



LETHBRIDGE

COMMUNITY WELLBEING

STRATEGIC PLAN:
Towards Collective Impact

City of Lethbridge
Community Social Development

APRIL 2019



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INTRODUCTION

The City of Lethbridge's Community Social Development (CSD) department completed a comprehensive process to develop its 5-year Strategic Plan grounded in research, data analyses, best practices, and community engagement.

As part of this effort, a Needs Assessment was completed that brought together findings from available data, public engagement and consultations, information from other initiatives, and social asset mapping to discern priority social challenges in Lethbridge.

It became very clear as the community engagement progressed that an intentional collective effort was needed across stakeholders working on social issues. Stakeholders strongly supported an effort to pull together the diverse efforts underway and ensure maximum impact. There was significant alignment from the research and consultations for the development of a fulsome Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy that would address high-level priorities and help move community efforts in the same direction with clear accountabilities and timelines.

Through this process, it also became apparent that the City's role is to act as convenor and support the coordination of diverse efforts to create and implement the Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy (CWSS). Building on the emerging directions of the proposed CWSS, the CSD Strategic Plan is premised on the City's support for this community-based direction.

Moving forward, the City proposes to act as the backbone support for the creation of the Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy in partnership with key stakeholders.



1.1 NEEDS ASSESSMENT KEY FINDINGS

The Needs Assessment Report outlined trends and issues impacting wellbeing in Lethbridge that directly shaped the strategic directions for CSD moving forward. The diverse perspectives and sources of information analysed converged on several key priority social issues and demographic groups requiring tailored responses. The Executive Summary of the Needs Assessment is included in the Appendix section of this report.

Figure 1: Dominant Social Issues & Priority Populations

DOMINANT SOCIAL ISSUES

- » Mental health & addictions supports
- » Balancing prevention & crisis responses
- » Community safety measures
- » Interpersonal violence prevention/ intervention
- » Homelessness response
- » Poverty & inequality measures
- » Enhancing resilience and coping skills
- » Coordinating support services
- » Education, employment, training

PRIORITY POPULATIONS

- » Indigenous peoples
- » Youth & young adults
- » Seniors
- » Immigrants and refugees
- » Women fleeing violence
- » Families with children
- » People with disabilities
- » Those facing mental health, addictions
- » Low income households

BUILDING A RESILIENT, GROWTH-PROOF SOCIAL INFRASTRUCTURE

In some respects, the social challenges Lethbridge is facing are those brought on by urbanisation as the community grows from a town into a city. For this growth to be sustainable and beneficial across demographics, it will require social infrastructure adjustments and transformations.

The City's role as a convener on social issues is to spur action across diverse assets and initiatives to set Lethbridge up as an inclusive city long-term where everyone has the opportunity to thrive. The way forward will require strategic and intentional leveraging of community assets both locally and regionally.

The growing population pressures associated with urbanisation are associated with social challenges, particularly housing affordability/homelessness, population health, poverty, and strains on existing infrastructure. The community will have to consider how to best leverage and align current assets and efforts, especially in light of the relatively high proportion of seniors and children in the community.

LEVERAGING AND MAXIMISING COMMUNITY ASSETS TO RESPOND TO COMPETING PRIORITIES

The fact that Lethbridge continues to attract migration means that inclusion and belonging are essential to support successful settlement. The high numbers of Indigenous and immigrant migrants into the City means that tailored approaches for these groups will continue to be essential. The increasing number of people with disabilities, both developmental and/or physical, will require supports to be healthy and to belong.

The uneven impacts of social and material deprivation on Indigenous communities are concerning across Canadian communities. The overrepresentation of Indigenous people in the homeless population, those struggling with addictions and mental health and poverty, means that a cultural lens will continue to be a priority for Lethbridge.

The opioid crisis has hit Lethbridge particularly hard; overdoses, police calls, and supervised consumption use trends are highlighting the devastating impacts experienced by those directly and indirectly affected. The impacts of the crisis are felt city-wide; thus, solutions will need to address the challenges holistically across stakeholder groups.

While safety and immediate crises responses are essential, recognising and continuing to prioritise prevention cannot be understated. The spike in domestic violence in the City is telling us that families are under extreme strain. Mental health diagnoses and prescription rates are indicating as well that vulnerabilities are impacting more than what we immediately see in our crises response. We have to recognise and prioritise prevention, so that the cycles of trauma and poverty can be challenged long term.

DEFINING THE ROLE OF THE CITY AS CONVENOR OF COMMUNITY IMPACT EFFORTS

The fact that significant resources are in place, yet reportedly strained and uncoordinated, points to the need for a more effective community-based response system as well. While \$700M/year in charitable revenues are in place, there is still consistent reporting that more investment is needed to address the aforementioned challenges. Given the need for better leveraging and coordination, it is incumbent that effective and efficient use of these resources is achieved particularly in a climate where social spending is strained.

The City's role within the wellbeing space should also be clarified appropriately. With its direct investment being very limited to provincial and federal flow-through funding of services, the value add of the City's involvement is that of convener among willing stakeholders working on safety and wellbeing. Moving forward, it is essential that the City consider how best to maximise its limited investment to influence the broader \$700M community social asset value for best outcomes for the community.

CONFIRMATION OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT FINDINGS

To gauge community feedback on the Needs Assessment and emerging strategic directions, the City convened key community leaders together to provide feedback and discuss the possibilities of future collaborative work on community wellbeing and safety January 31, 2019. From this dialogue, the City prepared a draft CSD Strategic Plan and received community support to begin convening key stakeholders to develop a Lethbridge Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy over the course of the year.

Feedback from the stakeholder session confirmed the research and consultation input, particularly the focus on enhanced integration of diverse initiatives towards common objectives.

Stakeholders noted that balancing crisis responses and prevention will be essential moving forward.

The priority needs and populations were confirmed as well – with an emphasis on mental health and addictions, disabilities, poverty, and violence. The participants noted that the needs of priority populations will need to be taken into account holistically: pointing out that the priorities are interconnected and cannot be done in isolation of one another. A fulsome approach is needed to move the community in a coordinated manner.

The stakeholders also noted how interrelated and overlapping identities are at the individual level: someone may identify as LGBTQIA2S+, and be a senior and Indigenous. Thus, a person-centred approach will be essential to meet the person where they're at, rather than crafting program-centric models that place artificial boundaries on complex realities.



1.2 EMERGING ALIGNMENT FOR A COMMUNITY WELLBEING & SAFETY STRATEGY

Stakeholders on January 31, 2019 expressed that enhanced integration of efforts will ultimately be needed, paving the way forward to address common priorities collectively. To this end, most (87%) agreed to develop a Lethbridge Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy (CWSS). Those who did not agree with the direction noted that it may not be possible to align efforts due to fear over losing funding, lack of trust, or ability to agree on common goals.

For a collective approach to be successful long-term, a common understanding of intent, roles and responsibilities is needed. Each partner must be respected for what they can contribute, and operational realities such as funding, individual mandates, capacity, jurisdictional issues, and willingness must be acknowledged.

The primary areas of focus for the future CWSS based on the Needs Assessment findings discussed/affirmed by stakeholders were:

1. Systems Planning & Integration

– focused on the need to improve integration of diverse services, efforts, and resources towards the creation of a person-centred social safety ecosystem.

2. Safe & Resilient Communities

– focused on prevention/intervention measures to mitigate vulnerability to addictions, abuse, violence, trauma, etc. and enhance resiliency for individuals and communities to be safe and to thrive.

3. Basic Needs

– focused on ensuring the basic necessities of life are adequate and accessible, including shelter, food, transportation, as well as access to education, recreation, employment, and training.

4. Social Inclusion

– focused on engagement and building strengths to create welcoming communities, social cohesion, and belonging.

Stakeholders also noted that an overarching coordinating body is needed to lead these efforts, ensuring communication, resource coordination, joint outcomes measurement, and clarity of direction. This aligns with the Collective Impact concept of the ‘backbone organisation’ – to be explained in the next section – tasked with convening and leading community efforts. There was agreement that the City should continue to convene stakeholders to develop the Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy with the understanding that the eventual role of the City in this work would be determined over the course of this next phase of work.

Based on this community feedback, CSD proposes a Strategic Plan to Council that focuses on supporting this direction as per stakeholder feedback. The CSD Strategic Plan will align with the emerging priorities identified in the Needs Assessment and the proposed directions of the CWSS. As highlighted in the community sessions, there is a will to work together, improve outcomes, and maximise impact. What is needed is a coordination vehicle to discern how best to achieve integration among diverse stakeholders.



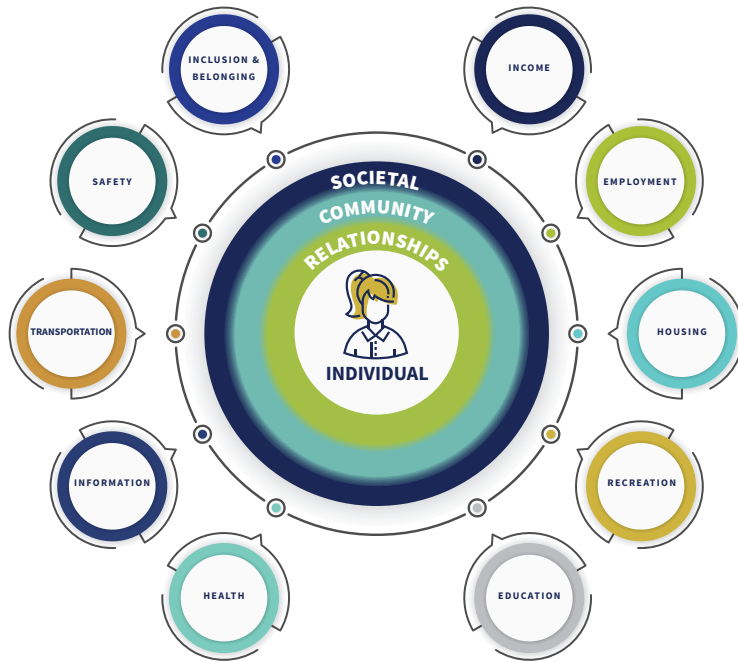
KEY CONCEPTS

INDIVIDUAL WELLBEING

There are various interrelated domains impacting wellbeing, including basic needs like housing and income, and beyond – such as education and recreation. These domains are impacted by relationships, community, and societal contexts.

An integrated safety net ecosystem will need to work across these domains to achieve the desired impact and overcome the current siloed approach.

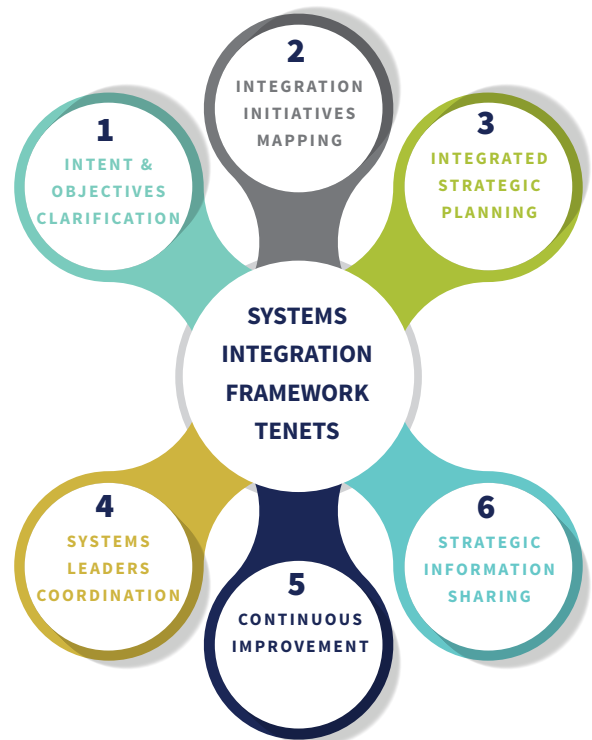
Figure 2: Dimensions of Wellbeing through a Prevention & Strengths-based Lens



SYSTEMS INTEGRATION

A fully-integrated safety net ecosystem has mechanisms in place that bring key public and community decision makers together in an ongoing process to ensure efforts are effective, aligned, and mutually-reinforcing towards shared objectives. This is, in turn, aligned with efforts across frontline service delivery in respective organisations.²

Figure 3: Key Tenets of Systems Integration



COLLECTIVE IMPACT

As described by FSG Consulting¹, Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of actors from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a complex social problem. In order to create lasting solutions to social problems on a large scale; organisations – including those in government, civil society, and the business sector – need to coordinate their efforts and work together around a clearly-defined goal.

Collective Impact is a significant shift from the social sector's current paradigm of 'isolated impact' because the underlying premise of collective impact is that no single organisation can create large-scale, lasting social change alone. There is no 'silver bullet' solution to systemic social problems, and these problems cannot be solved by simply scaling or replicating one organisation or program. Strong organisations are necessary, but not sufficient, for large-scale social change.

Not all social problems are suited for collective impact solutions. Collective Impact is best employed for problems that are complex and systemic rather than technical in nature. Such initiatives are currently being employed to address a wide variety of issues around the world, including education, healthcare, homelessness, the environment, and community development. Many of these initiatives are already showing concrete results, and reinforcing the promise of Collective Impact in solving complex social problems.

For Collective Impact to be successful, five conditions should be met:

- 1. Common Agenda among key stakeholders,**
- 2. Shared Measurement to assess impact,**
- 3. Mutually Reinforcing Activities aligned to priority objectives,**
- 4. Continuous Communication among stakeholders to maintain trust and alignment; and**
- 5. Backbone Organisation Supports to coordinate and convene partners.**

See Appendix A for more on Collective Impact.

COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE

It is essential that governance of Collective Impact initiatives is delivered by the full range of stakeholders that it involves; as such, to be effective the CWSS must be delivered through Community Governance.

Community Governance as a key concept refers to a community ownership and co-creation of the mechanisms used to deliver a set of core accountabilities for the CWSS:

Key Accountabilities

- 1 Strategy implementation oversight**
- 2 Strategy outcomes monitoring and performance management**
- 3 Coordination of diverse funding streams**
- 4 Data collection, information sharing and reporting**

To ensure fulsome representation, the membership could include the following groups working together. Since this model would need to be cocreated with partners, this would become part of the City's role to support as backbone to the Collective Impact work ahead.

IMPACT

- » Follows a Collective Impact model – with City as backbone organization
- » Community governance and decision making
- » Collaboration & input from key external organizations, groups and the community
- » Coordinated delivery of programs, services and responses to common issues
- » Coordinated funding (consolidation of criteria and processes for funding)
- » Information sharing to promote best-practices
- » Community wide outcomes and measurement
- » Coordinated messaging and streamlined communication across entire community



To support this direction the City can enhance its internal integration across departments to align efforts and impacts on safety and wellbeing. This can be an initial phase while the community governance is being cocreated with key stakeholders.



FOUNDATIONAL VALUES

It is important to articulate the values underpinning the CSD Strategic Plan: what they are, and what they are not.

This section summarises values that emerged during the consultation process, review of community information, and the needs assessment analysis.

PREVENTION over intervention.

Where possible, our work will continue to prioritise early intervention and prevention measures, rather than waiting for issues to become crises before we intervene.

PERSON-CENTRED over system- or program-centred.

We will strive to build services, policies, and processes grounded in what individuals and families tell us they need, as opposed to what systems or programs perceive the needs and solutions to be.

AGILITY over tradition.

We will prioritise being flexible, adaptable, and quick-to-act rather than business-as-usual mentalities as this is essential to meeting the fast-pace of change in our community.

SUSTAINABILITY over deficit.

We will work to maximise value for taxpayers and develop financially-sustainable models, rather than assuming constant growth of expenditures will resolve social challenges.

COMMUNITY-LED over government-led.

We see communities and citizens as essential assets in our social infrastructure with the role of government and institutions as supportive rather than directive.

INTEGRATED over fragmented.

We are committed to building seamless and accessible supports for those who need them, and will continue to challenge disparate efforts out of alignment with our community's priorities.

STRENGTHS-BASED over deficit-based.

We will build on what works with a lens on promoting the strengths and resilience of individuals, families, and communities rather than solely focusing on what is going wrong and what is broken.





EMERGING STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

To honour and align CSD’s work with the strategic directions that emerged from community input towards a future Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy, we will align our internal priorities to the same key themes identified during the Needs Assessment consultation process, particularly the January 31, 2019 session.

The following four directions were confirmed as priorities by the community for all of Lethbridge stakeholders to work towards. To this end, CSD’s Strategic Plan aligns with these directions as well to ensure movement towards an aligned community-based direction.

Of note, these directions are not listed in order priority – and we recognise their interrelatedness in practice.

Figure 4: Strategic Directions



For each of the Strategic Directions, the body of the document will tell a story about the theme area and focus on CSD’s role to advance this priority. Each section will outline:

- 1. Context
- 2. Recommendations
- 3. Community Input
- 4. CSD Key Actions
- 5. Timeframe (Short-term: 1 year; Medium-term: 2-3 years; Long-term: 4-5 years)

Community Social Development staff will develop an annual business plan, pending the approval of the Strategic Plan, outlining key steps, resources, timelines, and core collaborators.

1. SYSTEMS PLANNING & INTEGRATION

CONTEXT

Lethbridge has a rich social services sector, engaged health, justice, and education systems, and caring businesses, faith, and volunteer communities. In fact, **over 400 programs and organisations are currently operating in the community funded by over \$700M annually.** Yet these assets are not streamlined into a coordinated system of care as well as they could be.

Hundreds of millions of dollars have been spent to fund programs and services to address community safety and social wellbeing such as homelessness, poverty, mental illness, drug and substance abuse, domestic violence, poor health, and trauma. A plethora of public, non-profit and private organisations provide social programs, healthcare, and justice services to the vulnerable populations.

Significant time, effort and dollars are spent developing and implementing specific organisational strategies, and even more money is spent on governance through various boards, committees, and layers of administrative processes and measures.

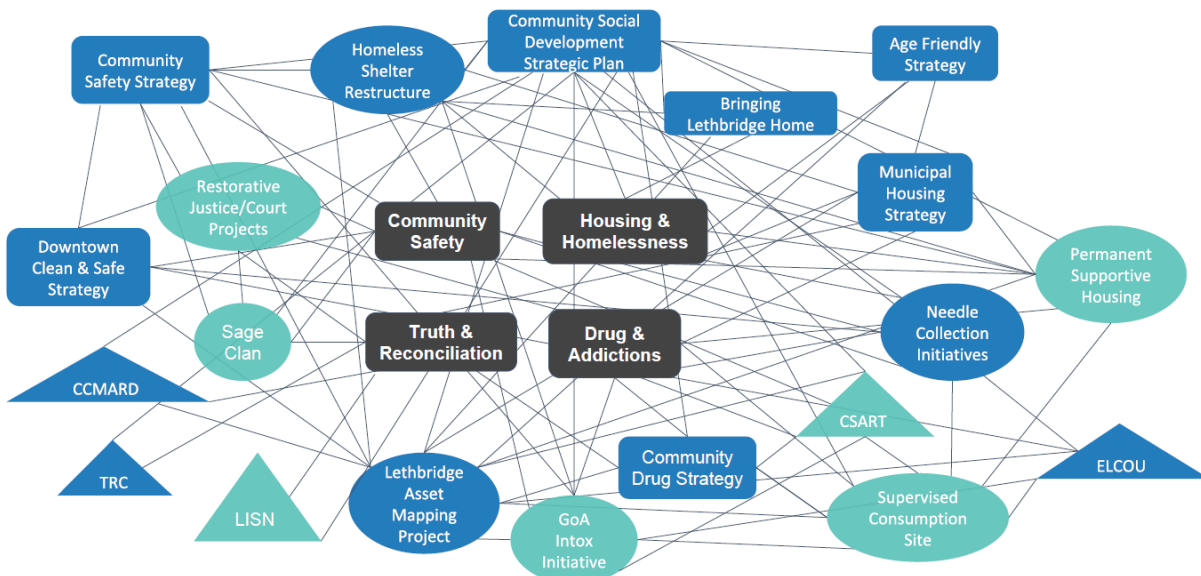
City-led initiatives, programs, or projects coexist with many others provincial, federal, or community-based initiatives such as:

- » Alberta Health Intox program
- » Supervised consumption services
- » Medical and social detox programs
- » Community Substance Abuse Awareness Resource Team (CSART)
- » Lethbridge Early Years Coalition
- » Lethbridge Indigenous Sharing Network
- » Lethbridge Local Immigration Partnership
- » Refugee resettlement programs

In addition, the City of Lethbridge is one of many organisations that fund community safety and social wellbeing initiatives; others include the Governments of Canada and Alberta; the United Way of Southwestern Alberta; the Community Foundation of Lethbridge & Southwestern Alberta; private donors; and faith groups. Finally, through our social asset mapping project we have determined there are approximately 400 different organisations and services delivering social wellbeing programs in Lethbridge.

All of the following efforts are occurring concurrently in the community, spurring questions regarding how these initiatives fit together. The lack of clear coordination among these efforts has led to confusion on how they intersect and align.

Figure 5: Wellbeing Initiatives Underway & their Interconnections



It is critical to highlight that these social challenges are full community challenges – not solely the City’s responsibility or purview to resolve; it will take all of us pulling in the same direction to move the needle and tackle root causes.

The City is proposing to develop a more strategic approach to coordinate and align such initiatives internally, and to further play a leadership role in convening community discussions and integration externally.

We have to look for ways to better integrate these services, invest in what works, and ensure key services are in place to support those in need. We believe there is great potential to do this work better together as a community.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Community leaders indicated on January 31 that this emerging priority resonated, and that systems-level planning and integration must be practical, relevant, accessible, and user-friendly. The flexibility and adaptability of funding should allow for full engagement of all people involved – front line, lived experience, subject experts, families, all sectors, etc.

There should be freedom to take services to the client rather than force the client to come to services.

Since systems are all interconnected, buy-in from all partners is paramount. Transparency and strong communication will be critical to success. Leadership, funding coordination, and governance were suggested; however, it was also cautioned that additional bureaucracy and barriers should be managed to prevent roadblocks in sharing information.

Groups indicated that collaboration needs to be based on building trusting relationships that recognise and respect differences, yet are focused on common goals. Clients and their user-experiences must guide decisions with accessibility for all. Regional approaches and relationships should be encouraged, particularly with the Blood Tribe.

This direction was also confirmed in meetings with the University of Lethbridge, the Government of Alberta, school districts, other local funders, First Nations partners, and Reserves representatives.

All engaged agreed that the best path forward was through a community-wide strategy and aligned efforts.



RECOMMENDATIONS

We will build on the support demonstrated at the January 31, 2019 Community Leaders Session for a community-based overarching strategy on wellbeing and safety, and support its co-development and implementation. This will leverage the diverse efforts already underway and create a community-based model for strategically advancing common objectives.

Building on Collective Impact concepts, a community-based governance model would entail the creation of a process and coordination mechanisms among community stakeholders to achieve shared objectives around wellbeing and safety. This can take the form of disassembling our current committee structure and introducing an overarching Steering Group made up of representatives and supported by the City to work on a common agenda, tracking progress and impact, and mutually reinforcing activities.

Based on stakeholder support, the City can act as the Backbone Organisation coordinating actions to support the strategy implementation and collective movement across stakeholders. The Backbone Organisation can assist in coordinating service delivery, fostering collaboration and engagement, and increasing linkages across agencies/systems. It can also improve accountability, coordinate funding, and ultimately keep the stakeholders aligned and focused on the vision.

In its role, the City would act as convener, collaborator, and catalyst for funding, and establish a streamlined, integrated system of care.

The Backbone Organisation's key roles include:

- » **Funding Coordination:** Able to bring partners together to coordinate investment in highest impact activities, and to ensure a complementary approach.
- » **Capacity Building:** Bring up collective IQ of community, services, developers, researchers, etc. to develop and implement innovative measures and best practices.
- » **Partnerships & Innovation:** Build partnerships across sectors to support Strategy goals; this will include exploring social finance innovation, financial, and land trust management.
- » **Leadership & Accountability:** Report to the community on stakeholder engagement, research and continuous improvement, policy advocacy to keep homelessness a priority, and knowledge dissemination.
- » **Systems Planning:** Enhance system-level coordination for service providers to support the Strategy goals regardless of funding source. Can coordinate with diverse departments, governments, donors, etc. Moving forward, significant capacity building will be needed to ensure the sectors at all organisational levels are informed and trained on their role in implementation. This includes consistent and ongoing training on innovative programming that follows best practice.

TO SUPPORT THIS DIRECTION, SEVERAL ACTIONS ARE NEEDED INTERNALLY WITHIN THE CITY OF LETHBRIDGE:

Internal alignment across City funding and initiatives related to community wellbeing and safety (such as Municipal Housing Strategy, Community Safety Strategy, Community Drug Strategy, Clean and Safe Downtown Strategy, Social Asset Mapping, etc.). This integration will support capacity building within the City of Lethbridge and the development of a Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy with community stakeholders, while aligning various ongoing and emerging initiatives.

Although all stakeholders are important, there are key organisations that either provide significant funding for or lead considerable efforts to address social wellbeing and community safety. These include (but are not limited to) the Government of Alberta, United Way of Lethbridge and SW Alberta, the Community Foundation of Lethbridge and SW Alberta, post-secondary institutions, school districts, First Nations groups, and private/faith groups. We will continue to bring these key partners together to discern common outcomes, funding models, and integrated service delivery approaches that maximise our resources for best impact. Internally, we will refine/integrate our internal approach to social issues, relevant policies, funding, and committees to support this direction with Council's support and leadership.



ACTIONS

TIMELINES

1.1	Advance the co-development of a Lethbridge Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy (CWSS) with community partners to align efforts towards common objectives.	SHORT
1.2	Work with key funders, system partners, and service providers to develop a community-based governance model to deliver Lethbridge CWSS priorities in a coordinated and strategic manner. An option is adapting Calgary's Community Systems Integration Table that brings decision makers together to align respective strategies to shared objectives.	SHORT
1.3	<p>Encourage City Council to support community-based governance and integrated service delivery through a review and realignment of the Social Policy and current committee structure to the proposed direction emerging from the CWSS. This would include realigning the City's various funded and led initiatives on safety and wellbeing internally using a common framework. This includes coordination of current and future committees and initiatives such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> » Bringing Lethbridge Home » Reconciliation Implementation Plan » Family and Community Support Services (FCSS) » Social Housing In Action (SHIA) » Age-Friendly Lethbridge » Municipal Housing Strategy » Community Drug Strategy » Community Safety Strategy » Needle Collection Strategy » Clean Sweep Program » Diversion Outreach Team » Executive Leaders Coalition on Opioid Use (ELCOU) » VIBRANT Lethbridge (poverty initiative) » Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CMARD) » Downtown Clean & Safe Strategy 	MEDIUM
1.4	Enhance regional collaboration with surrounding communities beginning with relationship and trust building, particularly the Blood and Piikani Reserve, across organisational/decision-making levels to support regional systems planning efforts. This includes collaboration with rural communities and the County.	LONG
1.5	Assess and align current City of Lethbridge policies, practices, and funded services with Reconciliation Calls to Action and the Local Health Integration Network Welcoming Communities Framework.	MEDIUM
1.6	Review City of Lethbridge internal systems and structure to ensure effective development and implementation of the CWSS as part of an ongoing business transformation process.	SHORT
1.7	Align internal City funding portfolios and initiatives to assess and report impact using a common Performance & Funding Framework in alignment with Council priorities and the CWSS.	SHORT
1.8	Work with system and community partners to develop and deliver capacity building and training on trauma-informed care, integrated service delivery, harm reduction and person-centred services across frontline responders and services.	MEDIUM
1.9	Work with key funders and service providers to develop approaches to better care for frontline staff, particularly around the challenges of vicarious trauma, burnout, and working with addictions and mental health.	MEDIUM

2. SAFE & RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

CONTEXT

Community safety, mental health, and substance use are resoundingly Lethbridge's top-of-mind social challenges. The opioid crisis and its reverberating impacts for individuals, families, and entire communities are challenges faced internationally and have manifested in the Lethbridge context over the last two-to-three years.

There is no doubt of the commitment of health, first responders, and social service providers to address the drug crisis and safety challenges it has contributed, yet community concerns and data confirm that more needs to be done.

This indicates a need for a balanced approach to health and safety that ensures options are in place along a fulsome prevention and recovery continuum that provides the right options at the right time from a person-centred lens.

This means we also acknowledge and address community concerns over safety, and ensure measures are in place to mitigate these. It also means we have to ensure that we are not simply band-aiding the symptoms of much more complex issues that spur addictions and mental health issues, and that we take proactive steps to support evidence-based measures to address current and future crises.

Beyond the visible challenges we face, the data and consultations are showing us that the stress on families and children is manifesting in increased domestic violence and intergenerational trauma. Here we have to pay attention to over-representation amongst populations affected by trauma, and develop tailored interventions particularly for Indigenous peoples and refugees. Vulnerable seniors, children and youth, lone parents and people with disabilities are also consistently among this population and have diverse needs, reaffirming the need for a person-centred approach.

At the community level, we will support approaches that enhance safety and the perception of safety across city neighbourhoods. We will also pursue innovative approaches to restorative justice, addictions treatment, and mental health supports.

COMMUNITY INPUT

On January 31, 2019 community stakeholders noted that multiple approaches are needed to address safety at multiple levels. Participants noted that perceptions of safety need to be addressed, and that safety is subjective.

To this end, restorative justice and a measured law enforcement approach are needed, particularly highlighting culturally-competent programming. Safety from violence and building resilience in both children and parents were also noted as a priority.

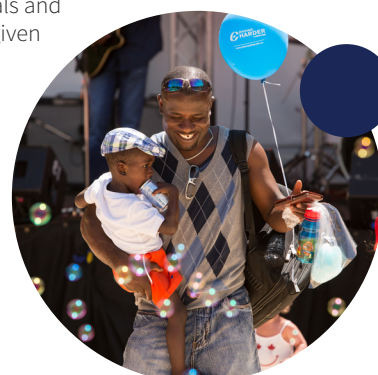
RECOMMENDATIONS

Lethbridge is a community that cares; we have a strong frontline sector, volunteers, faith, and business sectors that support one another. Consistently, we heard that the time for talk is done, and we have to move to action:

“Imperfect action trumps perfect planning.” - Harry Truman

Already, the City and community partners have rolled out diverse safety measures and are working to introduce more around supporting addictions recovery and complex needs. Yet there are significant gaps in the current service continuum that will need to be addressed: this includes a lack of supportive housing for those with complex needs, treatment options for polysubstance users, and safe shelter options for intoxicated and not intoxicated individuals and those fleeing violence. These are gaps we need to address in Lethbridge, but also regionally, given the data and consultation input on these challenges. We have to work with our Indigenous community partners to support healing approaches that are culturally-appropriate and recognise the intergenerational trauma and interpersonal violence at the root of substance use and mental health issues.

Importantly, we will work at the prevention and intervention levels, recognising that these challenges will ultimately never be addressed without healthy children and families. Here our ethnocultural communities, education system, and faith sector can play important roles in enhancing the natural and community-based supports for vulnerable groups as well.



ACTIONS

TIMELINES

2.1	Support a balanced law enforcement approach that is focused on community safety and crime reduction from a prevention and intervention lens. This includes supporting community safety measures (i.e. Diversion Outreach Team, Ambassadors, Crime Stoppers, Blockwatch, Community Peace Officers) across neighbourhoods reporting increase in crime or decrease in safety perception.	SHORT
2.2	Work with health and housing partners in government and community to advance the creation of Permanent Supportive Housing, intoxication and inpatient/outpatient treatment options identified in the Community Drug Strategy.	SHORT
2.3	Explore the potential of restorative justice, community court, and drug/Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder court models in Lethbridge with Police, First Responders, and justice partners particularly for addictions/mental health related issues that may be better served in treatment or community service rather than incarceration.	MEDIUM
2.4	Integrate domestic violence responses into the broader community systems of care model ensuring those fleeing violence are supported immediately, and those perpetuating violence have appropriate consequences and access to resources to stop future violence.	MEDIUM
2.5	Work with health partners to increase maternal/infant health to increase successful childhood/parenthood outcomes. Support awareness on brain development and adverse childhood experiences (such as Building Brains) and best practices to enhance mental health across the community system of care.	LONG
2.6	Work with community, child intervention, and education partners to streamline early screening and intervention approaches, such as home visitation, with families experiencing vulnerability to promote and ensure health and safety. This includes supporting those with diagnosed/undiagnosed developmental disabilities including Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD).	LONG
2.7	Build common initiatives to advance wellbeing in partnership with educational institutions and supports, including childcare, preschools, schools, post-secondary, and adult/continuing education.	MEDIUM
2.8	Enhance capacity of helpers including teachers, family doctors, religious leaders, counsellors, etc. to make appropriate referrals to those looking for help using the HelpSeeker platform. Explore the potential creation of peer navigators and mentors for vulnerable groups to increase access to appropriate resources and supports.	MEDIUM
2.9	Work with Indigenous partners locally and regionally to develop tailored supports to address the healing needs of Indigenous peoples struggling with mental health, trauma, and addictions.	MEDIUM
2.10	Work with newcomer communities and services to support the mental health needs of immigrants, refugees and refugee claimants, particularly those who experienced trauma and violence through culturally- and linguistically-appropriate approaches.	MEDIUM

3. BASIC NEEDS

CONTEXT

We cannot expect people to thrive as full participants in our community if their immediate, basic needs are not met. The lack of shelter, housing, food, transportation and income are critical, basic needs of any individual. The United Nations Declaration of Human Rights references these basic needs as intrinsic and inalienable, rather than earned benefits.

When basic needs are not met, the health and safety of individuals and communities is affected.

In fact, income disparities are associated with poorer economic outcomes. Greater remediation of such disparities will in turn contribute to better educational attainment, employment, health and wellness outcomes, and decreased negative interactions with public systems.

Despite our efforts to support vulnerable populations struggling with basic needs, the Community Social Development Needs Assessment highlighted significant issues across Lethbridge neighbourhoods, including a spike in homelessness, ongoing core housing needs, and a lack of transportation and affordable food – especially for newcomers, seniors, and Indigenous people living in poverty. Some families and lone parents are struggling in our community to meet their day-to-day needs, which in turn will impact their own, as well as our community's, long-term health and wellbeing.

COMMUNITY INPUT

Community input on January 31 centred on defining what constitutes basic needs with suggestions ranging from different types of housing, to physical and mental health basic needs, transportation, and food security. Stakeholders noted that how people access basic needs, and the barriers created by the current system, need to be challenged.

Assessing needs from a person-centred lens – not what “we” think they need – is important, as it recognises needs of the front line as well as needs of the client.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We know that considerable work is needed to create a seamless system of care for those looking for help.

We have a strong homelessness and housing sector, diverse food security programs, and financial assistance programming in place.

We propose to enhance and coordinate these efforts within our capacity, such as directing FCSS, OSSI, and HPS funds, but also through partnerships with Government of Alberta partners and other funders.

We will create space for innovation and creative solutions as well, particularly looking to enhance employment opportunities for vulnerable groups, sustainable housing models, food access/quality, and transportation. We will engage “unusual suspects” – including those with lived experience and socially-minded entrepreneurs – as partners to challenge our current approaches.

Aligning efforts to address poverty and income inequality and a social innovation agenda can enhance our community's collective impact beyond the City's immediate role in funding initiatives, particularly given that we are a relatively small part of the greater safety net creating these basic needs. We will work with our provincial and federal government, community, and private sector partners to enhance access and appropriate levels of housing, income assistance, employment, and education opportunities, food/clothing, and transportation options for Lethbridge citizens.

ACTIONS

TIMELINES

3.1	Implement recalibration of homelessness services to align to proposed CWSS priorities, ensuring alignment with the Municipal Housing Strategy to enhance housing affordability, accessibility, and diversity in Lethbridge.	SHORT
3.2	Support activities to better coordinate access to affordable housing and rent supports across providers (including social housing, rent-geared-to-income units, assisted living, seniors' housing, long-term care, permanent supportive housing, transitional housing, etc. to integrate waitlists and enhance flow-through as appropriate.	LONG
3.3	Explore creative strategies to reduce energy costs and enhance energy efficiency with private sector and government partners.	LONG
3.4	Work with financial institutions to develop strategies to enhance banking access and financial products for low-income residents.	LONG
3.5	Explore innovative food security initiatives including Community Food Centres, redistribution strategies to reduce food waste, social enterprises, urban agriculture, and food/nutrition knowledge targeting vulnerable groups.	MEDIUM
3.6	Ensure recreation opportunities are accessible to low-income groups through reduced user fees.	LONG
3.7	Work with private sector, community, and government partners to explore strategies to increase financial asset building, employment/training options, and financial literacy for vulnerable groups as part of a Community Economic Development Strategy.	LONG
3.8	Support low-income residents' access to subsidised transit passes and innovative transportation social enterprise pilots such as car shares, car pools, rent-a-bike.	MEDIUM



4. SOCIAL INCLUSION

CONTEXT

A sense of belonging and positive connections to one's family, friends, and community are essential building blocks to one's wellbeing. We all have the right to be accepted and live without fear from discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, ability, or gender. We all also have the right to be and feel safe in our homes and neighbourhoods. When we are facing life difficulties, we should have the ability to get the right support we need at the right time to manage these challenges.

While our community has been fraught with considerable challenges in recent years, the drug crisis and our response to it have become divisive among residents – we have to acknowledge these tensions and build a path forward together based on mutual respect and a common vision where everyone thrives and belongs.



At the heart of these tensions is our relationship with our colonial past and its ongoing manifestations and repercussions. Part of our work in truth and reconciliation includes understanding the relationships between intergenerational trauma and systemic discrimination, effects of the 60s Scoop, and residential schooling. Because of the overrepresentation of Indigenous people and their visibility among the Supervised Consumption Site (SCS) and shelter, racial tensions have been reaffirmed – further exacerbated by crime and safety concerns in the downtown near these facilities.

By no means does this mean that all SCS users or shelter users are Indigenous; rather, it is an acknowledgement that this is a perception reported in the consultations and the public survey that attributes safety issues to Indigenous people that we have to recognise and address.

The documented and self-reported migration among Indigenous people from nearby reserves has added to the complexity of these tensions a political dimension on whose responsibility it is to care and support a group with complex needs.

We have to acknowledge and challenge the stigma and discrimination implied in these perceptions. At the same time, we cannot ignore the pleas of those who are concerned with the long-term sustainability of their business, and residents who have been victims of crime and no longer perceive their community as safe. Neither is acceptable, and we can do better. The business community has indicated clearly that they are committed to being part of solutions and are keen to participate in current and future efforts. Leaning on their expertise and passion for our community will be essential to our collective success.

COMMUNITY INPUT

January 31 participants highlighted the essential role of community engagement and public education on social issues and tackling stigma. Lethbridge volunteerism was identified as a key leverage point to build on to enhance a sense of belonging and civic pride as well as a way of tackling social isolation amongst some groups – such as seniors.

Participants also recognised that technology has significantly changed the way people interact, reducing face-to-face contact and connections. Connection is essential to the prevention of social issues and the development of individual and community resilience; thus, intention and creative efforts to connect people to each other and their community are needed.

Moving forward, a focus on person-centred policy and system design can be leveraged to develop innovative ways of connecting people, raising awareness about social issues, and supporting vulnerable groups.

RECOMMENDATIONS

We have a rich history of volunteerism and community building rooted in our agrarian past and our emergence as a service centre in Southern Alberta. The 400 diverse services we have enlisted in HelpSeeker point to a strong social service sector further supported by voluntary, faith, and informal supports.

The diverse consultation and initiatives to address safety and opioids in our community point to our willingness to do better and find solutions.

We are motivated to take action and make our community the best it can be; we care for our vulnerable neighbours and are willing to take risks to find innovative approaches to emerging challenges.

We will build on our common will, and continue to enhance the coordination of supports and awareness of services leveraging new technologies and data. We will call on our community and regional partners to support activities that enhance inclusion and challenge stigma. We will also lean on those with lived experience to co-develop and co-lead this work as partners in solutions rather than receivers of service.



ACTIONS

TIMELINES

4.1	Continue to build on the Lethbridge Asset Mapping Project (LAMP) leveraging HelpSeeker to assess resource capacity and user trends in real time, and enhance transparency of services in the community; this should be integrated into the operationalisation of the Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy.	SHORT
4.2	Explore the expansion of Coordinated Access & Assessment beyond the homeless-serving system to include other key services identified in Lethbridge's asset map, leveraging the HelpSeeker platform system occupancy and capacity functionalities.	MEDIUM
4.3	Work with community and government partners to explore the potential of Community Hubs, Situation Tables, and Community-Wide Coordinated Access models to streamline triage and matching of clients to services across Lethbridge.	MEDIUM
4.4	Support efforts to develop a Social Impact Lab in Lethbridge to foster innovation and solve complex real-world problems.	SHORT
4.5	Invite business partners in a dialogue on innovative solutions to common issues and explore potential partnerships, including social entrepreneurship and co-sponsoring a Social Innovation Fund to test high leverage/high potential pilots using an agile development approach.	SHORT
4.6	Enhance the role of those with lived/living experience in the design and operations of the system of care by supporting the creation of a Lived Experience Circle to support City and the implementation of the Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy.	SHORT
4.7	Work with Indigenous partners locally and regionally to support a cultural centre in Lethbridge that recognises and celebrates the contributions of Indigenous people in our community. This centre can be enhanced with cultural supports for healing and support community engagement and education as part of our response to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) Calls to Action.	LONG
4.8	Develop innovative community engagement and public education strategies and campaigns aimed at reducing stigma and promoting understanding regarding mental health, substance use, crime and safety, racism, and discrimination. This will also include ongoing awareness on HelpSeeker as an entry-point to services.	MEDIUM
4.9	Support community activities and initiatives that enhance residents' sense of belonging to and pride in Lethbridge. Targeted activities for seniors, youth, newcomers, and Indigenous people should be explored.	MEDIUM
4.10	Implement regular monitoring of community perception of safety and wellbeing to gauge impacts and trends using standardised public questionnaires and consultation session. Ensure ongoing targeted engagement with business, faith, lived experience, and service providers is built into this approach.	SHORT
4.11	Develop an annual report to the public on the current state of safety and wellbeing in Lethbridge and highlight learnings, emerging challenges, future directions, and course corrections.	MEDIUM

A LETHBRIDGE

WHERE

EVERYONE

BELONGS AND

THRIVES.

SUMMARY & NEXT STEPS

This report summarises the City of Lethbridge’s Community Social Development (CSD) department’s 5-Year Strategic Plan grounded in research, data analyses, best practices, and community engagement. This Plan is grounded in a comprehensive Needs Assessment that synthesised available data, public engagement and consultations, information from other initiatives, and social asset mapping to discern priority social challenges in Lethbridge.

The CSD department built this Plan in alignment with community stakeholders’ strong support for the development of a fulsome Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy that would address high level priorities and help move community efforts in the same direction with clear accountabilities and timelines.

This process highlighted the role of the City of Lethbridge as a convenor to support the coordination of diverse efforts to create and implement the Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy. As highlighted in the community sessions, there is a will to work together, improve outcomes, and maximise impact. What is needed is a coordination vehicle to discern how to best achieve integration among diverse stakeholders. Building on the emerging directions of the proposed CWSS, the CSD Strategic Plan is premised on the departments support for this community-based direction providing the department with the mandate to move forward in this direction.

The Community Wellbeing & Safety Strategy will provide the blueprint to achieve this collective will in practice. It will be developed and implemented by the community, for the community, acting as a boat in which everyone holds an oar and pulls in the same direction:

A LETHBRIDGE WHERE EVERYONE BELONGS AND THRIVES.



APPENDIX 1 – ELEMENTS OF EFFECTIVE COLLECTIVE IMPACT

COMMON AGENDA:

- » All participants to have a shared vision for change
- » Common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed-upon actions » Differences discussed and resolved
- » Participants agree on the primary goals for the collective impact initiative as a whole
- » Funders play an important role in getting organisations to act in concert

SHARED MEASUREMENT SYSTEMS:

- » Shared measurement systems are essential to collective impact
- » Agreement on ways success will be measured and reported
- » Collecting data and measuring results consistently on a short list of indicators at community level across all participating organisations
- » Common systems for reporting performance and measuring outcomes

MUTUALLY REINFORCING ACTIVITIES:

- » Diverse group of stakeholders working together
- » Coordination of their differentiated activities through mutually reinforcing plan of action
- » Each stakeholder takes on specific set of activities where they excel in a way that supports/is coordinated with others

CONTINUOUS COMMUNICATION:

- » Trust among non-profits, corporations, and government agencies
- » Several years of regular meetings to build up enough experience with each other
- » Monthly or biweekly in-person meetings among the organisations' CEO-level leaders
- » Creating a common vocabulary takes time, essential to shared measurement systems
- » Time to see interests treated fairly, decisions made on evidence and best possible solution to problem, not to favouritism

BACKBONE ORGANISATION:

- » Coordination requires supporting infrastructure
- » Separate organisation/staff with specific set of skills
- » Ongoing facilitation, technology and communications support, data collection and reporting, logistical and administrative details
- » Embody principles of adaptive leadership: focus people's attention, create a sense of urgency, apply pressure without overwhelming, frame issues as opportunities and difficulties, mediate conflict
- » Highly structured process that leads to effective decision making

APPENDIX 2 – SCAN OF WELLBEING & SAFETY INITIATIVES

This document offers an overview of initiatives focused on various aspects of wellbeing of relevance to the City of Lethbridge’s work to support the creation of a Community Wellbeing and Safety Strategy.

These initiatives have been grouped in four Strategic Directions outlined in the CSD Strategic Plan. The scan summarizes examples of policies or strategies across Canada to add further context to Lethbridge’s efforts in this area.

CSD STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

SYSTEMS PLANNING & INTEGRATION Focused on the need to improve integration of diverse services, efforts and resources towards the creation of a person-centred social safety ecosystem.	SAFE & RESILIENT COMMUNITIES Focused on prevention/intervention measures to mitigate vulnerability to addictions, abuse, violence, trauma etc. and enhance resiliency for individuals and communities to be safe and thrive.
BASIC NEEDS Focused on ensuring the basic necessities of life are adequate and accessible, including shelter, food, transportation, as well as access to education, recreation, employment, and training.	SOCIAL INCLUSION Focused on engagement and building strengths to create welcoming communities, social cohesion, and belonging.

SYSTEMS PLANNING & INTEGRATION

This priority for the achievement of wellbeing refers to the need of improving integration of diverse services, efforts, and resources towards the creation of a person-centred social safety net ecosystem.

Issues | Location | Focus group

Poverty, Housing, Food | Calgary | All

Enough for all. Unleashing Our Communities' Resources to Drive Down Poverty in Calgary. Offers a snapshot of poverty in the City of Calgary, describing the roots of the problem and propose a number of policy initiatives needed to successfully reduce poverty in the city.

It suggests redirecting resources rather than adding new ones, to build on existing initiatives, and integrate these into existing structures and operations. As the report states, Calgary currently has a social service network consisting of 1,200 agencies providing over 10,000 services across the city to people affected by poverty. Lack of coordination of services is a key challenge with Calgary's social service delivery system, which depends on a multitude of local organizations with different locations and services.

The Calgary Poverty Reduction Initiative aims to address the challenges people face in accessing the right supports, services, and resources by providing a common access point, and improving access to information. This initiative understands the importance of having integrated services aiming to provide a suite of inter-connected actions that together build a web of resilient relationships.

To this end, the strategy includes the creation of Community Hubs to facilitate connections and services among residents of the same neighbourhood. Community Hubs would provide programs and services including childcare, community gardens, mobile health services, civic services, justice services, library services, food trucks, recreation and arts programming, community kitchens, financial literacy, social services, youth and seniors programming, immigration services, and information service kiosks.

Source:

<http://enoughforall.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/03/Enough-for-All-Strategy.pdf>

Integration | Calgary | Immigrants

Local Immigration Partnerships (LIP). The Calgary LIP began in 2008, and there are currently 77 LIPs across the country, 10 of which are in Alberta. LIPs are made up of employers, school boards, health centres and networks, boards of trade, levels of government, professional associations, ethno-cultural and faith-based organizations, and the community and social services sectors. These key players meet periodically aiming to systematize local engagement of service providers and other institutions in newcomers' integration process, support community-level research and strategic planning, and improve coordination of effective services that facilitate immigrant settlement and integration.

Even though LIPs do not provide direct service clients, they provide a collaborative framework to facilitate the development and implementation of sustainable solutions for the successful integration of newcomers that are local and regional in scope. The overall objective of the LIPs initiative is to enhance collaboration, coordination, and strategic planning at the community level in order to foster more welcoming and inclusive communities, and improve settlement and integration outcomes.

Source:

http://www.calgary.ca/_layouts/cocis/DirectDownload.aspx?target=http%3a%2f%2fwww.calgary.ca%2fCSPS%2fCNS%2fDocuments%2fImmigrants-Newcomers-Refugees%2fCLIP-Local-Settlement-Strategy-2018-to-2020.pdf&noredirect=1&sf=1

<https://www.calgarylip.ca/>

Poverty, Integration, Housing, Safety, Exploitation, Mental Health | P.E.I | Seniors

Promoting Wellness, Preserving Health Action Plan. Provincial Action Plan for Seniors' Living. For its development, a number of public and private organizations gathered in consultations to provide their inputs for an actionable and achievable first-ever plan for seniors in the province.

To this end, an Executive Advisory Committee, comprised of officials from the Departments of Health and Wellness and Family and Human Services, with a community seniors' representative, was established with the purpose of designing and overseeing an effective action plan development process, and writing the action plan based on the information collected. Similarly, an Advisory Network of seniors, near-seniors, caregivers, and representatives from various care groups – including mental health and addictions, long-term care, home and community care, primary care, acute and emergency care, and palliative care – conducted over 25 stakeholder engagements to gather content for the action plan.

As a result of the involvement of different actors in the developing process of the plan, the need of a progressive change was evident to support aging-in-place, and to create a more holistic, upstream, and coordinated system of supports and services that help seniors now and in the future. Part of the recommendations of this plan aim to create partnerships within the sport and recreation sector and other community organizations, as well as promote early integration of palliative care, life-prolonging therapies, and advanced care planning.

Source:

https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/sites/default/files/publications/dhw_promoting_wellness_preserving_health_action_plan.pdf; <https://www.princeedwardisland.ca/en/information/health-and-wellness/seniors-health-and-wellness-action-plan>

Mental Health | Vancouver | All

Vancouver's approach to the overdose crisis is a response to the public health emergency declared in 2016. This approach has considered a “Coordinated City Response” that has included a number of public and private organizations for its implementation, namely the City Council, Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH), BC Housing, Vancouver Fire and Rescue Services (VFRS), Vancouver Police Department (VPD), and academic partners.

The report notes that a more coordinated and aligned effort at the local, provincial, and national levels is needed to better address this crisis. To this end, the Vancouver City Council recommended a federally-led, multi-sectoral Task Force to provide advice to the Government of Canada on the design and implementation of a new legislative framework relating to personal possession of illicit substances. This suggested Task Force would consult with the public, all levels of government, and experts in relevant fields, including but not limited to: criminal justice, public health, harm reduction, law enforcement, addictions medicine, substance use research, and people with lived experience of substance use.

Source:

<https://council.vancouver.ca/20180417/documents/rr1b.pdf>

<https://council.vancouver.ca/20170726/documents/pspc11-Presentation.pdf>

Violence | Canada | Women, Immigrant, Indigenous

Strategy to Address Gender-Based Violence. This federal strategy considers that no organization or government alone can eradicate violence against women and, therefore, allocates resources among agencies to promote coordinated actions in different levels of governments.

The strategy aims to fund agencies such as:

- » Status of Women Canada for a Gender-Based Violence Knowledge Centre, data collection and research, and programming;
- » Public Health Agency of Canada to support implementing and testing ways to prevent GBV, including child maltreatment and teen dating violence;
- » Public Safety Canada to enhance efforts to address online child exploitation;

- » Department of National Defence to increase funding for Family Crisis Teams, to support members of the Canadian Armed Forces and their families affected by violence;
- » Royal Canadian Mounted Police for cultural competency training for federal law enforcement officers; and
- » Immigration, Refugees and Citizenship Canada to enhance the Settlement Program.

Source:

https://www.canada.ca/en/status-women/news/2017/06/it_s_time_canadasstrategytopreventandaddressgender-basedviolence0.html

Integration | All Provinces | All

Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and Discrimination (CCMARD). The CCMARD is a network of municipalities that wants to improve their policies against racism, discrimination, exclusion, and intolerance. Currently, 51 municipalities have joined the Coalition in an attempt to improve their practices to promote social inclusion, establish policies to eradicate all forms of racism and discrimination, and promote human rights and diversity.

Being a member of this network has brought different benefits to the communities they represent. In particular, municipalities agree on experiencing benefits such as:

- » **Community life:** A welcoming and inclusive community is one in which all citizens feel able to actively participate in the economic, social, and cultural aspects of the community without encountering barriers due to discrimination. This involvement from diverse community members leads to an enriched, safer, and more cohesive life in the municipality.
- » **Economic life:** Municipalities that are committed to creating a welcoming community by combating racism and other forms of discrimination are in a better position to attract and retain immigrants, Aboriginal peoples, and underrepresented populations in the workforce.
- » **Response:** Municipalities that have devoted time and attention to address issues of racism and other forms of discrimination in their community are better prepared and more effective in their response should an incident of discrimination occur.
- » **Efficiency:** Improved efficiency due to reduced racism and discrimination in a municipality includes improved service delivery, fewer complaints to Council, and reduced liability in the event of complaints on the basis of discrimination.

Source:

<https://en.ccunesco.ca/networks/canadian-coalition-of-municipalities-against-racism-and-discrimination>

Canadian Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism and discrimination

Homelessness | Canada | All

Cross-Site At Home/Chez Soi Project. National Final Report. This report is a snapshot of the homelessness reality in Canada with an estimated cost of seven billion dollars. The At Home/Chez Soi Project was a pilot project aiming at the implementation of a Housing First approach in the Canadian context to deal with serious mental illness and homelessness as opposed to the traditional “treatment then housing” model. The pilot was designed to identify what works, at what cost, for whom, and in which environments; it was implemented as a randomized controlled trial of the Housing First model in Vancouver, Winnipeg, Toronto, Montréal, and Moncton.

Among its findings, the initiative demonstrated that Housing First can be effectively adapted according to local needs, including rural and smaller city settings and communities with diverse mixes of people (e.g., Aboriginal or immigrant populations). Similarly, the study found a significant impact on housing stability during the two-year study period, as well as an important shift in the use of crisis services to community services, with important cost reductions in services such as psychiatric hospital stays, general hospital stays (medical units), home and office visits with community-based providers, jail/prison incarcerations, police contacts, emergency room visits, and stays in crisis housing settings and in single-room accommodations with support services.

This study also emphasizes the need for strong leadership and partnerships across departments, sectors, government, and communities to build bridges across fragmented systems and programs. Effective coordination of actions among homelessness

service providers helped participants to achieve important results, and is demonstrated to be key in the planning and implementation of effective Housing First programs. In fact, as the study concludes, “the many service and housing providers who worked on At Home/ Chez Soi developed new skills and increased the capacity in their communities for the delivery of recovery-oriented services”.

Source:

https://www.mentalhealthcommission.ca/sites/default/files/mhcc_at_home_report_national_cross-site_eng_2_0.pdf

Homelessness | Calgary | All

Together to Zero. Charting Calgary’s Path to the End of Homelessness. This report offers a strategic framework by which key social institutions in the public systems and organizations – such as the homeless-serving agencies, the public, corporations and partners – can better align efforts and initiatives in order to best meet the needs of vulnerable Calgarians who are at risk of or experiencing homelessness.

To that end, a number of lessons of a decade of working towards ending homelessness in Calgary are mentioned in the Report and expected to take into account for future actions. Some of these lessons are:

- » Housing First does not equal housing only, and many people may require wrap around supports to help them be successful.
- » The true causes of homelessness come from external macro factors, and prevention must predominantly occur in the primary public systems.
- » While the goal of a true Absolute Zero end to homelessness remains as a collective aspirational goal, it is important to realize that this is not realistic in practice without significant changes within our primary systems. - It makes more sense to focus on achieving what is now known as Functional Zero – whereby efforts are concentrated on reaching a point where there are enough services, housing, and emergency shelter beds for everyone who needs them.

Source:

https://www.ihearhomeyc.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/TogetherToZero_FINAL_2018_12_07_web_2up.pdf

Poverty | Medicine Hat and Region, Alberta | All

Ending Poverty in All its Forms, Ensuring Wellbeing for All. This strategy recognizes that the response to poverty and wellbeing needs to be multi-dimensional at the individual, family, community, and system/policy levels. Thus, a poverty strategy aiming to increase the wellbeing of all should not simply focus on basic needs such as income, food, or housing. Rather, it should emphasize in the prevention of it for which a coordinated action among diverse agencies, government, and social and economic systems is key.

This strategy calls for strategic and targeted policies aiming at addressing all the root causes of poverty. Moreover, it is relevant to build systems that support and provide the opportunity for community members to thrive with dignity, respect, and compassion.

This strategy calls for a coordinated action in at least 13 priority areas:

- » Leadership and systems change
- » Community systems planning
- » Income security
- » Business innovation
- » Energy poverty
- » Affordable housing
- » Homelessness
- » Food security
- » Transportation

- » Health and wellness
- » Learning and literacy
- » Resilient families
- » Community safety

Source:

<https://www.thrivemh.ca/>

SAFE & RESILIENT COMMUNITIES

Safe and resilient communities should be another relevant theme to include in policies aiming at improving wellbeing. In particular, this priority refers to prevention/intervention measures to mitigate vulnerability to addictions, abuse, violence, trauma, etc., and enhance resiliency for individuals and communities to be safe and thrive.

Issue | Location | Focus group

Violence, Abuse | Alberta | Women, Children, Youth

Alberta has made a government-wide commitment to prevent sexual violence and improve support for survivors. This commitment brings together community organizations and ten government ministries to deliver a coordinated, province-wide response to sexual violence in Alberta. It was developed through extensive consultation with frontline providers, advocates, and survivors.

To prevent sexual violence and mitigate the vulnerability of individuals, Alberta provides programs aiming at shifting to a culture of consent in which education about consent, gender equality, and healthy relationships are relevant, and men and boys are key to promoting respectful relationships, positive gender roles, and equality.

As for intervention actions, the province has prioritized measures to improve the response to sexual violence and harassment by supporting sexual assault centre and agencies, providing training and resources to police to improve their response and investigation, developing guides for law enforcement officials, funding sexual response teams, and increasing access to the legal system for survivors.

The province works closely with service providers to improve access to sexual assault services in rural and remote communities, and recognized the need to increase funding for women’s shelters, make it easier for survivors of family violence to leave dangerous situations, implement the Action Coalition on Human Trafficking Alberta, provide new occupational health and safety rules, and provide free legal advice to survivors of sexual violence.

Source:

<https://www.alberta.ca/commitment-to-end-sexual-violence.aspx#p86>

Mental Health, Addictions | Canada | All

The Canadian Drugs and Substances Strategy is a comprehensive, collaborative, compassionate, and evidence-based approach to drug policy. It provides a variety of services, information, and resources to prevent, treat, and address illegal production and trafficking of drugs. From the prevention side, the government provides resources to educate Canadians, particularly youth, about the risks of drug and substance use with the goal of increasing awareness and knowledge about the risks of problematic substance use, and reducing the desire and willingness to obtain and use drugs. In turn, the treatment initiative aims to support for improved treatment and rehabilitation services for those with substance-use disorders. To this end, the government funds evidence-based treatment options, improvements to treatment systems, programs and services, and initiatives working with others and sharing knowledge about new approaches to treatment and recovery. The enforcement of this strategy aims to enhance the capacity of the criminal justice system to investigate and prosecute offenders, identify and control new and dangerous psychoactive

substances, and reduce the possibility for controlled substances to be diverted from otherwise legal activities such as from pharmacies. This strategy is the result of coordinated efforts from federal agencies such as Health Canada, Public Health Agency

of Canada, Public Safety Canada, Royal Canadian Mounted Police, Department of Justice, Global Affairs Canada, Canadian Institutes of Health Research, Canadian Institute for Health Information, Canada Border Services Agency, FINTRAC, and Indigenous Services Canada.

Source:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/substance-use/canadian-drugs-substances-strategy.html>

Mental Health, Addictions | Vancouver | All

The City of Vancouver implements its **drug strategy based on four pillars** such as harm reduction, prevention, treatment, and enforcement. The prevention pillar includes strategies and interventions that help prevent harmful use of alcohol, tobacco, and both illegal and prescription drugs. The treatment pillar includes a range of interventions and support programs that encourage people with addiction problems to make healthier decisions about their lives. The principles of harm reduction require not doing any harm to those suffering from substance addiction, and focus on the harm caused by problematic substance use, rather than substance use per se. The enforcement pillar of Vancouver's four pillars strategy recognizes the need for peace, public order, and safety in the Downtown Eastside and other Vancouver neighbourhoods.

The implementation of these pillars has counted on the support and constant involvement of police, health services, and other agencies that link drug users to immediate medical care, withdrawal management (detox), treatment, and other counseling and prevention services.

Source:

<https://vancouver.ca/people-programs/four-pillars-drug-strategy.aspx>

Bullying | Ontario | Children, Youth

The Bullying Prevention and Intervention program, outlined on the Policy/Program Memorandum No. 144 (2018), provides direction to school boards in Ontario to develop policies and guidelines relating to bullying prevention and intervention. To this end, the Memorandum emphasizes the need of having a positive climate that exists when all members of the school community feel safe, included, and accepted, and actively promote positive behaviours and interactions. It also offers relevant definitions of bullying, cyberbullying, aggressive behaviour, and harm for the purposes of bullying prevention and intervention strategies.

The memorandum also stresses the need to including the views of students, teachers, principals, and other staff of the board, volunteers working in the schools, parents of the students, school councils, and the public. Similarly, the memorandum reminds about the requirement of consulting bullying prevention and intervention plans with their Special Education Advisory Committee, their Indigenous Education Advisory Council, social service agencies, mental health agencies, and other appropriate community partners.

Source:

<http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/extra/eng/ppm/144.pdf>

Homelessness | Canada | All

A New Direction: A Framework for Homelessness Prevention. This study answers the question: what it will take to stop homelessness before it starts, to avoid its often-traumatizing effects? To this end, the study summarizes successful examples of homelessness prevention around the world, and proposes a prevention framework on which local and federal policies can base their homelessness programs and plans. The report highlights the need to move onto a homelessness approach that not only focuses on dealing with homelessness, but that also prevents it from happening in the first place.

As the study argues, homelessness occurs as a result of a combination of structural, systematic, and individual/relational factors. Addressing the multiple causes of homelessness through a coordinated effort will improve housing stability and reduce the risk of homelessness overall. Moreover, the study emphasizes the idea that homelessness cannot be prevented by the homelessness sector alone; ministries and departments in health, education, child protection, criminal justice, housing, employment and training, etc. have a role to play. In fact, successful homelessness programs should include models of structural prevention and systems prevention in their attempt to eradicate homelessness. Thus, a plan to effectively end homelessness should include:

- » Structural prevention
- » Systems prevention
- » Early intervention
- » Eviction prevention
- » Housing stability

Source:

<https://www.homelesshub.ca/sites/default/files/attachments/PreventionFramework-Summary.pdf>

Safety | Red Deer, Alberta | All

Toward a Vision for a Safety Red Deer. This strategy, the first local strategy for community safety and crime prevention in Red Deer, is the result of a joint effort between individuals, agencies, and organizations interested in building on existing community assets while recognizing the challenges that cannot be solved in isolation. This report summarizes collective views of what is going well in Red Deer, what needs to improve, and recommendations for what should be done moving forward. It also includes community feedback, significant local data, and research on effective principles of practices in community safety and crime prevention.

This strategy offers a different way to look at safeness in communities going from a policing approach to broader understanding of the community safety issues. Thus, although this report recognizes the importance of policing and enforcement as crucial components of community safety, it also acknowledges that to promote safety over time, coordinated actions on education, prevention, and intervention can complement enforcement measures towards a safety goal.

Thus, the focus areas of this Strategy are:

- » **Education:** Initiatives designed to increase awareness, understanding, accountability, and action.
- » **Prevention:** Proactive initiatives designed to encourage safety and reduce harmful behaviours.
- » **Intervention:** Initiatives designed to respond to existing harmful behaviours.
- » **Enforcement:** Actions designed to respond to criminal activity and minimize the effects of crime.

Source:

<http://www.reddeer.ca/media/reddeerca/about-red-deer/social-well-being-and-community-initiatives/Community-Safety-Strategy.pdf>

BASIC NEEDS

No successful wellbeing policies can be designed and implemented without taking into consideration to basic needs: adequate and accessible, including shelter, food, transportation, as well as access to education, recreation, employment and training.

Issue | Location | Focus group

Mental Health, Poverty, Integration, Housing, Safety | Ontario | Seniors

Aging with Confidence: Ontario's Action Plan for Seniors. This plan offers a description of the seniors living in Ontario and offers some insights to better support the aging population while helping them to remain independent, healthy, active and socially connected.

To this end, the plan identifies the need of improving the transportation options for seniors, as well as the access to information and the establishment of more age-friendly communities with more accessible and inclusive services for seniors. Similarly, this plan proposes taking action towards expanding consumer protection programs, preventing elder abuse, reducing the wait for long term care, protecting vulnerable seniors, building affordable housing, and increasing the network of seniors' active living centres.

Source:

https://files.ontario.ca/ontarios_seniors_strategy_2017.pdf

Food | Ottawa | Children, Youth

Increasing Access to Healthy Food for Children and Youth – Where They Live and Learn: A “Stone Soup” Approach. This policy project aims to increase access to healthy and nutritious food for children and youth in Ottawa. It provides recommendations to actions towards improving existing successful policies, and breaking the barriers to get food to vulnerable, low-income children and youth.

Source:

<https://www.spcottawa.on.ca/access-to-basics/food-atlas>

Food, Poverty, Health, Employment, Education, Homelessness | Canada | All

Dignity for All. A National Anti-Poverty Plan for Canada. This plan formulates a number of recommendations to the Canadian government to improve the Canadian strategy to fight poverty. As the study argues, poverty must be addressed in Canada by focusing on six different realms:

Income security: 1) Reform income assistance programs, such as Employment Insurance, to better reflect labour market realities and other gaps in the system; 2) Increase the National Child Benefit to \$5,600 annually for eligible families (and index it to the cost of living).

Housing and homelessness: 1) Develop and implement a coordinate National Housing Strategy based in human rights; 2) Increase funding by no less than \$2 billion per year in new money to implement housing strategies that meet the strategy targets.

Health: 1) Recognize in the legislation of an anti-poverty plan the social determinants of health – including income, employment, food security, early childhood education and care, and housing; 2) Commit to a new ten-year Health Accord including a National Pharmacare Program.

Food security: 1) Develop – in collaboration with all levels of government, food producers, community stakeholders, and food insecure people – a National Right to Food Policy; 2) Increase federal investment to address the very high levels of household food insecurity among First Nations, Inuit, and Métis peoples in a manner that respects cultural, community, and gender considerations and Aboriginal land sovereignty.

Early childhood education and care: 1) Develop a high-quality, universal, publicly-funded and managed early childhood education and care program for children aged zero to five years and for school-aged children up to age 12, to be phased in by 2020; 2) Dedicate federal transfers of \$1 billion, \$1.6 billion, and \$2.3 billion over each of the next three years with the ultimate goal of achieving the international benchmark of spending at least 1% of GDP on childhood education and care by 2020.

Jobs and employment: 1) Set national wage standards above the poverty line; 2) Provide employment incentives for youth and other groups underrepresented in the workforce.

Source:

https://www.cpj.ca/sites/default/files/docs/files/DignityForAll_Report-English-FINAL.pdf

Poverty | Alberta | Children, Youth

One in Six is Too Many. Alberta Child Poverty Update. This report offers a snapshot of the child poverty in Alberta. This study recognizes that children and youth are particularly vulnerable to the deleterious effects of poverty throughout their lifespan. Similarly, the report outlines how the poverty has negative physical, psycho-social, and academic effects on children and youth, including abuse, neglect, school incompleteness, behavioural and emotional problems, physical illness, and developmental delays.

Child poverty is even more disproportionately experienced in families that are Indigenous, racialized, affected by disability, recent newcomers to Canada, and lone-female parent-led.

To alleviate the issue of poverty and its implications on children and youth, the report recommends to the Government of Alberta, among others:

- » Implement actions to address the significant shortage of annual tax revenue;
- » Change reduction rates associated with AISH, Alberta Works, the Alberta Child Benefit, and the AFETC to incentivize families to increase their employment income;
- » Implement a universal childcare system that improves accessibility, affordability, and quality such as expanding the ELCC;
- » Continue to improve the minimum wage in order to cover the cost of living for working families; and
- » Create and implement a provincial poverty-reduction strategy with targets and timelines.

Source:

<https://edmontonsocialplanning.ca/index.php/resources/digital-resources/a-espdc-documents/a06-newsletters/a06g-reports/1059-alberta-child-poverty-report-2018/file>

Housing, Safety, Health, Food, Education, Employment | Canada | Immigrant (Refugees)

Government-Assisted Refugees Program. This is one of the refugee programs currently in place in Canada. Through this program, the government assists Convention Refugee Abroad in their resettlement process in Canada aiming at helping refugees to become participating members of Canadian society as quickly as possible. It offers support that can last up to one year from the date of arrival in Canada, or until the refugee is able to support himself or herself, whichever happens first.

This support is entirely funded by the Government of Canada or Quebec and delivered by non-governmental agencies. This support may include:

- » accommodation;
- » clothing;
- » food;
- » help in finding employment and becoming self-supporting; and
- » other resettlement assistance.

Convention refugees are also entitled to support such as:

- » meeting at the airport or port of entry;
- » a temporary place to live;

- » help finding a permanent place to live;
- » basic household items; and
- » general help with life in Canada.

Immigration loans are also available to convention refugees and are used to cover the cost of transportation to Canada and additional settlement costs, if needed, while in Canada. These loans are expected to start being paid after 12 months of living in Canada.

Source:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/help-within-canada/government-assisted-refugee-program.html>;

<https://www.canada.ca/en/immigration-refugees-citizenship/services/refugees/help-within-canada/financial.html>

SOCIAL INCLUSION

The following documents are examples are focused on engaging and building strengths to create welcoming communities, and to enhance social cohesion and belonging.

Issue | Location | Focus group

Poverty, Integration | Calgary | All

Community Hubs Strategy. Community Hubs are welcoming neighbourhood gathering places that local residents visit to connect with each other and their community. The ultimate goal of Community Hubs is to provide residents with a central access point for a range of health and social services. This includes social, cultural, recreational, and green spaces that promote a strong and vibrant community. Currently in Calgary there are seven Community Hubs in five neighbourhoods across the city. Although each of them provide tailored services according to specific needs of the community, Community Hubs usually offer programs, activities, and services to residents such as:

- » Newcomer programs
- » Language programs
- » Free tax clinics
- » Community activities and programs
- » Free and accessible space for community groups
- » Food security initiatives and opportunities
- » Recreation

Source:

<https://www.calgaryunitedway.org/impact/communities/community-hubs#thehubs>;

<http://www.calgary.ca/CSPS/CNS/Pages/Strong-Neighbourhoods/Community-Hubs.aspx>

Integration | Wood Buffalo, Alberta | All

Diversity and Inclusion in Wood Buffalo: A community Plan 2017-2022. This plan outlines the strategies that the community of Wood Buffalo, Alberta will base their diversity and inclusion work on in the near future. To that end, the plan recognizes ten dimensions of the diversity present in the community:

- » Children and youth
- » Socio-economic
- » Ethno-cultural
- » Indigenous and rural
- » Religion
- » Gender
- » Seniors
- » Language
- » Health and mobility
- » Sexual orientation

Similarly, the program emphasizes six priorities key to enhancing diversity and inclusion in the community:

- » Effectively communicate information to and within the community
- » Identify, involve, and engage diverse voices
- » Promote a sense of community by recognizing and celebrating diversity
- » Increase understanding through education
- » Foster trust and collaboration between groups and individuals
- » Reduce barriers to resources and services

Source:

<http://www.rmwb.ca/Assets/Departments/Community+Services/Diversity+Plan+2017-2022.pdf>

Integration, Inclusion | Toronto | Black People

Toronto Action Plan To Confront Anti-Black Racism. Describes the context in which anti-Black Racism is present in Toronto – the most diverse city in the world. As the report argues, this form of racism is embedded in Canadian institutions that reflect and reinforce beliefs, attitudes, prejudice, stereotyping, and/or discrimination that is directed at people of African descent and is rooted in their unique history and experience of enslavement and colonization in Canada. Similarly, the report offers 22 recommendations and 80 actions to confront anti-Black racism in Toronto, particularly in five issue areas:

- » Children and Youth Development
- » Health and Community Services
- » Job Opportunities and Income Supports
- » Policing and the Justice System
- » Community Engagement and Black Leadership

This report aims to help ensure that municipal services, spaces, and policies become fully inclusive and accessible to Black

Torontonians in both intent and in practice. To this end, some of the recommendations of this plan are:

- » Build a more transparent, accountable, and effective police oversight system to better serve Black Torontonians, and to strengthen community trust in police;
- » Increase opportunities for Black Torontonians to participate in City decision making;
- » Make city spaces more accessible and welcoming to Black Torontonians;
- » Provide public education on issues of anti-Black racism in Toronto;
- » Increase access to high-quality programs for Black children and youth;
- » Improve the quality and effectiveness of health and community services for Black Torontonians; and
- » Improve shelter and housing conditions to better support Black Torontonians

Source:

<https://www.toronto.ca/legdocs/mmis/2017/ex/bgrd/backgroundfile-109127.pdf>

Inclusion | Manitoba | All

Manitoba Government Diversity and Inclusion Strategy. This strategy aims to build a diverse and inclusive civil service in Manitoba, reflective of the population it serves. With this objective, this strategy has established three main goals:

- » **Inviting Diversity:** To recruit from a diverse, qualified group of potential applicants to build a representative workforce at all levels of the organization.
- » **Opening the Door to Diversity:** To identify and remove employment barriers to enable the full participation of all employees.
- » **Embracing Diversity:** To cultivate a culture that motivates individuals to contribute to their full potential and build a career with a high-performing Manitoba government.

Similarly, this strategy aims at promoting equity among the civil service taking positive steps to attain a representative civil service and continue progress towards increasing the representation and retention of four designated groups at all levels of the organization. These four groups are:

- » Women
- » Indigenous people
- » Persons with a disability
- » Visible minorities

Finally, the Government of Manitoba recognizes that a diverse group of employees that represents the public often leads to understanding the issues and concerns of the citizens we serve in a more complete way. Moreover, a diverse group of employees can enable a workplace to come up with a variety of unique ideas and approaches to an issue, and it can often lead to creative, innovative solutions.

Source:

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/govjobs/government/emplequity.html>;

https://www.gov.mb.ca/govjobs/pdf/manitoba_government_diversity_and_inclusion_strategy_public.pdf

Inclusion, Integration, Participation | Vancouver | Women

Vancouver: A City for All Women. Women's Equity Strategy 2018-2028. This Strategy aims to make Vancouver a place where all women and self-identified women have full access to the resources provided in the city and opportunities to fully participate in the political, economic, cultural, and social life of the city.

The strategy identifies five priority areas in which the City of Vancouver will focus on to achieve full inclusion and participation of women. These priorities are:

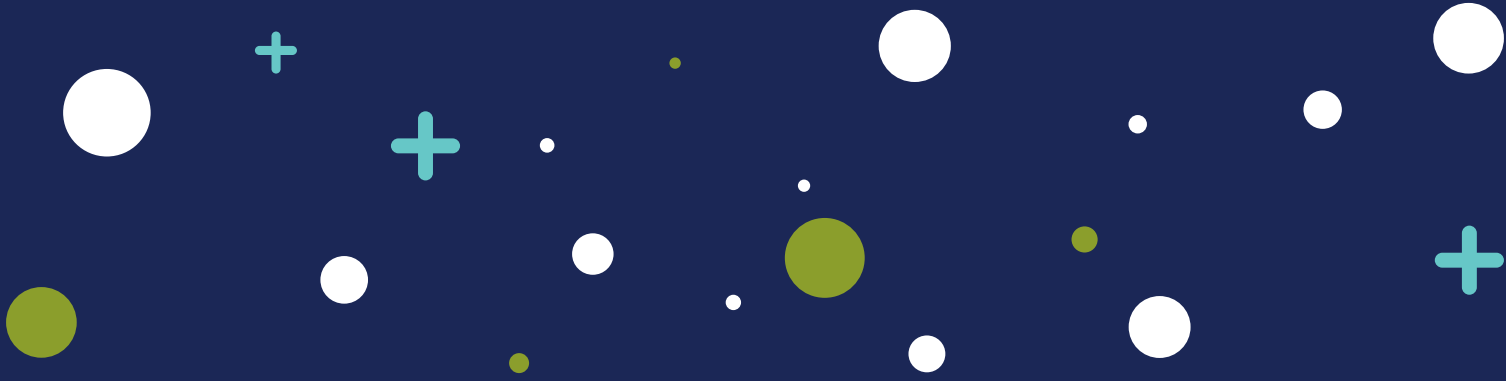
- » Applying an intersectional lens to the city's strategies and plans;
- » Addressing safety, including violence against women;
- » Accessible, quality childcare;
- » Safe and affordable housing; and
- » Women's leadership and representation within the city's workforce

Likewise, this document outlines a number of actions that the city should undertake in key areas such as safety, childcare, housing, leadership, and representation to ensure that:

- » All citizens have equitable access, inclusion, and participation in community life;
- » Vancouver is a safe city in which all women are secure and free from crime and violence, including sexual assault;
- » Women's full participation in the workforce and engagement in public life is supported by affordable and accessible quality childcare for children;
- » A range of affordable housing choices is available for women of diverse backgrounds and circumstances, including single parents, seniors, newcomers, and those facing vulnerable conditions;
- » The city will elevate the visibility, influence, representation, and contribution of all women in the organization by providing equitable access to work opportunities, including leadership roles and other underrepresented occupations and by creating and implementing initiatives to specifically enhance their development and leadership. **Source:**

<https://www.gov.mb.ca/govjobs/government/emplequity.html>;

<https://vancouver.ca/files/cov/womens-equity-strategy-2018.pdf>



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