

## Update: Edmonton's Poverty Elimination

<b>Initiative Title:</b>	Edmonton's Poverty Elimination (formerly called Poverty Reduction)
<b>City Council Lead(s):</b>	Councillor Sohi and Councillor Henderson
<b>Department Lead(s):</b>	Lyall Brenneis, Community Services

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### Objective:

To develop a poverty elimination strategy for Edmonton developed in collaboration with community partners. Originally called the Poverty Reduction Initiative, the Steering Committee decided that this initiative was an opportunity to be transformative and work towards "eliminating poverty" rather than "reducing poverty". Council approved the Terms of Reference for this Council Initiative on October 17, 2012.

### Key Outcomes, Projects or Activities and their Status as of May 2013:

- 1) Establish a Steering Committee to provide oversight and direction in the development of a poverty elimination strategy:
  - The Steering Committee was formed in January 2013; it has 17 members from 21 cross-sectoral and inter-governmental members. The Committee is co-chaired by the Council advocates (Councillors Ben Henderson and Amarjeet Sohi) and United Way Capital Region representatives (President & CEO Anne Smith, Vice-President Allan Undheim). Since January, the Committee has been meeting once a month.
  - Community Services department provides support through an assigned staff
  - The Committee's accomplishments to date include:
    - Examination of research and evidence-based documents about the extent and causes of poverty and its broader impact on Edmontonians and its social and economic costs ( i.e. Families First Research, Ending Poverty in Alberta report by the Edmonton Social Planning Council)
    - Alignment of Edmonton's strategic development with Provincial poverty reduction efforts through Provincial information-sharing with Committee and ongoing Provincial representation
    - Development of a draft preliminary Strategic Framework as a road map for the elimination of poverty in Edmonton.
  
- 2) Development of a shared vision and strategic directions to eliminate poverty

The preliminary draft Strategic Framework called, "Unleashing our Potential: Eliminating Poverty in Edmonton" defines a vision and goals for the strategy. It includes a set of guiding principles and proposes a transformative and collaborative approach in the development of key actions to end poverty in Edmonton within a generation. The draft Strategic Framework intends to shift the poverty dialogue and

action beyond charity and alleviation of poverty to resilience, investment and engagement.

The draft Poverty Elimination Strategic Framework is a work in progress drawn from discussions of the Steering Committee, informed by research and emerging practices in poverty reduction and elimination. It will be fully developed and enriched through community engagement and alignment with the release of the Provincial Poverty Reduction Strategy as well as current City initiatives and community partners.

### 3) Progress Report to Community Services Committee on June 25, 2013

The Steering Committee prepared a progress report to Community Services Committee to provide updates on activities and accomplishments.

#### **Future Steps:**

The Poverty Elimination Steering Committee will continue to develop a full Poverty Elimination Strategy to bring forward to City Council in early 2014. Moving forward with the planning process in 2013, the Committee will undertake the following activities:

- further consult with Edmontonians, particularly those with lived experience of poverty, to ensure diverse voices are heard and have input to the strategic planning process.
- work on creating a formalized commitment from members of the Committee and other partners towards a collaborative and coordinated efforts
- explore ongoing governance and collective leadership models to steward the implementation of the Strategic Implementation Plan
- develop a communications strategy to support active community engagement and public awareness in the elimination of poverty in Edmonton.