

2025/2026 COMMUNITY SAFETY AND WELL-BEING FUNDING

Recommendation

That the Community and Public Services Committee recommend to City Council:

1. That the Social Development Branch 2025 and 2026 operating expenditure budget be increased by \$2,000,000 on a multi-year basis to fund the Violence Prevention Action Plan Implementation, 2SLGBTQIA+ Safe Spaces Action Plan Implementation and Community Safety and Well-Being Grant Top-up with funding from the Community Safety and Well-being funds held within Financial Strategies.
2. That the City Manager's Office Branch 2025 and 2026 operating expenditure budget be increased by \$300,000 on a multi-year basis for the Truth and Reconciliation Sponsorship Fund from the Community Safety and Well-being funds held within Financial Strategies.

Requested Action	Council decision required		
ConnectEdmonton's Guiding Principle	ConnectEdmonton Strategic Goals		
CONNECTED	Healthy City		
City Plan Values	BELONG. LIVE. THRIVE. ACCESS.		
City Plan Big City Move(s)	Inclusive and compassionate	Relationship to Council's Strategic Priorities	Community safety and well-being
Corporate Business Plan	Transforming for the future		
Council Policy, Program or Project Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy • Indigenous Framework • Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2SLGBTQIA+) Action Plan • Truth and Reconciliation Municipal Response Plan • Anti-Racism Strategy • Corporate Homelessness Plan • Enhanced Transit Safety Plan • Corporate Accessibility Plan 		

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	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Violence Prevention Action Plan• 2SLGBTQIA+ Safer Spaces Action Plan
Related Council Discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• May 24, 2022, OCM00991, Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy• July 4, 2023, CS01919, Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy Implementation Update• August 28, 2023, CS01919, Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy Implementation Update• October 10, 2023, CS02068 Community Safety and Well-being 2023 Funding• October 24, 2023 CS02068 Community Safety and Well-Being 2023 Funding

Executive Summary

This report requests the Committee recommend to Council that \$2,300,000 in 2025/2026 Community Safety and Well-being (CSWB) funding be allocated to four critical priorities, which will expedite the City's progress towards outcomes under the Crime Prevention and Crisis Intervention, Safe and Inclusive Spaces and Reconciliation Pillars of Action:

- Recommendation 1: Violence Prevention Action Plan Implementation (\$750,000 multi-year ending in 2026);
- Recommendation 2: 2SLGBTQIA+ Safe Spaces Action Plan Implementation (\$750,000 multi-year ending in 2026);
- Recommendation 3: CSWB Grant Top-up (\$500,000 multi-year ending in 2026); and
- Recommendation 4: Truth and Reconciliation Sponsorship Fund (\$300,000 multi-year ending in 2026).

Six hundred and ninety thousand dollars (\$690,000) in ongoing funding has been approved for CSWB Strategy Administration under the City Manager's delegated authority starting in 2025. The remainder of CSWB funding, totaling \$1.189 million for 2025 and \$1.182 million for 2026, will be held in the CSWB reserve for emergent purposes.

REPORT

CSWB funding was established to support community-driven efforts under seven pillars of action: Anti-Racism, Reconciliation, Equitable Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, Poverty, Safe and Inclusive Spaces, Crime Prevention and Crisis Intervention and Well-being. Approved funding for the CSWB Strategy is \$20.8 million in 2025, and \$20.3 million for 2026 and ongoing. While the majority of the funds have been approved for distribution in this budget cycle, \$3.489 million remains unallocated for 2025 and \$3.482 million is unallocated for 2026. Funds unallocated at year-end will be retained within the CSWB reserve to support future funding requirements in alignment with the CSWB Strategy.

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Funding Year	Total CSWB Funding Available for Allocation in Thousands (Including Carryforwards of Unspent Funds)	Allocated CSWB Funding in Thousands (As of August 2024)	Unallocated CSWB Funding in Thousands
2022	\$23,217	\$23,217	0
2023	\$31,283	\$31,283	0
2024	\$39,161	\$39,120	\$41
2025	\$20,843	\$17,354	\$3,489*
2026	\$20,343	\$16,861	\$3,482*
Total	\$134,847	\$127,835	\$7,012

**Unallocated CSWB Funding for 2025 and 2026 includes \$322,000 previously approved as ongoing funding for RECOVER which will be discontinued from 2025 onwards and has been made available for reallocation.*

CSWB Funding Approved by Interim City Manager

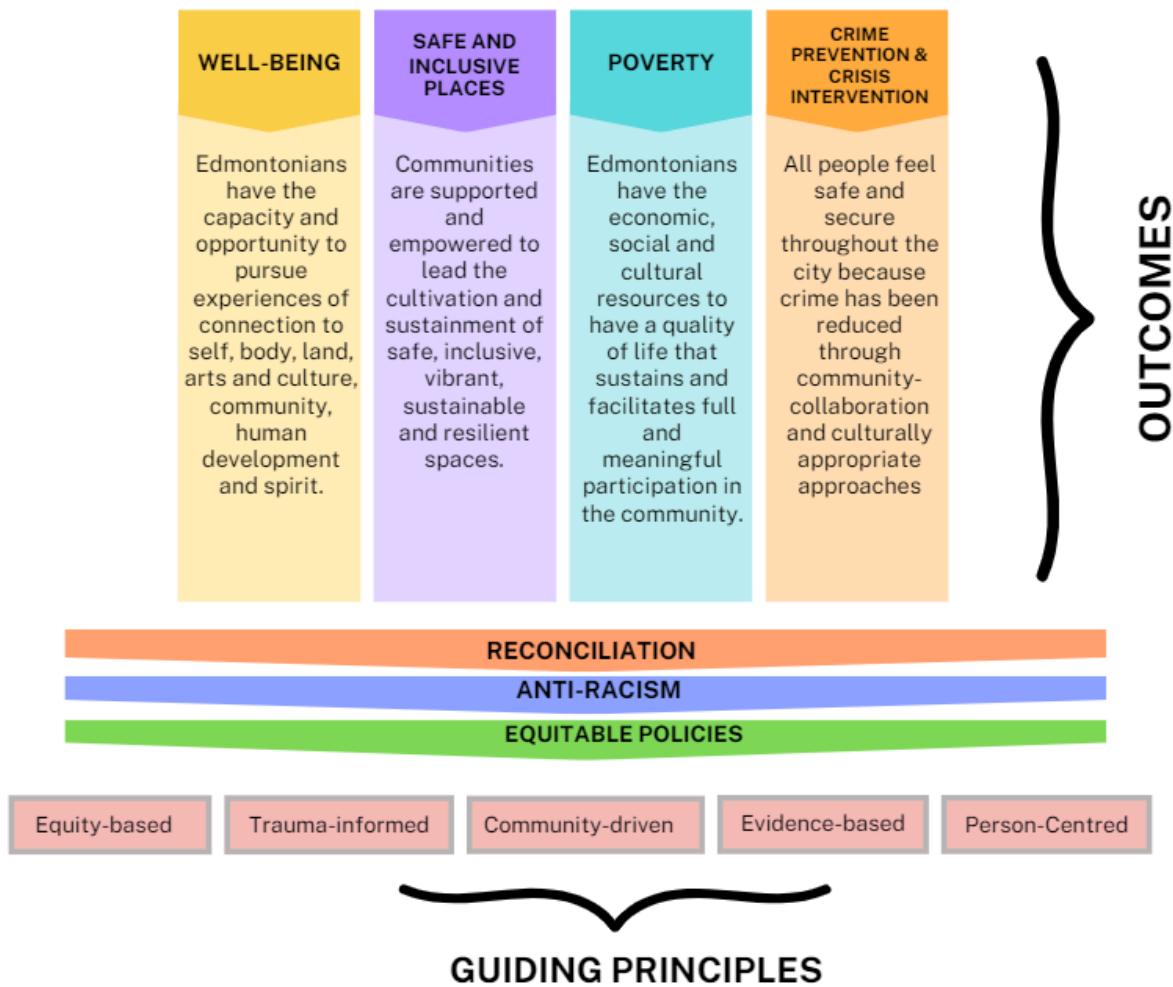
For Council's awareness, \$690,000 in ongoing funding has been approved for CSWB Strategy Administration under the City Manager's delegated authority and is included in the allocated funds column in the above table. Funding represents just over three per cent of the total CSWB Strategy Budget. Funding will support project management, evaluation, communications and public engagement, and greater program and service integration to maximize strategy impact. This funding amount aligns with resources required for other City strategic initiatives.

Criteria For New CSWB Investments

In order to qualify for CSWB funding, initiatives must embody strategy principles (equity-driven, trauma-informed, community-driven, person-centred and data-informed) and make impact towards CSWB outcomes under seven pillars of action: Reconciliation, Anti-Racism, Equitable Policies, Procedures and Guidelines, Well-Being, Safe and Inclusive Spaces, Poverty and Crime Prevention and Crisis Intervention (Figure 1).

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Figure 1



To develop 2025/2026 recommendations, additional criteria was applied to prioritize the most high impact CSWB initiatives:

- Consideration of previously funded CSWB initiatives to avoid duplication and address critical gaps (Attachment 1 - Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy Funded Initiatives);
- Strategic alignment with Council-identified priorities; and
- Previously identified community priorities.

2025 / 2026 Funding Recommendations

The following initiatives were assessed according to CSWB funding criteria and are recommended to expedite the City's progress towards outcomes under the Crime Prevention and Crisis Intervention, Safe and Inclusive Spaces and Reconciliation CSWB pillars.

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Recommendation 1: Violence Prevention Action Plan Implementation (VPAP)

Recommended Funding: \$750,000 for 2025 and 2026 (multi-year ending in 2026)

Funding will be earmarked for implementation of the Violence Prevention Action Plan (VPAP), conditional on final Community and Public Services Committee approval in March 2025.

Background

- In August 2023, Council approved the development of a VPAP, as part of the broader CSWB Strategy (August 28, 2023, CS01919, Community Safety And Well-Being Strategy Implementation Update).
- The VPAP is a critical dependency for achieving the CSWB Crime Prevention and Crisis Intervention Pillar outcomes.
- In January 2024, Safe and Healthy Communities hired a Social Planner to lead the development of the plan.
- No funding source is currently identified for implementation once the VPAP is complete.

Impact

- Earmarking implementation funding now will ensure there are designated resources available to implement VPAP actions, following Community and Public Services (CPSC) approval, while allowing time for the investment approach to leverage other funding sources.
- The majority of funding will support new or enhanced projects, programming and initiatives that address the root causes of violence and promote healing.
- Without this funding, the VPAP will not have a dedicated funding source for implementation which will limit the City's ability to achieve CSWB outcomes and result in difficulty leveraging additional funding, addressing immediate challenges and achieving its desired impact.
- If the final VPAP presented to CPSC does not require the full \$750,000, the remainder will flow back to the CSWB Reserve and be re-allocated to other priorities.

Supporting Data

- The 2023 Service Satisfaction Survey¹ found that community safety continues to rank high in importance to Edmontonians but that satisfaction in community safety is trending downward (from 45 per cent in 2022 to 35 per cent satisfaction in 2023).
- A downward trend was also seen in people's perception of safety in Edmonton with only 51 per cent agreeing they feel Edmonton is a safe city in 2023, compared to 62 per cent in 2022².
- The 2014-2023 Alberta Community Health Survey³, shows a positive trend for protective factors to community safety, such as trust in neighbours (88.6 per cent) and feeling of belonging to a community (80.6 per cent).

Recommendation 2: 2SLGBTQIA+ Safe Spaces Action Plan Implementation

Recommended Funding: \$750,000 for 2025 and 2026 (multi-year ending in 2026)

Funding will be earmarked for action implementation, conditional on CPSC approval of the 2SLGBTQIA+ Safe Spaces Action Plan.

Background

¹<https://www.edmonton.ca/sites/default/files/public-files/ServiceSatisfactionSurvey2023-ServiceReport.pdf?cb=1699393628>

²<https://openperformance.edmonton.ca/dataset/Sense-of-Safety/jwff-gjvk>

³<https://www.healthiertogether.ca/prevention-data/alberta-community-health-dashboard/community-cancer-prevention-screening-dashboard>

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- In April, 2024, Council approved \$155,000 in one-time funding for 2024 for the development of the 2SLGBTQIA+ Safe Spaces Action Plan (March 18, 2024, CS01972, Safe and Inclusive Public Spaces) and \$335,000 in ongoing program funding starting in 2025 (April 23, 2024, FCS02361, Spring 2024 Supplemental Operating Budget Adjustment). Total funding is shown in Figure 2.
- The 2SLGBTQIA+ Safe Spaces Action Plan is a critical dependency for achieving the goals of the CSWB Safe and Inclusive Spaces Pillar.
- The 2SLGBTQIA+ Safe Spaces Action Plan will be presented to City Council after the conclusion of engagement contract work, which will begin later this year and is expected to be completed in 2025.
- No funding source is currently identified for action implementation.

Figure 2

Funded Item	2024	2025	2026
Engagement Contract Work	\$75,000		
Engagement Support FTE	\$80,000	\$80,000	\$80,000
Social Planner FTE		\$118,000	\$118,000
Program Costs		\$17,000	\$17,000
Advisory Committee		\$120,000	\$120,000
Total Approved Budget	\$155,000	\$335,000	\$335,000
FTEs	1.0	2.0	2.0

Impact

- The majority of funding will support new or enhanced projects, programming and initiatives that address safety challenges facing the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, through new or enhanced projects, programming and initiatives that address the root causes of violence and promote healing.
- A lack of investment in the Safe Spaces Action Plan to combat violence may further exacerbate the safety of 2SLGBTQIA+ Edmontonians; violence directed towards this community has been identified as a credible threat by the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service.
- If CPSC determines that the full \$750,000 is not required to fund the recommended actions, the remainder will flow back to the CSWB Reserve and be re-allocated to other priorities.

Supporting Data

- According to the 2SLGBTQI+ Action Plan survey, 39 per cent of 2SLGBTQIA+ respondents reported experiencing violence due to homophobia, transphobia, biphobia or other forms of discrimination in the last five years⁴.
- StatsCan also reports that the number of police-reported hate crimes in Canada has more than doubled since 2019. Higher numbers of crimes related to sexual orientation are a major contributor to the increase in 2023⁵.

⁴<https://www.canada.ca/en/women-gender-equality/free-to-be-me/federal-2slgbtqi-plus-action-plan/survey-findings/quick-stats.html>

⁵<https://www150.statcan.gc.ca/n1/daily-quotidien/240725/dq240725b-eng.htm>

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Recommendation 3: Top Up for CSWB Grant Funding

Recommended Funding: \$500,000 for 2025 and 2026 (multi-year ending in 2026).

\$500,000 in funding will be added to the current allocation of \$500,000 in CSWB grant funding, for a total of \$1 million to ensure long term impact and expedited achievement of CSWB outcomes. Specific grant criteria will be determined prior to each grant intake, and will be developed based on community-identified needs.

Background

- In 2023 and 2024, there was combined funding of \$5 million available for Community Safety and Well-being community grants as a result of a one-time funding increase approved in October 2023.
- Funding supported enhanced collaboration among organizations working on community safety and well-being initiatives, as well as enhanced or new programming to address critical risk factors related to violence and victimization, hate crimes, food insecurity and other social challenges.
- \$20 million in funding requests were received for the 2023/2024 grant intake, resulting in a large number of unfunded projects that fit within the goals of the CSWB Strategy.
- CSWB grant funding will sharply decrease from \$5 million in 2023/2024 to \$500,000 in 2025/2026.

Impact

- Additional CSWB grant funding will support the achievement of CSWB outcomes and fulfill the community-driven commitment of the strategy.
- Without additional funding, the CSWB grant will be able to support a small number of projects (compared to the 27 supported in 2023/2024). This reduction will greatly reduce financial support for safety and well-being programs and services in Edmonton.

Recommendation 4: Truth and Reconciliation Sponsorship Fund

Recommended Funding: \$300,000 top-up to the Truth and Reconciliation Sponsorship budget (multi-year ending in 2026) to meet increasing community needs.

Background

- There is currently \$500,000 in funding for Truth and Reconciliation sponsorships.
- The City has received a significant increase in community requests for sponsorships that advance the Truth and Reconciliation Calls to Action.
- Relative to the need, the current sponsorship envelope (\$500,000) is limited.
- To date, the program has denied \$200,000 in funding requests this year, and any further requests will be denied or only partially funded.

Impact

- Reconciliation is a fundamental commitment of the CSWB Strategy and the Truth and Reconciliation Call to Actions speak to the responsibility of all levels of government to support sports reconciliation and the promotion of arts and culture.
- The Social Return on Investment of sponsoring community-led Reconciliation efforts is significant, including increased self-determination of Indigenous communities, cultural resurgence and economic activity.

Budget/Financial Implications

There is currently \$3.489 million of unallocated CSWB funding for 2025 and \$3.482 million unallocated CSWB funding for 2026. If the recommendations are approved, this would result in

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remaining unallocated funding of \$1.189 million for 2025 and \$1.182 million for 2026 available for emergent CSWB related items.

Community Insight

The Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy is City convened and community-driven, and is committed to centring the voices of communities in the implementation of the strategy. Multiple approaches are being utilized to gain insight from community partners, including feedback through other related strategies, multi-sectoral gatherings, one-on-one meetings and input through Council and Committee meetings.

The recommendations outlined in this report are a direct result of community-identified needs:

- The VPAP responds to community advocacy which has called for investments in proactive violence prevention to address the root causes of victimization. This plan will be informed by community engagement to ensure actions respond to community needs and priorities. This work also aligns with calls within the Safer for All Report⁶, which is the basis for the Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy.
- The 2SLGBTQIA+ Safe Spaces Action Plan responds to community advocacy regarding the safety of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community and the increase in hate and violence directed towards gender and sexual minorities. This plan will be informed by an advisory committee made up of community members and community engagement will occur to ensure actions respond to community needs and priorities.
- The Truth and Reconciliation Sponsorship Fund responds to both community-identified needs and the TRC Calls to Action. Sponsorship funding will support community participation in cultural, arts and sports events to promote cultural resurgence and self-determination.
- CSWB Grants embody the guiding principle of community-driven by providing funding for locally-identified priorities and solutions that align with the overall vision and goals of the CSWB Strategy.

GBA+

The CSWB Strategy uses a GBA+ and intersectional approach to understand the unique barriers that impact equity-deserving communities including racialized peoples, Indigenous peoples, houseless Edmontonians, persons with disabilities and 2SLGBTQIA+ communities.

Analyses consider the multiple and compounding factors that affect an individual and community's experience of safety and well-being including but not limited to ethnicity, gender, sex, religion, education, ability, income or age.

The recommendations contained in this report respond to systemic barriers through targeted funding to address inequities and critical gaps in municipal funding.

Attachment

1. Community Safety and Well-Being Strategy Funded Initiatives

⁶https://www.edmonton.ca/public-files/assets/document?path=PDF/SaferForAll-CSWBTaskForce-Report-March30_2021.pdf