

COUNCIL MEMBER APPOINTMENT REPORTING

Appointment:	Inter-City Forum on Social Policy
Classification:	External Agency - Intergovernmental
Councillor(s):	Councillor Jo-Anne Wright
Reporting Period:	November 1, 2022 - April 30, 2023

Mandate

The Inter-City Forum on Social Policy acts as a vehicle for information-sharing, networking and advocacy for and among Alberta cities and other major urban areas, and the people who live in them, in an inter-governmental context.

Its purpose is to address social policy, program and service issues that are of concern to Alberta urban municipalities.

Background

ICFSP members include elected officials and senior administrative staff from municipalities across Alberta. Representing Edmonton is Councillor Jo-Anne Wright and Judy Smith, Director of Community Resources and FCSS. In addition, Family and Community Support Services Association of Alberta (FCSSAA) and Alberta Municipalities also appoint representatives. Comment on the context and/or relationship between the civic agency and the City of Edmonton.

Shared priorities and advocacy areas

Areas of advocacy and shared priorities that align with the City of Edmonton tend to deal with the root causes of social disorder and include housing, mental health, and substance abuse.

Report on activities, projects, and outcomes

In December, ICFSP conducted a survey of municipality members to identify the social policy needs in Alberta. Mental health, housing, addictions and drug use, houselessness and food insecurity topped the list. In January, we heard from Adrianna Scott with Alberta Food Banks and received a joint presentation from Erick Ambtman, Executive Director Ending Poverty Alberta & Meaghan Reid, Executive Director Vibrant Communities Calgary highlighting that by advocating to various levels of government together, we would be stronger and more effective.

A Housing & Homelessness workshop was conducted in April 2023 to determine how we could influence housing and homelessness outcomes for Albertans living in urban centres and develop strategies to address priority shifts. Participants were challenged to answer the following questions: 1. What is the unique role that ICFSP can play in addressing housing and homelessness in Alberta's cities? 2. What are the barriers facing developers in addressing housing and homelessness in Alberta?

3. What are the barriers facing support agencies and organizations in addressing housing and homelessness in Alberta? and 4. What are the barriers facing your own municipality in addressing housing and homelessness?

Using these results and the data provided from the earlier survey, we have begun to move forward with planning toolkits/resources to be shared across the municipalities and the development of joint advocacy work (which will have to wait until after the provincial election).

Upcoming events and milestones

ICFSP members will continue to meet three times a year as a whole or perhaps more frequently in sub-committees to move forward on the remaining top five priorities identified.

Evaluation

It is recommended City of Edmonton continues to work with Inter-City Forum on Social Policy to not only advocate on behalf of the City's interests, but also that of urban municipalities across the province that share the same priorities.