

# EDMONTON'S APPROACH TO URBAN WELLNESS



# STRATEGIC ACTIONS



## HEALTHY CITY

### AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Increase the supply and the spectrum of affordable housing by delivering grant funding programs, establishing innovative partnerships, facilitating development of City-owned land for affordable housing and policy development.\*

### POVERTY ELIMINATION

Partner with the community-based EndPoverty Edmonton to eliminate poverty in Edmonton within a generation. The City of Edmonton is accountable for implementing 18 of 35 EndPovertyEdmonton Road Map actions from 2019 to 2022.

### RECOVER

Use social innovation to work with citizens on codesigning solutions and addressing complex challenges of urban wellness. This will generate a culture shift and ensure that citizens' input and ideas are incorporated in creating and maintaining the well-being of Edmontonians.

### RIDE TRANSIT PROGRAM

Provide discounted monthly transit fares to make it easier for citizens to access jobs, education, health care, recreation, community resources and government services.

### VISION ZERO

Invest in traffic safety infrastructure and education to eliminate serious injury collisions and fatalities to achieve Vision Zero, an internationally recognized goal for a transportation system with no fatalities or serious injuries involving road traffic.\*



## URBAN PLACES

### BLATCHFORD

Build one of the world's largest sustainable communities which will be home to up to 30,000 Edmontonians living, working and learning in a sustainable community that uses 100 per cent renewable energy. The vision is that Blatchford will be carbon neutral and significantly reduce its ecological footprint, and create opportunities to pursue a range of sustainable development.

### EDMONTON AREA REDEVELOPMENT

Create a vibrant, walkable and respectful community for citizens.

### EVOLUTION

Increase the density of development to accommodate for the city's growth.



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## EDMONTON CITY PLAN

### 4. BIG CITY MOVE

INCLUSIVE AND COMPASSIONATE

V 1.0  
CHARTER  
BYLAW 20,000

Edmonton

# RECOVER is emergent & responsive

Mandate:

Make a Wellness  
Centre plan

**Awareness**

Adopt social innovation  
process: "What is  
wellbeing?"

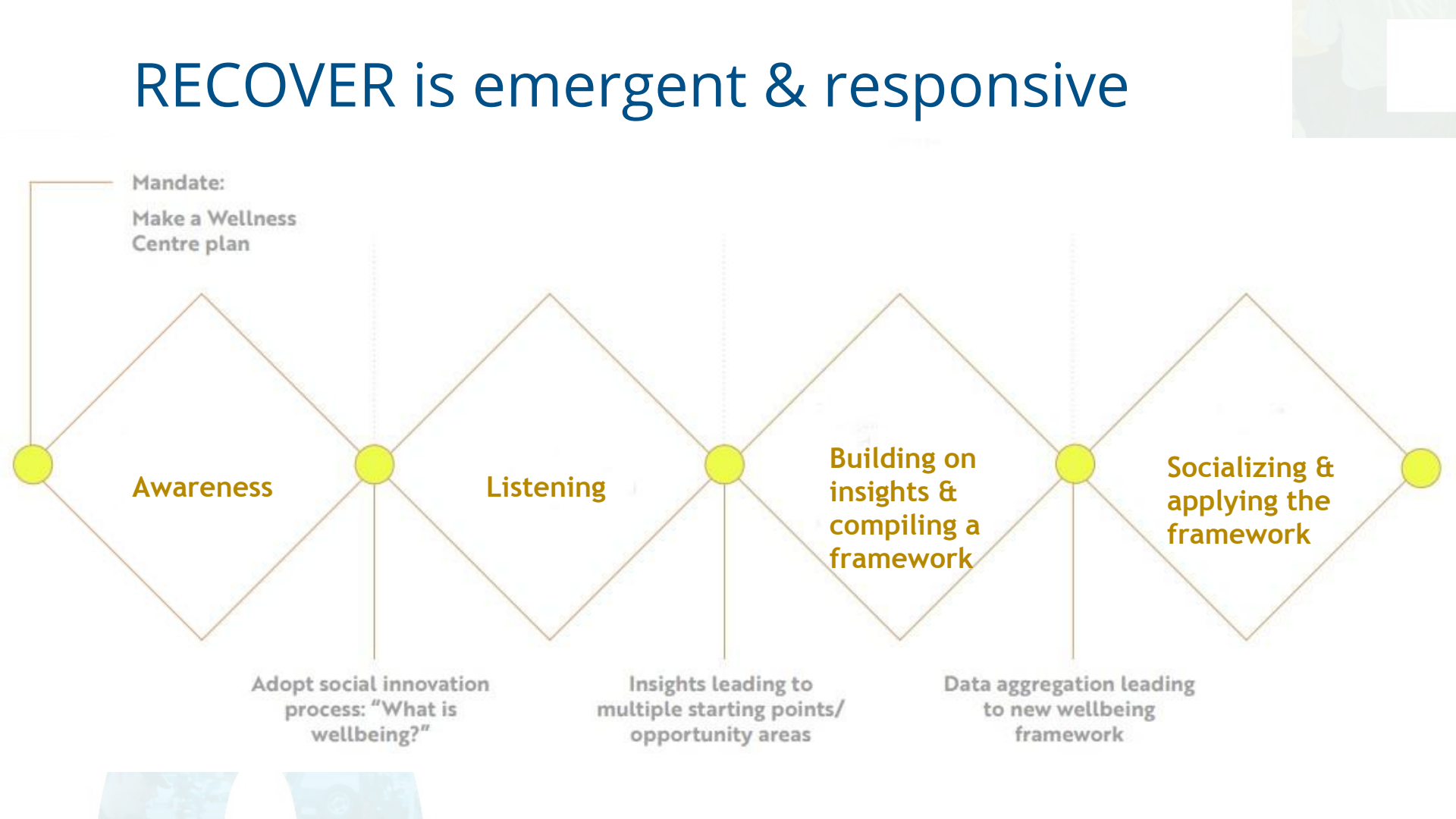
**Listening**

Insights leading to  
multiple starting points/  
opportunity areas

**Building on  
insights &  
compiling a  
framework**

Data aggregation leading  
to new wellbeing  
framework

**Socializing &  
applying the  
framework**



# Cities Addressing Tough Challenges

- Cities are increasingly involved in **addressing complex societal problems**
- The **pressure for City involvement** has increased - VUCA
- All levels of government are **trying adapt** roles, policies and processes
- Edmonton is one of the more **innovation-oriented** cities in Canada and beyond





# Learning #1: RECOVER initiatives have generated some solid project, yet very diverse **'well-being' results so far**



Project Welcome Mat efforts to sustain and replicate elsewhere

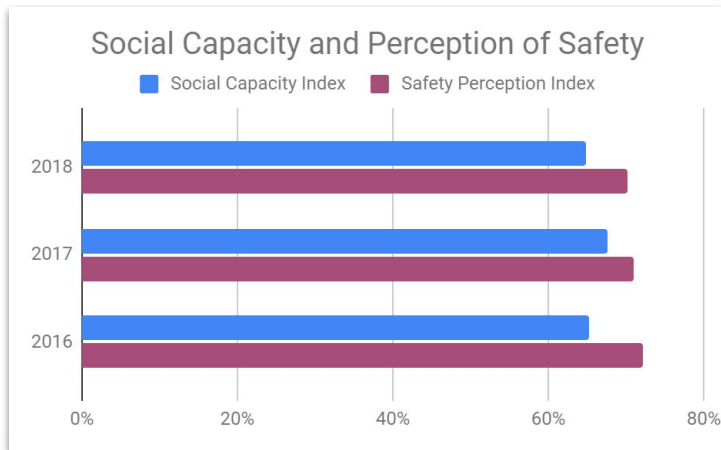


24-7 Crisis Diversion Service "It's All About Connections" prototype continuing



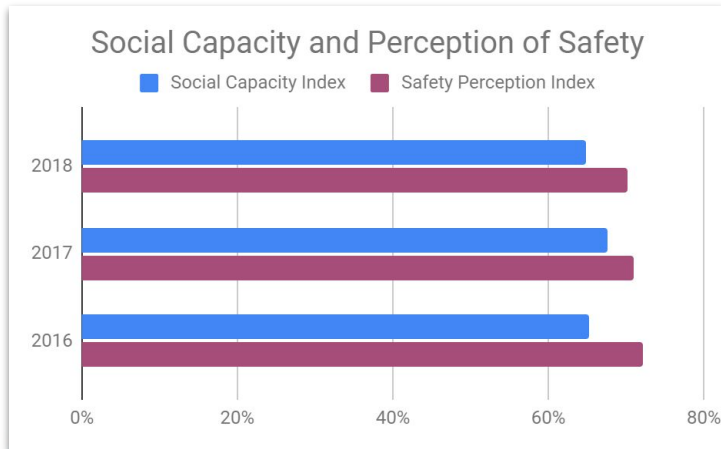
City Centre Mall place-making prototype continuing

# Learning #2: The **preliminary metrics** developed to measure progress in improving well-being **don't reflect the deeper understanding** of 'well-being'



Social Vulnerability Index	2016
Boyle Street	High
Central McDougall	High
Downtown	Medium
McCauley	High
Queen Mary Park	High
Strathcona	Medium

# Learning #2: The **preliminary metrics** developed to measure progress in improving well-being **don't reflect the deeper understanding** of 'well-being'



Social Vulnerability	
Boyle Street	
Central McDougall	
Downtown	
McCaughey	
Queen Mary Park	High
Strathcona	Medium

These metrics made sense at the beginning of the project. They no longer do.

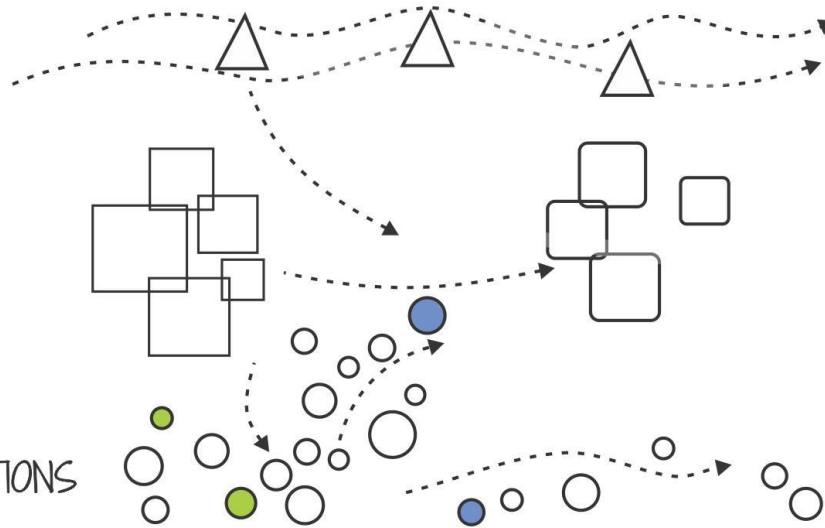


# Learning #3: RECOVER can be **a contributor – not a driver** – to improving overall levels of well-being at the community level

Shifting  
PARADIGMS  
& CULTURE

Changing  
SYSTEMS

Developing  
NICHE INNOVATIONS

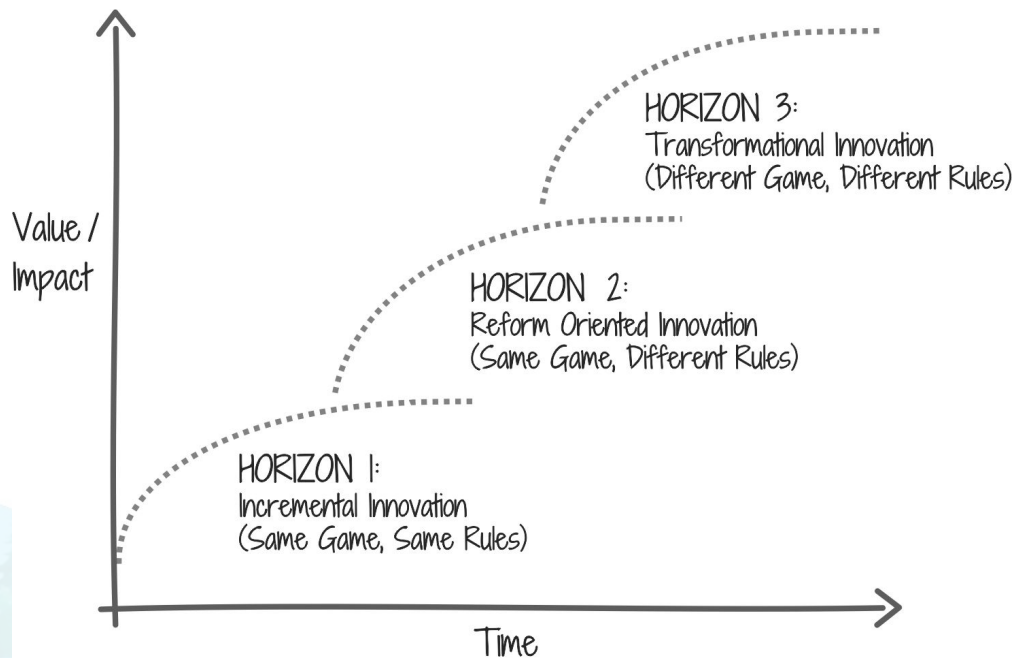


**IMPACT**

Improving  
Well-Being  
at Individual,  
Community,  
& City Levels

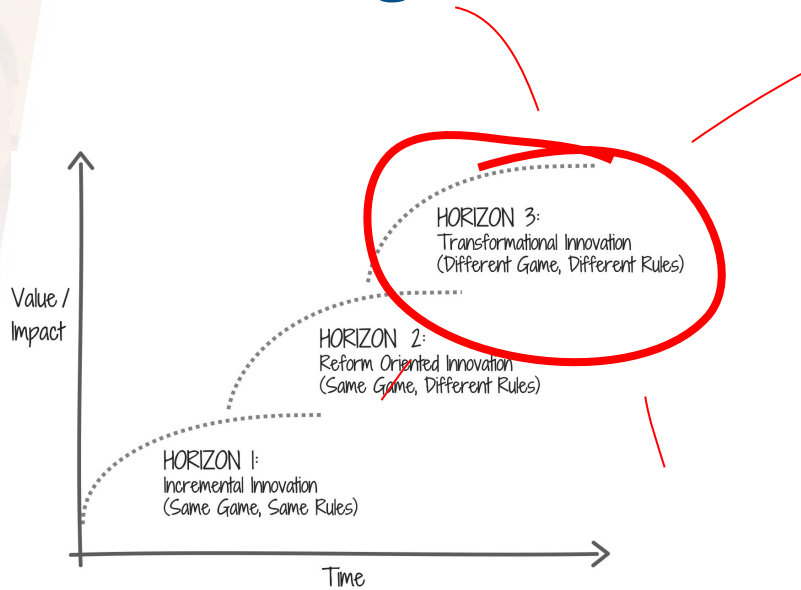
Adapted from: Frank Geels (2011). Multi-Level Framework on Sustainability Transitions

# Learning 4: The **pressure to produce** immediate solutions to improving well-being has encouraged RECOVER participants to **focus on incremental - rather than transformative - innovation**



Adapted from McKinsey and Co.

# Lesson #5: One opportunity for transformative innovation is **re-thinking what we mean by well-being**



Adapted from McKinsey and Co.



# Leading the Way

Edmonton as a city of healing  
and connection

Nov 25 2020



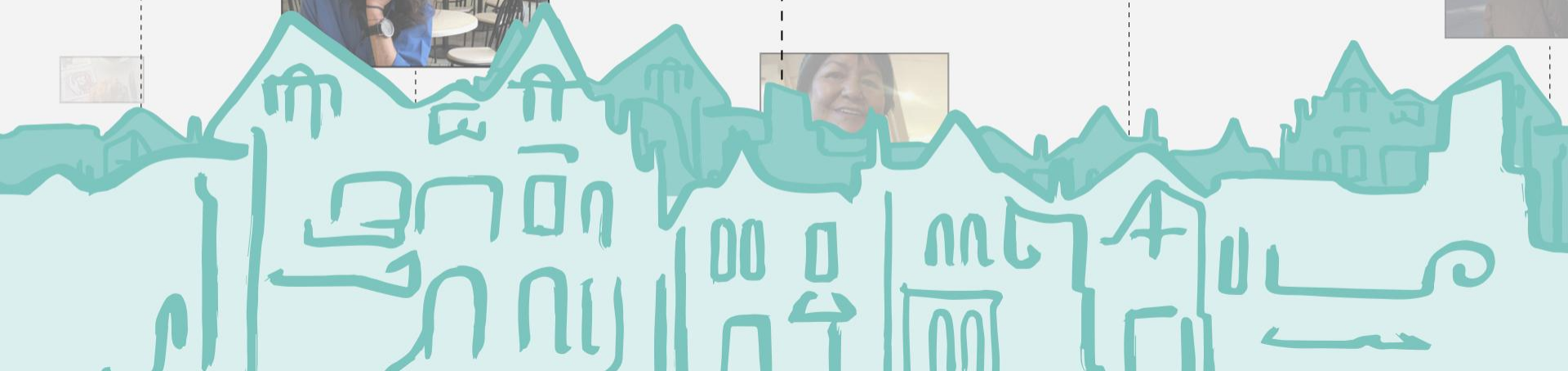
Meet  
**William**



A snapshot...



William is not alone...



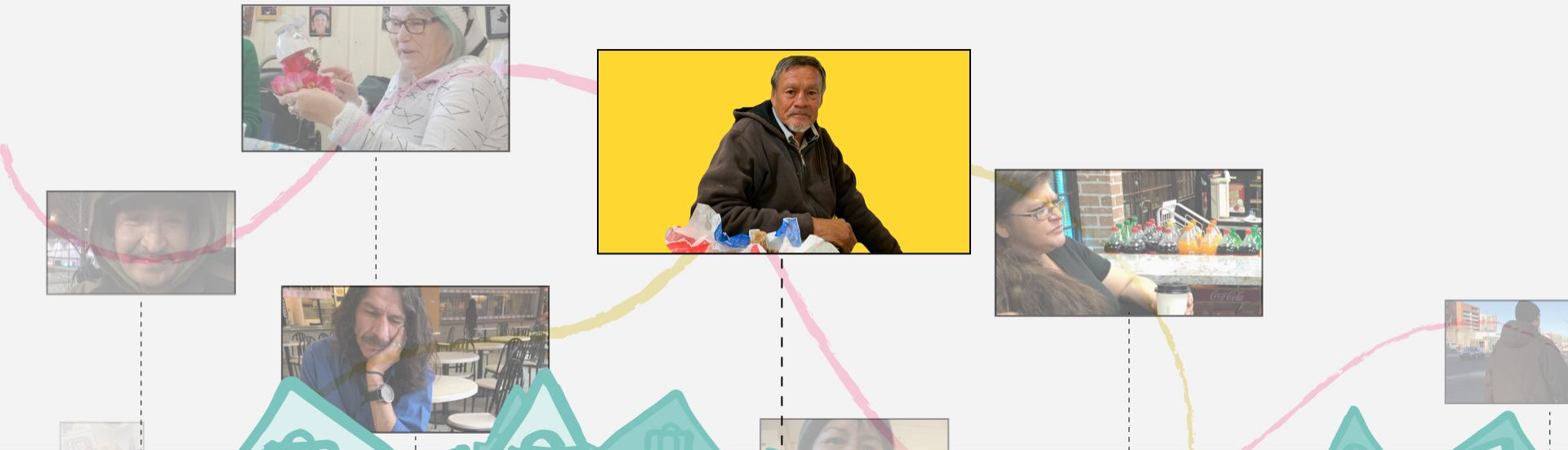
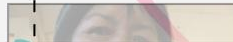
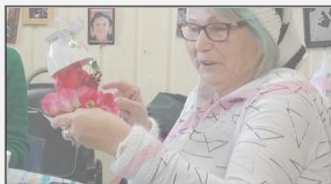
## Citizen defined outcomes

Respect

Safety and security

Purpose

Connection

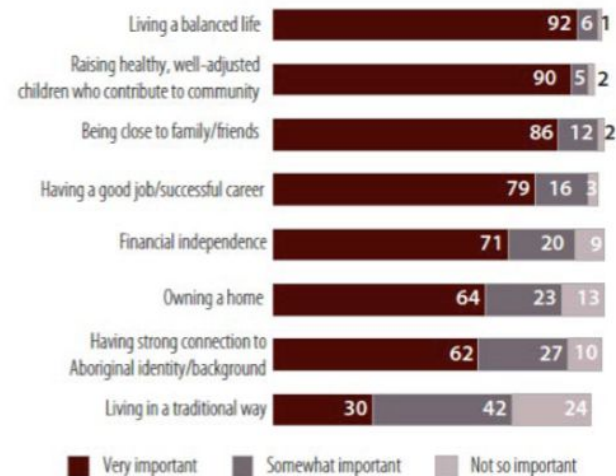




The Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study confirms the centrality of balance & connection.

### Definition of a successful life

People define a successful life in a many different ways. Please tell me if the following are very important, somewhat important or not so important to your idea of a successful life.



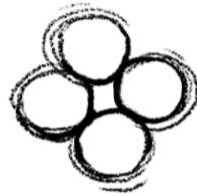
#### Source

[Urban Aboriginal Peoples Study](#); Edmonton Report. Environics Institute, 2010, pp. 1-76.

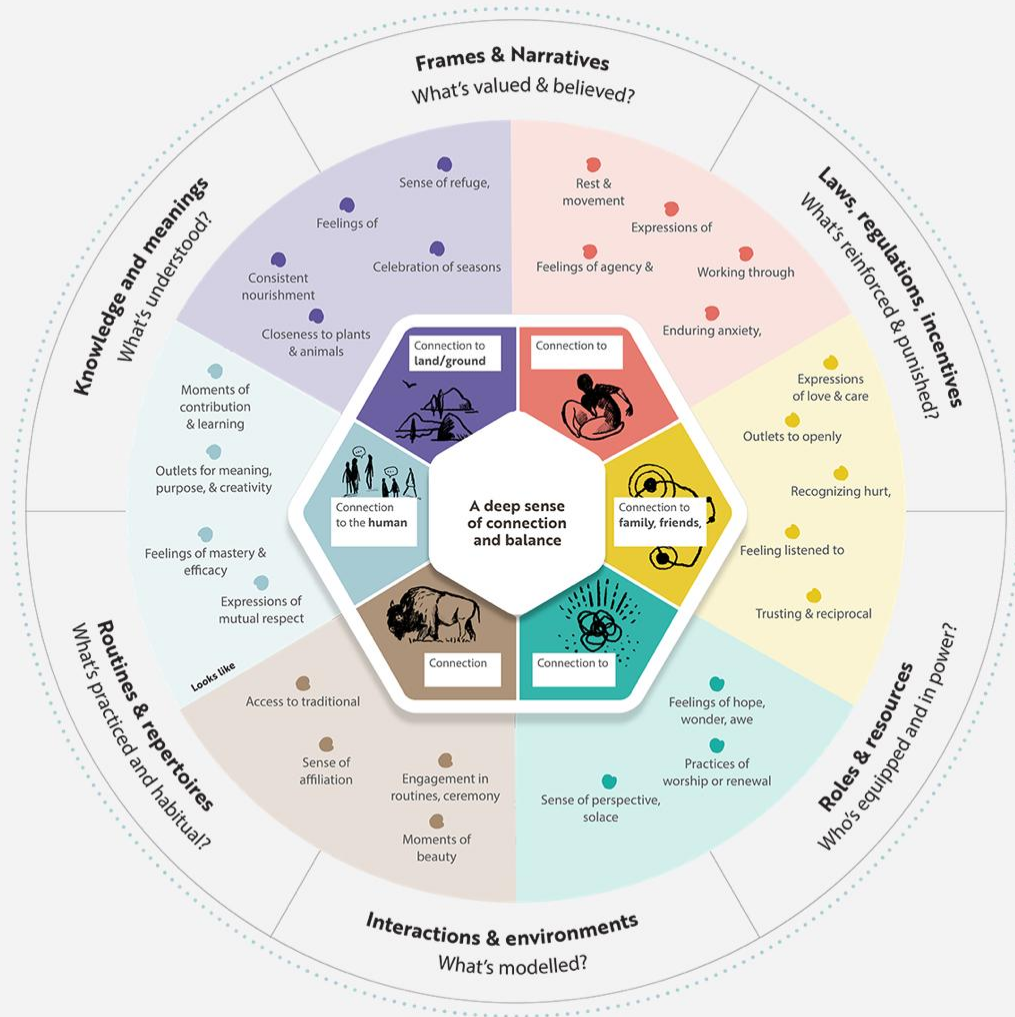


Wellness has come to equal satiating needs,  
in order of material urgency

The elements of wellness  
aren't hierarchical

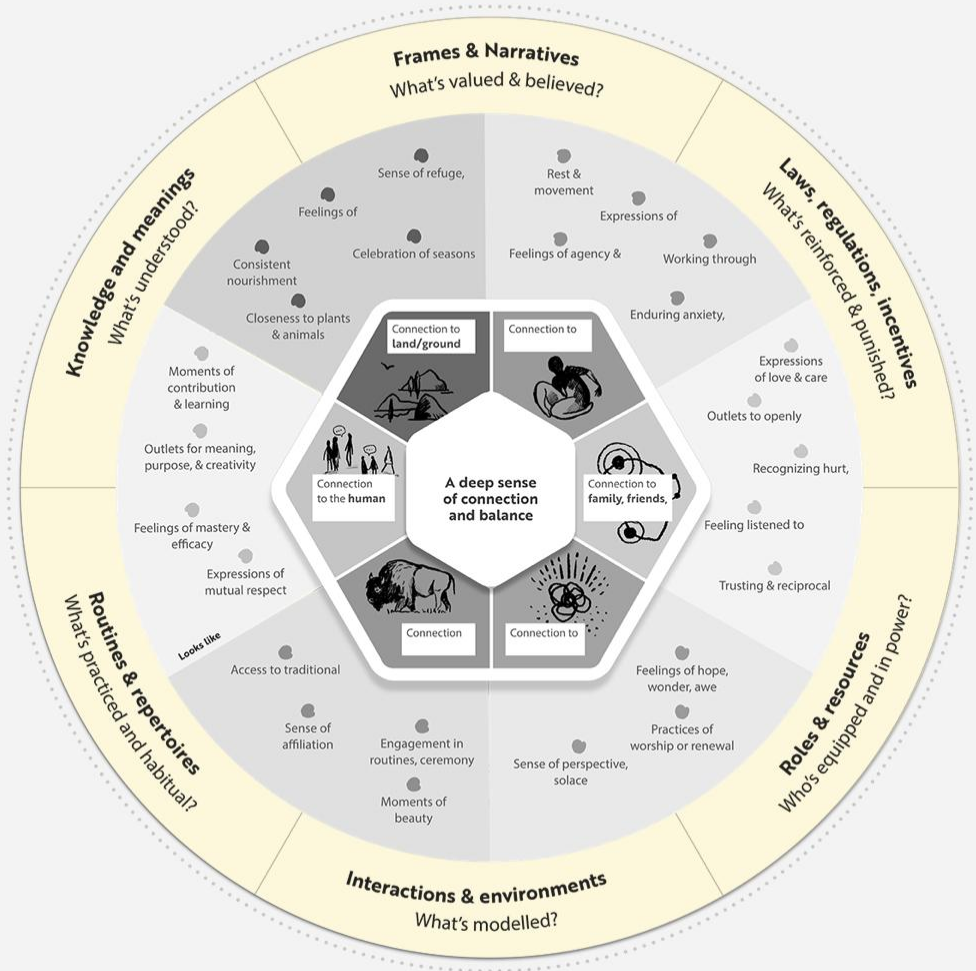


Recover's wellbeing framework honors interconnection.



**Cities are uniquely positioned to cut through silos and foster holism**

Cities have access to many cultural levers of change





## **Culture is the water we all swim in**

The set of shared beliefs, values and behaviours that structure our everyday lives, and which are passed along to succeeding generations.

Recover's wellbeing framework can help the city to...



**Refocus purpose**



**Aligning activities**



**Measure what matters**

To refocus purpose is to reset  
means and ends.





For example, housing is a means to a bigger end: connection to place, family, community, body.

When we confuse ends and means, we risk supplying the means in ways that cause further harm.



Aligning activities means intervening at the level of culture, not just more programs and services.

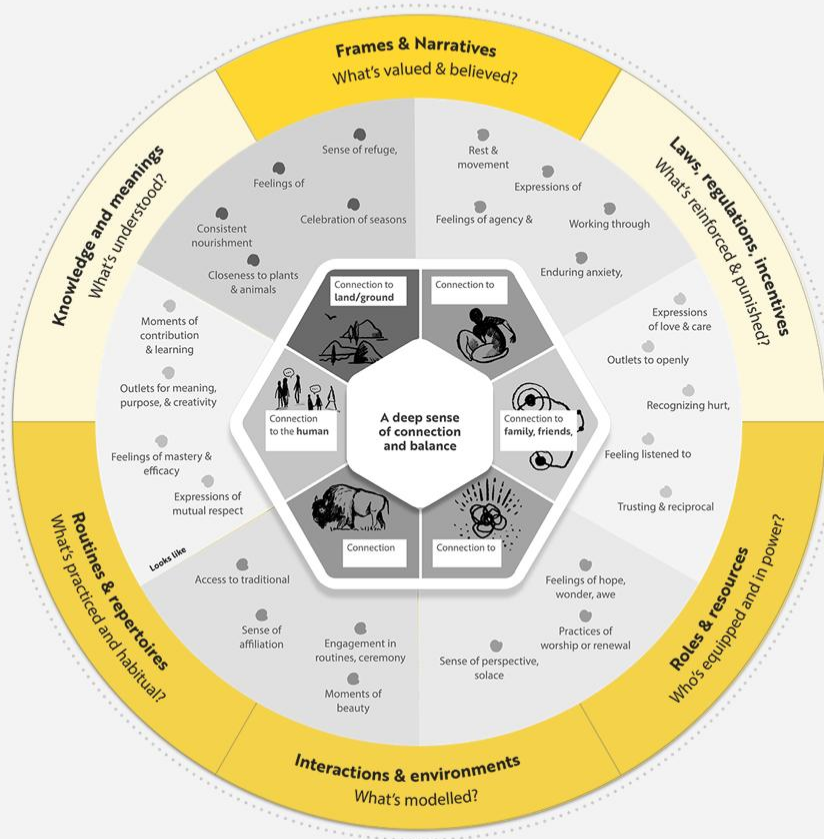


For example, we're testing The Mourning Midwife, a new set of roles, rituals, and stories of grief and loss.

Why? Disenfranchised grief drives so much disconnection – and fuels expensive cycles of decline



# Changing systems



# Spreading culture



## Centralized

(Control by...)



## Backbone structure

(Refer to...)



## Self-organised

(On your own)

Modes of spread

Principles



Platform

**TED** Ideas worth spreading

**TEDx**  
x = independently organized TED event

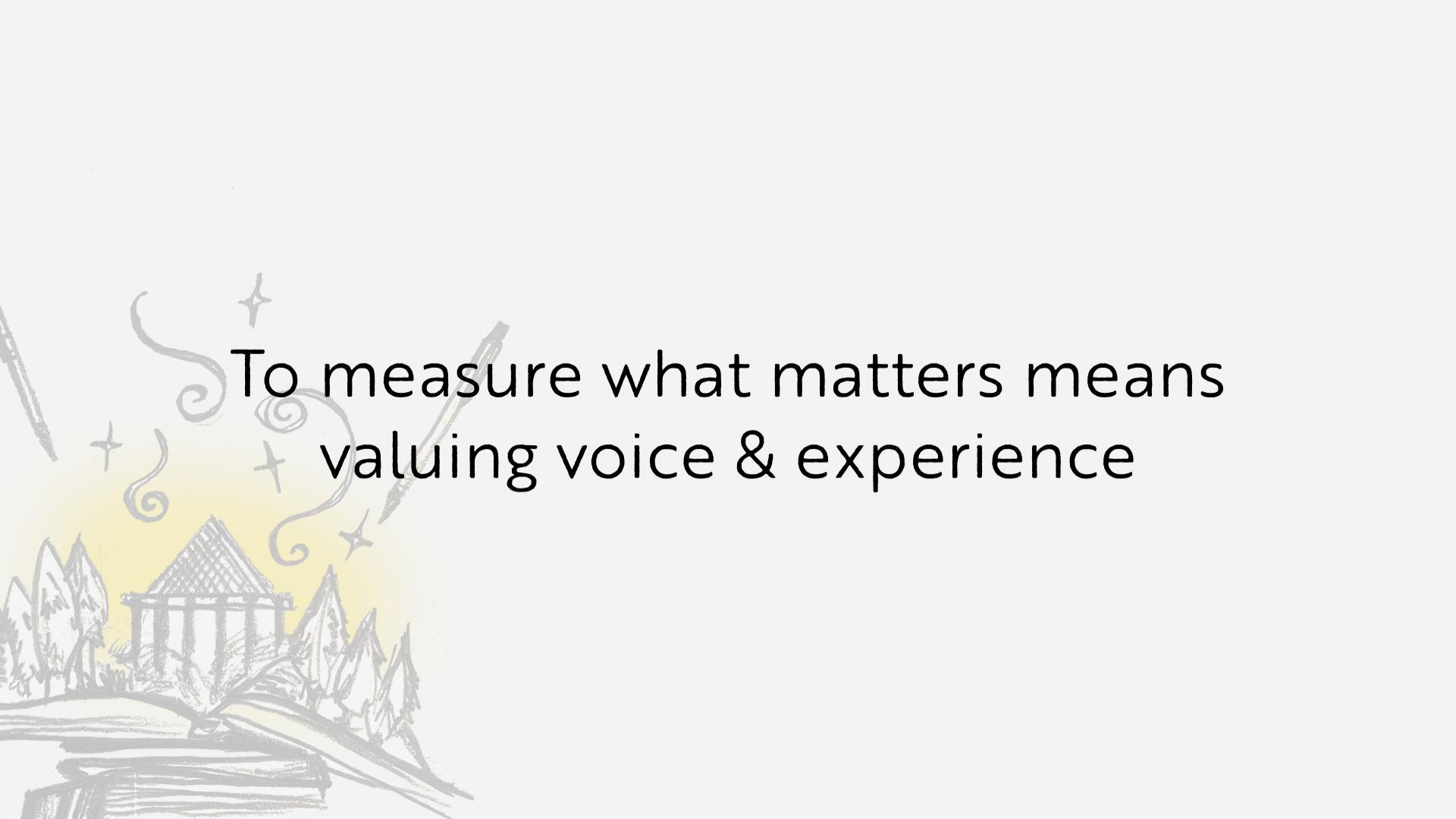
*meetup*

Ongoing content



**LES MILLS**



A decorative background featuring a pencil, stars, and a sketch of a building. The pencil is positioned diagonally across the upper left. Several four-pointed stars are scattered around the pencil. In the lower left, there is a sketch of a building with a gabled roof and columns, surrounded by trees and a stack of books.

To measure what matters means  
valuing voice & experience

Investing in a new set of metrics focused on subjective well-being, and community-led story collection.

For example, the SenseMaker framework

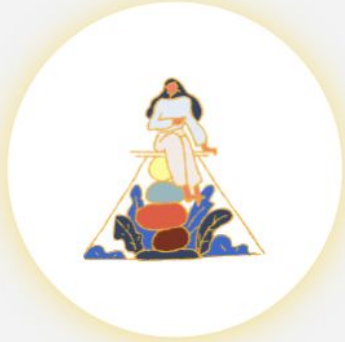


At a time when we are being called to  
disrupt long-standing patterns of  
marginalization, we must commit to  
changing **who** and **what** we **value** and  
**count**.



## Edmonton is well placed to lead the way

Transformation starts with leadership that



**Recognizes the status quo isn't good enough**



**Takes responsibility for sustaining systems of marginalization**



**Demonstrates curiosity and supports multiple ways of knowing and learning**

Thank you for your  
curiosity and courage!

# Catalyst Group



Networker



Advisor



Funder



Chief Skeptic

Allan **Undheim**, *United Way*

Cheryl **Whiskeyjack**, *Bent Arrow*

Dan **Jones**, *EPS*

Gail **Stepanik-Keber**, *Servus Credit Union*

Jacquelyn **Cardinal**, *Naheyawin*

Jan **Fox**, *REACH*

Jane **Bisbee**, *Social Enterprise Fund*

Jesse **Murphy**, *Capital Power*

JoAnn **Kirkland**, *EPS*

Joanne **Currie**, *United Way*

Kalen **Pilkington**, *MacEwan*

Keren **Tang**, *McConnell Foundation*

Leo **Wong**, *U of A*

Martin **Garber-Conrad**, *ECF*

Maryna **Korchagina**, *GoA*

Meghan **Dear**, *Localize / ATB X*

Norma **Spicer**, *Metis Nation of AB*

Rob **Smyth**, *CoE*

Sean **Melrose**, *Rhiza Capital*

Wanda **Costen**, *MacEwan*

# Next Steps

- **Researching, designing and testing** ideas - learning how to meaningfully impact the six kinds of connection and measure impact
- Pursuing **partnerships**
- Assisting **post secondary** professors, who are using the wellbeing framework in their courses
- Collaborating with the RECOVER **Catalyst Group**



**Thank you!**

