



## 2020-2021 Edmonton Heritage Council Annual Report and Update

### Recent Developments Related to *Connections & Exchanges* and EHC's Activities

#### RECOMMENDATION

That the January 17, 2022, Edmonton Heritage Council report EXT00883, be received for information.

#### Report Purpose

#### Information only

#### Previous Council/Committee Action

The Edmonton Heritage Council was established in 2009, addressing the first of 11 heritage recommendations in *The Art of Living: A Plan for Securing the Future of Arts & Heritage in the City of Edmonton: 2008-2018*.

At the June 25, 2013, Community Services Committee meeting, the Committee directed the Edmonton Heritage Council (EHC) to provide an annual report of museum strategy and EHC's programs, along with heritage advisory issues in agreement with the City of Edmonton. EHC is also a lead partner with Edmonton Arts Council and ArtsHabitat Edmonton in *Connections & Exchanges: A 10 Year Plan to Transform Arts and Heritage in Edmonton*.

#### Executive Summary

- This report provides an update on the Edmonton Heritage Council's (EHC) key programs and initiatives for 2020/2021.
- This report is to be received for information, as per annual reporting requirements of the Edmonton Heritage Council to the Community and Public Services Committee.
- Edmonton Heritage Council's mission is *to connect people to the stories of their city* through support and leadership in preserving, researching, interpreting and documenting Edmonton's history and heritage.
- The work of EHC aligns with ConnectEdmonton and the City Plan, noting the goals of Healthy City, Urban Places, Regional Prosperity and Climate Resilience.

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- Edmonton Heritage Council receives annual operating, programming and Community Investment funding from the City of Edmonton, detailed in the 2020-2023 Service Agreement. This agreement is aligned with City Council's approval and allocations for *Connections & Exchanges: A 10 Year Plan for Transforming Arts and Heritage in Edmonton*.
- EHC is implementing the heritage-related recommendations in the City Council approved *Connections & Exchanges*, in partnership with Edmonton Arts Council and ArtsHabitat Edmonton. EHC's newest program FIRE (Funding Indigenous Resurgence in Edmonton) works to support First Nations, Métis, and Inuit traditional practices and protocols in connection to lived heritage.
- In 2021, EHC executed three major survey projects towards measuring and evaluating the Aims and Outcomes in *Connections & Exchanges*.

### REPORT

Edmonton Heritage Council's mission is to *connect people to the stories of their city* through support and leadership in **preserving, researching, interpreting** and **documenting** Edmonton's history and heritage.

Edmonton Heritage Council envisions an Edmonton embracing its diverse heritage, inclusive of all people, communities, and cultures, on Treaty 6 territory, consistent with principles of truth and reconciliation.

Edmonton Heritage Council's strategic aims are derived from the eight Aims of *Connections & Exchanges*. Currently, EHC's priorities are:

1. Remove barriers for all Edmontonians to participate in heritage experiences;
2. Edmonton's heritage sector, organizations, and individuals are innovative and economically resilient;
3. Edmonton's neighbourhoods offer meaningful opportunities for heritage participation and engagement;
4. Edmontonians have a sense of belonging and connectedness to the people, places, and stories of their city;
5. Heritage leaders are actively engaged in civic planning and engagement;
6. Dynamic exchanges of ideas and expertise occur between Edmonton's heritage sector and the world;
7. Diverse platforms for heritage collaboration within Edmonton allow communities to connect and create.

Edmonton Heritage Council's board and staff are committed to applying principles of reconciliation in alignment with the City of Edmonton's Indigenous Framework, including the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action, specifically those actions on culture and heritage.

EHC affirms its commitment to stated organizational [values](#) of **Heritage; Inclusion; Diversity; Truth & Reconciliation**; and **Community Engagement**. EHC's [equity policy](#) further expands on these values and their application to our programs and services.

## **2020-2021 Edmonton Heritage Council Annual Report and Update - Recent Developments Related to *Connections & Exchanges* and EHC's Activities**

EHC receives annual operating funding from the City of Edmonton, based on a 2020-2023 Service Agreement. In late 2018, City Council approved a phased 2019-2022 increase to Edmonton Heritage Council's core and investment program funding, based on the aims of *Connections & Exchanges: A 10 Year Plan for Transforming Arts and Heritage in Edmonton*.

A renewed Service Agreement, effective 2020-2023 and signed with City Administration, indicated EHC's leadership in the heritage aims of *Connections & Exchanges*, as well as an advisory role to City Council and a program administration role.

### **Key Program Initiatives**

#### **Edmonton City as Museum Project**

Launched in 2013 as part of a larger Edmonton museum strategy, the Edmonton City as Museum Project (ECAMP) is a multi-platform initiative to explore *the stories that connect us, the stories that divide us, and the stories that nurture an appreciation of our differences as Edmontonians*. ECAMP's mostly digital programming in 2020 and 2021 aims for accessibility and to create opportunity: calls for story contributors have been open to all, regardless of training and background; ECAMP Podcast has been relaunched in a community-oriented, team-driven format; online "ECAMPing Trips" have been made available for real-time participation and for posterity; virtual exhibits on Black history and Edmonton's roles in WWI facilitate museum-style navigation through rich collections of stories and images.

#### **Funding Indigenous Resurgence in Edmonton**

Funding Indigenous Resurgence in Edmonton (FIRE) developed from the 2020 symposium Reconciliation & Resurgence: Heritage Practice in Post-TRC Edmonton. This newly introduced grants program had its first intake in 2021 and is designed to reignite First Nations, Métis and Inuit traditional practices and protocols in connection to lived heritage. This unique grant opportunity assists all applicants in developing their capacity to apply for other grants as well.

#### **Heritage Community Investment Program**

The Heritage Community Investment Program (HCIP) was established in 2013, following City Council approval of funding, and City Policy C211H - Community Investment Grants to Organizations and Individuals. In 2020, EHC invested \$659,120 in Edmonton's heritage sector via this program, supporting 48 projects led by organizations and individuals. In 2021, HCIP invested \$635,000 in the community.

This investment builds organizational sustainability, increased professionalism and innovative heritage practices. A key objective for EHC is to reduce barriers and increase success for new and returning applicants to the program, particularly from Indigenous and diverse cultural communities in Edmonton. Positive success rates among returning (repeat) applicants is 45 per cent receiving funding as opposed to 38 per cent overall success. Since the program's inception in 2013, over \$4 million has been invested in Edmonton's heritage through HCIP.

2020 HCIP Operational Grants invested in these organizations: Alberta Aviation Museum, Alberta Genealogical Society (Edmonton Chapter), Alberta Labour History Institute, Alberta Pioneer

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Railway Association, Edmonton Chinatown Library Foundation, Edmonton Radial Railway Society (High Level Streetcar), Loyal Edmonton Regiment Museum and Société historique francophone de l'Alberta.

### **Key Challenges:**

- Naming, Renaming, & Commemoration: As Edmontonians continue the process of naming and renaming, as well as choosing what is commemorated and how commemoration happens and changes, a process is required to ensure EHC makes intentional, inclusive and enduring decisions. EHC believes a stronger framework needs to be created to support community organizations and groups in this process.
- Updating of the Historic Resources Management Program: With the anticipated updating of this important City of Edmonton program, EHC is supportive of a broader mandate for the program in terms of the range of historic resources it monitors and helps preserve in a diverse community, requiring additional staffing resources to support this work.

### **Connections & Exchanges Implementation**

Advances in key actions of the plan include:

- Advance Edmonton City as Museum Project to establish its role as a program and a place of dialogue, exchange, and collaborative city building through heritage. *This program continues to build its online story collection and present pandemic-friendly initiatives ranging from the revamped ECAMP Podcast (exploring neighbourhood, immigration and LGBTQ2+ stories) to online ECAMPing Trips on aspects of Edmonton's heritage, as well as two virtual exhibits (Edmonton's role in WWI and Black histories of Alberta). Calls for story contributors are open to all Edmontonians.*
- Provide "change capital" to cultural organizations to meet the needs of a rapidly changing city. *Recent changes to HCIP grant streams include Change Capital funding. As well, programming costs are now eligible for Operational grant funding. HCIP funding has also supported the creation of the Heritage Writers' Reserve Award.*
- Increase heritage organization and practitioner capacity through training, mentorships. *The series of Edmonton Community Foundation-supported (through the Rapid Response Fund) workshops titled Wide Angle Lens: Empowering Community Heritage Practices was initiated in 2020-accessible online capacity-building sessions led by heritage consultant Catherine Cole and guest speakers from the community.*
- Stand alongside and support Indigenous leaders in cultural work, organizations, and projects. *EHC has served as a support and convenor of the Treaty 6 Monument Project, a partnership of Confederation of Treaty Six First Nations, City of Edmonton and the Government of Alberta.*
- Through the creation of an Indigenous Initiatives program, support Indigenous communities in revitalizing and taking part in cultural practices connecting to ancestors, the land, and living traditions. *Note: this and the above action were advanced primarily through the creation, staffing, and first grant intake of FIRE (Funding Indigenous Resurgence in Edmonton) in 2020-2021. This program is informed by learnings from the March 2020 symposium Reconciliation and Resurgence: Heritage Practice in Post-TRC Edmonton.*

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- With City administration, develop policy guiding interpretation, naming, commemoration, participation, built heritage, boards, committees, facilities, and collections. Incorporate heritage into City strategies and planning. *Working with Edmonton Historical Board, EHC developed a civic heritage awareness brief in advance of the recent municipal election. EHC has participated in the City and community-led conversations in renaming and the removal of the mural depicting Bishop Vital-Justin Grandin at the Government Centre LRT and has had a key role in the Ring House Coalition, a community voice for University of Alberta heritage matters.*
- Inventory and develop heritage interpretive experiences to increase visibility, access, and engagement. *Major surveys executed in 2021 were focused on available heritage experiences in neighbourhoods, citizen engagement with heritage, and practitioner engagement within the sector.*

### **ATTACHMENTS**

1. Edmonton Heritage Council - 2020 Annual Report
2. Edmonton Civic Election 2021 - Edmonton's Heritage & Historic Resources
3. Edmonton Heritage Council 2021 - Strategic Goals and Priorities
4. Edmonton Heritage Council - 2020-2023 Service Agreement