

Edmonton

Community Mobilization Task Force on Housing and Houselessness

Final Report to City Council

Tina Thomas - Co-Chair
Nick Lilley - Co-Chair
Brent Wellsch - Strategist, Urban Matters
Salima Ebrahim - Chief of Staff and Corporate Lead for Anti-Racism and Reconciliation
Kim Petrin - DCM, Urban Planning and Economy

Source motion from Council

From the January 15/16/17, 2024 Special City Council meeting:

That Administration:

- establish a task force, led by Mayor, City Manager and an appointed member of Council, consisting of community leaders with a mandate to mobilize all sectors to create vision and raise capital that can be deployed to complement social service mechanisms, and
- allocate \$3.5 million from the Community Safety and Well-being Reserve unallocated funding to act as seed money to fund innovative solutions and attract additional sources of funding through the task force.

Membership announced at State of the City

1. Councillor Erin Rutherford
2. Michael Phair, Former Edmonton City Councillor
3. Dinika Matychuk, Leston Holdings
4. Doug Griffiths, Edmonton Chamber of Commerce
5. Dr. Joshua Evans, University of Alberta
6. Glori Sharphead, Enoch Cree Wellness
7. Gord Johnston, Cvida
8. Jim Brown, Sherrick Developments
9. Keri Cardinal, Niginan Housing Ventures
10. Corey Mowles, Youth Empowerment and Support Services*
11. Mike Saunders, Qualico Developments
12. *Murray Soroka, Jasper Place Wellness***
13. Nick Lilley, HomeEd
14. Omar Yakub, Islamic Family and Social Services Association
15. Rob Yager, United Way
16. Tina Thomas, Edmonton Community Foundation

Miranda Jimmy, Confederacy of Treaty 6 First Nations, also participated.

* Corey Mowles succeeded Margo Long as Executive Director for YESS

** Resigned mid-way through process



Task Force process

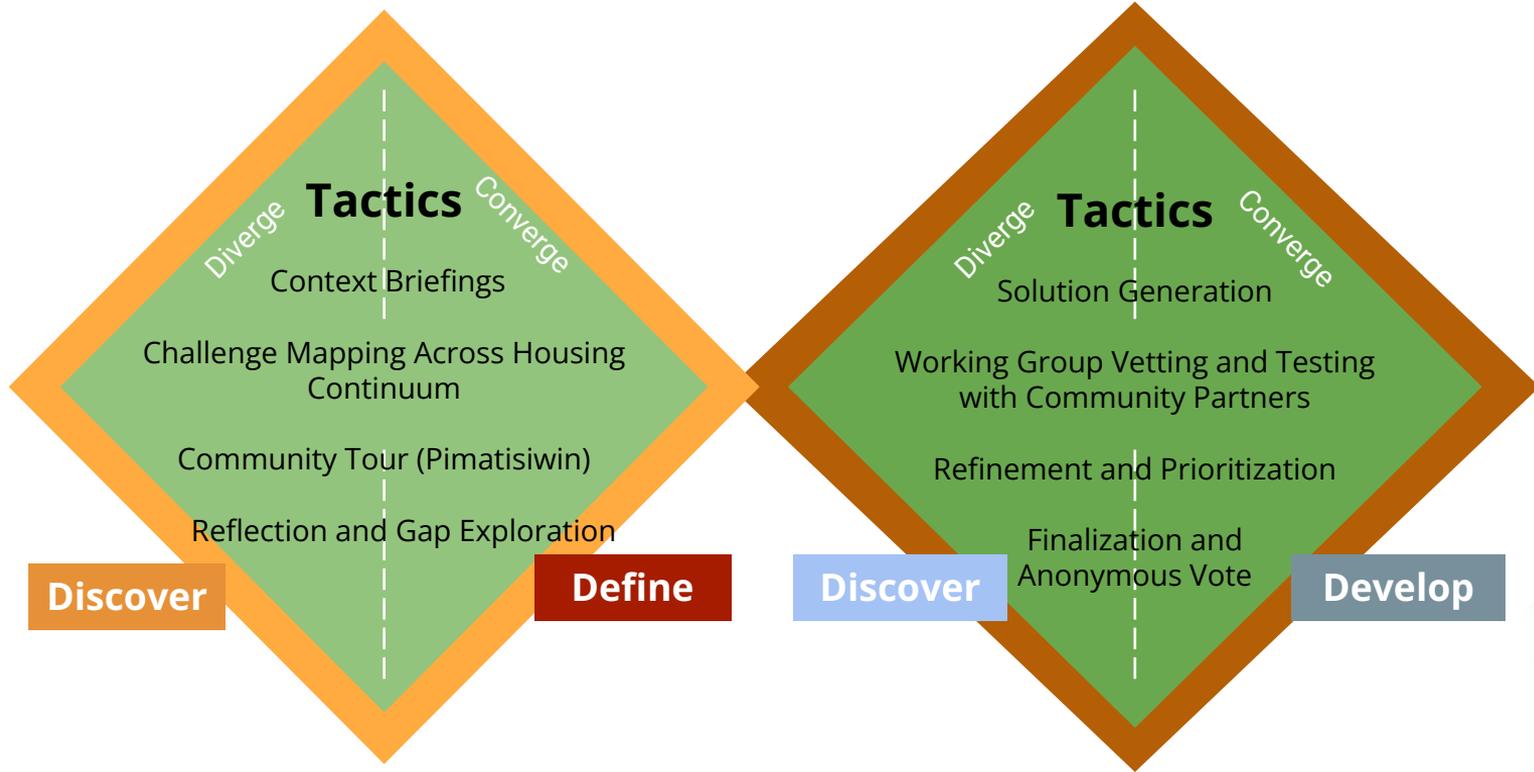


Photo from facilitated conversation

Following announcement in May 2024, diverse community leaders engaged in a series of facilitated meetings from September 2024 - February 2025, with the following focus:

- Meetings 1 - 3 **Problem framing and understanding**
- Meetings 4 - 6 **Exploration of community mobilization gaps & opportunities**
- Meetings 7 - 9 **Recommendation development & validation**
- Meeting 10 **Finalize recommendations and report direction**

Problem framing and solution framing



Task Force focused attention

With an abundance of strategies and investments already being enacted in Edmonton, the Task Force sought to identify new solutions beyond the scope of current efforts by the City of Edmonton and other stakeholders.

The explicit focus on community mobilization required the Task Force to identify and prioritize community-led initiatives that:

1. Address urgent, underserved needs in Edmonton,
2. Can be rapidly initiated and/or scaled, and
3. Can be sustained without ongoing government funding, beyond the City's seed investment.

Investment-ready community initiatives

Community fund for accelerated retrofits

Catalyzing the reimagination of underutilized properties into housing for vulnerable people through grant contributions that support feasibility studies and pre-development activities.



Proposed catalyst investment

\$1.5 million (one time)

Recommended lead organization

Edmonton Community Foundation

Outcome:

Community investment, via grants or in-kind support, accelerates the assessment and transformation of underutilized commercial properties into sustainable housing for vulnerable Edmontonians.

Bridge Between Housing Platform

A shared digital platform that makes it easy for social agencies and landlords to support vulnerable tenants through secure information sharing, common assessments and service agreements.



Proposed catalyst investment

\$1.0 million (one time)

Recommended lead organization

Islamic Family & Social Services Organization

Outcome:

Better communication, collaboration and trust between residents, social service providers and landlords, improves efficiency in placement and tenant retention.

Peer Support Services for Vulnerable Tenants

Trained peer support workers guide help tenants to navigate complex systems, develop essential life skills, and build social connections, addressing risk factors before individuals lose housing.



Proposed catalyst investment

\$1.0 million (one time)

Recommended lead organization

Canadian Mental Health Association -
Edmonton Region

Outcome:

Early intervention and support for mental health challenges reduces housing loss and the need for clinical services.

Systems-level considerations

Timely expansion of affordable and supportive housing

- Create a rental housing acquisition fund that stacks with funding for requisite capital expenditures to preserve existing affordable housing
- Modify (or expand) property tax relief and grant programs to better incentivize mixed market housing or provide funding not only on a per unit basis but also per bedroom to encourage support for families.
- Divest publicly owned land inventory for affordable and supportive housing initiatives.
- Reduce development fees and timelines for affordable and supportive housing initiatives.
- Expand the depth of subsidy and/or number of people served by rental assistance programs.
- Align and coordinate affordable and supportive housing project outcomes and financing decisions across funders.

Enhanced supports for at-risk Edmontonians

- Expand integrated case management approaches tied to centralized intake for those who are unhoused
- Coordinate actions between systems to prevent discharge from hospitals, prisons, youth government care and/or care facilities into houselessness.
- Shift the emergency shelter model to prioritize adequate transitional housing for diverse needs.
- Expand eviction prevention supports and/or post-eviction stabilization services.



Photo from Niginan Site Visit

Ongoing forum for collaboration with City Council

- An ongoing mechanism to facilitate continued dialogue and collaboration between community and City Council
- This mechanism, with multi-sector involvement, could:
 - Mobilize community to improve understanding and acceptance of the value of affordable and supportive housing, and raise community concerns to council as needed;
 - Improve collaboration and break down barriers between sectors in support of affordable and supportive housing; and
 - Advise on previously approved Council actions which address the housing and homelessness emergency as required.
 - Amplify Edmonton affordable and supportive housing needs and opportunities to other orders of government;
- The forum should exist for a fixed timeframe to monitor its effectiveness

Next steps for City Administration

Administration's Approach

- Develop agreements with the three selected community organizations to advance funds
 - Agreements will include clear deliverables, performance indicators and where appropriate, tie payment to satisfactory completion of project milestones
- Provide a memo with implementation considerations for the systems considerations within Administration's purview
- Review if any existing Administration or City Agency, Board or Commission tables could be leveraged to support ongoing engagement between multiple sectors

Thank you.
Questions?