children in Edmonton.

THE PROJECT WAS INTERESTED IN ANSWERING THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS:

- What are the lived experiences of ethnocultural families as they attempt to access and receive early learning and care in Edmonton?
- What assets, cultural resources, and ways of knowing can be harnessed to improve the system?
- What opportunities exist to shift approaches and practices and catalyze positive change?

The Journeys Project leaned on the cultural brokering skills and expertise of the Multicultural Health Brokers. A brokering approach is anchored in principles that support self-determination, agency, and choice - namely that communities determine their own needs, are full partners

in decision making, benefit from collaboration, and benefit from the transfer of knowledge and skills.

The Journeys Project engaged 30 parents from 8 ethnocultural communities in focus groups. This included participants from the Bhutanese, Chinese-speaking, Eritrean, Ethiopian, Filipino, Kurdish-speaking, Somali, and Spanish-speaking communities.

We then undertook an empathy and journey mapping process to produce 'personas' and composite stories that illustrate the complex experiences of parents. Each persona and composite story is a semi-fictional account woven together from what we heard from multiple participants and informed by the experiences of the brokers who work directly with ethnocultural families.

The results illuminate opportunities to improve early learning and care for ethnocultural families and their children. These pathways to change include:

1 EMPOWERING PARENTS: parents expressed a desire to be included in the education process and contribute their talents and cultural wealth toward the betterment of the childcare system;

2 SUPPORTING LANGUAGE AND CULTURE: parents aspire for the children to be in environments where their home language and cultural identities are nurtured;

3 FACILITATING INCLUSION AND BELONGING: parents yearn to be in environments where they feel welcomed and appreciated, and where they can share their experiences;

4 IMPROVING ACCESS AND NAVIGATION: parents identified the importance of improving access to childcare via means such as wayfinding and system navigators to help parents access childcare services; reducing language-related barriers for newcomer families; and addressing issues of affordability;

5 ADVANCING EQUITY: parents identified the need to address issues of equity and discrimination via practice and policy changes.

09

Indigenizing EndPovertyEdmonton



At EndPovertyEdmonton, we see ending poverty as a profound act of Reconciliation. Therefore, it is critical that Indigenization permeates everything we do. Our Indigenization gamechanger team works with EndPovertyEdmonton employees to provide them with teachings to elevate their level of understanding and develop their capacity as allies.

Our Indigenization team also works with governments, agencies, and organizations to ensure they:

- Recognize the validity of Indigenous worldviews, knowledge and perspectives
- Identify opportunities for indigeneity to be expressed
- Incorporate Indigenous ways of knowing and doing

To do this, the Indigenization team helps these organizations work towards:

- Awareness of the past
- Acknowledgement of the harm that has been inflicted
- Action to change behaviours

ENDPOVERTYEDMONTON'S INDIGENIZATION OBJECTIVES

- Advance reconciliation by collaborating with the Indigenous Circle and Indigenous community to bring an Indigenous lens to current and future EndPovertyEdmonton activities and supporting the implementation of recommendations developed by the Indigenous Circle
- Develop strategies, conduct research and undertake project management activities to advance EndPovertyEdmonton's and Indigenous communities' goals and objectives

- Collaborate with community and stakeholder partners to define, plan, coordinate and execute initiatives and projects related to ending poverty in the Indigenous community

WHAT DOES INDIGENIZATION AT ENDPOVERTYEDMONTON LOOK LIKE?

- In partnership with Indigenous Elders in Edmonton, develop key teachings on the importance of the matriarchal system and the impacts of colonization
- Advocate for the development of educational programs that support the sharing of the realities of First Nation history and the impacts of colonization
- Work with governments, agencies, and organizations to develop Reconciliation Action Plans
- Work with governments, agencies and organizations to ensure

Indigenization is at the core of Strategic Planning

- Advocate in the systems for the incorporation of Indigenous knowledge, practices, and solutions (e.g., sentencing circles in the Justice System, Kinship Care in Child Welfare)
- Work with established partners to further integrate Indigenous knowledge, solutions, practices, and ways of being into Edmonton culture
- Full implementation of the TRC Calls to Action, the MMIW Calls to Action, UNDRIP and full honoring of Treaty Rights

"We are all related – humans, animals and the earth. There's a kinship between all living things. Natural law talks about the natural pattern and order of things such as cause and effect – things will happen regardless of what we want or anticipate. The changing of the seasons is an example of natural law. We know that no matter what, we will have spring, summer, winter and fall. Natural law is relational to land-based teachings.

When we talk about Natural Law at EndPovertyEdmonton, our job in Indigenization and using natural law is to be mindful and intuitive to recognize when natural law is occurring. We need to recognize when things are out of our hands or when we can be better prepared. We use natural law to guide us through our practices and procedures."

– Karen Bruno,
Director of Indigenization

10

Indigenous Circle



The Indigenous Circle was created and convened to ensure that the policies, actions and advocacy work in ending poverty appropriately reflects the priorities and needs of Indigenous people in Edmonton. The Indigenous Circle works to advise, inform and influence the work of EndPovertyEdmonton through traditional governance as a means of restoring Indigenous worldview and understanding the path forward.

EndPovertyEdmonton honours our work with the Indigenous Circle by recognizing them as a key governing body. We are committed to advancing reconciliation by collaborating with the Indigenous Circle and Indigenous community to bring an Indigenous lens to current and future EndPovertyEdmonton activities and supporting the implementation of recommendations developed by the Indigenous Circle.

INDIGENOUS CIRCLE GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The work of the Indigenous Circle is guided by the following principles/values:

- Four Natural Laws: kindness, honesty, sharing, strength (Nehiyaw/Cree)
- Seven Grandfather Teachings: wisdom, love, courage, respect, truth, humility, honesty (Anishinabe/Ojibway)
- Thinking ahead toward the Seventh Generation

There are diverse Indigenous communities in Edmonton that include First Nations, Métis and Inuit people both from Alberta and across the country. It is important to recognize and consider the cultural diversity of urban Indigenous communities as we move forward. The Indigenous Circle's work also consults and upholds the United Nations Declaration

on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), calls to action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) of Canada and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Addressing poverty is not an act of charity but an act of reconciling basic human rights. That is the inalienable right of all human beings to live with dignity and access to an adequate standard of living. With the freedom and equality to pursue other civil, cultural, economic, political, and social rights.

Thinking Ahead Towards the Seventh Generation



AUGUST 2022

INDIGENIZATION LUNCHEON

The Indigenous Circle has a tradition of meeting with the Mayor of Edmonton and Edmonton City Council to share their perspectives on reconciliation, inclusion, safety, and wellbeing for Indigenous people, especially those living in poverty. We hope these conversations lead to a continued working relationship and these voices continue to be heard when policies are made in Edmonton.



11

Indigenous Culture and Wellness Centre



For decades, Indigenous Peoples have envisioned a place for community to gather, celebrate, and receive services in Edmonton. Many Elders, advocates, non-profit Indigenous organizations, and community members have kept the dream alive all these years. EndPovertyEdmonton is proud to support the development of the Indigenous Culture and Wellness Centre.

The Indigenous Culture and Wellness Centre (ICWC) is envisioned as a welcoming space for the benefit of all urban Indigenous people in the region with the aim of providing a safe space for the practice of community, ceremony, and wellness.

The Indigenous Culture and Wellness Centre (ICWC) will be a community cultural centre benefitting all Indigenous people -

as well as non-Indigenous people who wish to learn more about First Nations, Métis, Inuit and their practices - in the Edmonton area. The ICWC shall be a welcoming place for all people; a space for urban Indigenous Peoples to come together to connect their mind, body and spirit.



"It is important to elevate Indigenous voices, perspectives and experiences. It is a time for Indigenous people on Turtle Island to showcase their culture, talent and knowledge and for Canadians to listen, learn and value those perspectives.

For so long, Indigenous history including the history of Canada, was taught from a colonial lens and infantilized Indigenous people. Indigenous people were portrayed in a negative light and our contributions were diminished.

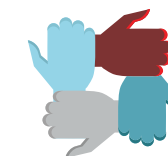
We are moving into an era where Indigenous communities are coming together as a unified voice to reclaim our language, culture, land and indigeneity.

EndPovertyEdmonton, encourages everyone to explore what it means to be an ally. A few of the many ways in which you could do this is to; support local Indigenous businesses, attend Indigenous events happening in our city, learn about Treaty 6 and say a prayer for the Indigenous children who lost their lives while in residential schools and for the missing and murdered Indigenous women, men, boys and girls."

"Hiy hiy"
– Kourtney Boucher,
Director of Indigenization

12

Integrating Lived Experience into EndPovertyEdmonton's Work



Lived experience is the representation of the experiences and choices of a given person and the knowledge they gain from these experiences and choices.

At EndPovertyEdmonton, our lived experience mandate is to inform policy discourse through engagement, community empowerment, research, analysis and report-writing for the purposes of decision-making and ultimately to improve the wellbeing of the communities we serve.

Throughout 2022, we laid a strong foundation upon which to build our lived experience work, and have started to demonstrate the utility of lived experience in all policy work.

4 REALMS IN WHICH WE OPERATE:

- Engagement/Empowerment
- Peer support
- Research
- Advocacy

GUIDING PRINCIPLE

Our guiding principle is the universal declaration of Human Rights that respect and dignity of all human family is the foundation of freedom, justice and peace in our society.

HOW WE WORK

- 1 Scoping review
- 2 Proposal, framework, consent forms and interview questions
- 3 Engage the community
- 4 Conduct focus groups or in-depth interviews for feedback from the community
- 5 Transcribe and analyze the data
- 6 Write a report based on the feedback from the community to inform decision
- 7 Member check-ins

SOME OF OUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

- 1 Expanded our existing networks to include people with lived experience in EndPovertyEdmonton's work
- 2 Delivered a lived experience affordable housing report to the City of Edmonton—report generated from primary research and data
- 3 Currently working to create a community-led governance model for lived experience

AREAS OF OPPORTUNITY:

- Create a dashboard to monitor progress and areas of improvements
- Develop common lexicon
- Work with the community to evaluate us and provide feedback
- More support needed for the tactical data work and training

- Demonstrate the utility of lived experience in all policy work—the how of it
- Virtual teas with the community

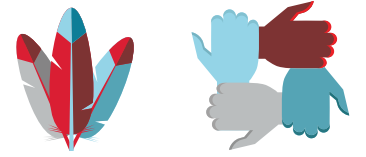
Nothing about us without us.

Don't do to them; or do for them; BUT do WITH them.

The worldview for Lived Experience—compassion, respect and trust.

13

Community-Led Governance Model for Lived Experience



EndPovertyEdmonton led the focus group sessions of people with lived and living experiences on how to steward community-led governance models for the Edmonton Chamber of Voluntary Organizations. The demographics of participants included Indigenous, black, and white (1 LGBTQ2S+; 5 females and 6 males).

The interview questions explored the following thematic areas:

- What is lived experience from the participants purview
- Imagining a successful community-led governance
- What safety means within the governance
- Operations of the governance body

The recurring themes around initial findings were:

- Lived experience as a continuum
- Recognition that there are different types of lived experience. The participants wondered
- what that means for representation in governance
- Rights relative to the existing government, structures or systems in place
- What a successful lived experience governance would look like – with the Indigenous Circle as a model
- Safety as an underlying principle together with other identified guiding principles of
- equity, transparency, trust et al
- Logistical operations

LIVED EXPERIENCES REPRESENTED:

Suicide
Domestic Violence
Addiction and Mental Health
Health Challenges
PTSD/Mental Health
Sexual Assault
Poverty
Racism
Homelessness

CONCLUSION

To conclude, many of the participants wondered out loud about how the system can be fixed when they feel disempowered in the system and by the system. Chasm between autonomy and authority – constant questioning around governance, advisory group, what it means to be

individual or be in a community?
What it means to share or be a part of a system together?
Can they trust the system?
What does it mean to be safe?
To belong? And how can they successfully engage with current oppressive systems/structures?



14

Housing Needs Assessment Report for the City of Edmonton



Housing is a basic human right. According to the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), “Adequate housing is the right of every woman, man, youth and child to gain and sustain a safe and secure home and community in which to live in peace and dignity.”

In support of this aim, and as part of the City of Edmonton’s Housing Needs Assessment project, EndPovertyEdmonton conducted qualitative research by utilizing critical ethnography through one-on-one in-depth interviews with individuals with housing lived and living experiences in 13 priority populations. This empowered the participants to tell their stories and relay their housing journeys, which in turn helped the City of Edmonton better understand current and future housing needs of these populations.

POPULATIONS ENGAGED WITH

- Women and children fleeing domestic violence
- Female heads of households, especially single mothers
- Seniors 65+
- Young adults aged 18-29
- Indigenous peoples
- Racialized people
- Recent immigrants, especially refugees
- Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning, and Two-Spirit (LGBTQ2S+)
- People with physical health or mobility challenges
- People with developmental disabilities
- People dealing with mental health and addictions issues
- Veterans
- People experiencing homelessness

The research resulted in a wealth of knowledge regarding barriers to finding or retaining affordable housing, as well as a thorough list of potential solutions:

- Provide long-term economic security to support those in low-income
- Provide greater financial assistance, more quickly
- Tackle poverty and racism
- Provide appropriate and targeted workforce development, professional development, job coaching, and job readiness
- Provide sustained and continuous therapy for those with mental health, addiction or other issues including recovery from abuse
- Review income-dependent rent calculations
- Build capacity for financial literacy; particularly learning to build credit for youth

- Train case workers in sensitivity and peer support
- Train residents to be able to live in, maintain, and keep a home
- Build more affordable homes, ensuring a higher proportion of mobility accessible and larger-family dwellings; access to transit; include people with lived/living experience in the design phase
- Simplify and coordinate applications
- Shorten wait times
- Adapt/develop better regulations for landlords and maintenance of rental dwellings








Poverty is complex. It cannot be solved by one person or even one group. The Cree have a word, kîyânaw, which means “for all of us”. It will take all of us moving in the same direction to end poverty.

Let's end poverty together.

ENDPOVERTYEDMONTON.CA

 @endpovertyYEG  endpoverty-edmonton  EndPovertyYEG



THANK YOU