



# fACTivist

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## fACTivist

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# Changing attitudes about density

By *Susan Morrissey, Executive Director*

It's my pleasure to welcome you to the summer edition of the *fACTivist*. After sitting down with our staff to determine what themes to pursue, I was reminded that our 75th anniversary will soon be upon us. In giving this further thought we came to the realization that when we start to reflect back, especially on the work of the Council 20, 30, or even 40 years ago, we realize that we were dealing with a different Edmonton, a different municipal government and different ideas about where as a city we should be going.



For instance, there are several articles in this edition about urban infill and the need for increased housing density. Much work has gone into developing the city's Infill Action Plan with input from Edmontonians. In fact, ESPC took the time to provide feedback to the plan, both as an organization but also through our partnership with the Edmonton Coalition on Housing and Homelessness.

Back in 1974 we published *Every Person's Guide to Neighborhood Defense or Rape of*

*the Block* which offered aggressive ways for citizens to engage with the municipal government regarding land use and transportation.

In one section a reference is made to the neighborhood of Lynnwood and the proposed development of Whitehall Square which was a high density residential complex. Some of the reasons listed in the publication for opposing the project was because it would change the character of the neighborhood, cause traffic and parking problems, cause overcrowding at the local junior high and would devalue existing single family homes, to name a few.

Fast forward to present day to see a different perspective. Many people have engaged in the discussion about infill as a means to addressing urban sprawl.

In a nutshell, attitudes towards density have changed over the years and many Edmontonians can see the value. It's interesting to look back and see how things have changed. It's also a way to gauge progress we have and are making as a city to be inclusive, just and healthy. Here's to our work going forward.

## On the cover ...

Friends at the Fountain... two neighbours sit in the shade and chat beside the fountain at Giovanni Cabato Park on 95th Street and 108A Avenue in Little Italy.

They were just two of the hundreds who attended the 30th Annual Inner City BBQ on Friday July 18.

Organized by the Urban Support Network Foundation and supported by many community agencies and businesses, the annual event cooked up hamburgers, hotdogs and served cold

drinks to about 1,500 low income women, men and children who enjoyed the sunny Friday afternoon.

Live music, a children's safety fair and some information booths from community agencies were also part of the event.



# INSIDE INFILL



## Take a walk

around most established Edmonton neighbourhoods and you will see examples of residential infill and redevelopment. Infill, as it is often termed, has been taking place for as long as people have been building and rebuilding houses, duplexes, apartments, row houses or dividing large heritage homes into multiple suites. Over the years, attitudes have changed. While many still yearn for the single family home in the suburbs, surrounded by similar homes, others are seeing the value of housing diversity. Infill is seen by many as a way to increase density, revitalize older neighbourhoods with young families, better utilize public transportation, schools, community leagues and other infrastructure, and possibly even rein in urban sprawl.

To guide public consultation and policy development, the City of Edmonton approved various plans, policies and strategies. These include [The Way We Grow](#), the [Elevate](#) report on community sustainability and the [Residential Infill Guidelines](#).

In August, city councillors voted to allow twin skinny homes and garage or garden suites in all single-family neighbourhoods. Council also voted to start work on a wholesale revamp of the entire zoning code after hearing from developers and residents during a lengthy executive committee meeting.

The precise wording changes to RF1 or single-family zoning will come back to councillors in January. The changes will allow homeowners to subdivide lots to as narrow as 7.6 metres and build single detached homes. Garage and garden suites will be allowed behind single-family homes throughout the block, not just on corner lots. The changes could become law after a public hearing in late winter.

To coincide with these decisions, we thought it would be useful to explore some of these issues in our special feature **Inside Infill**. For more see p. 6-10.

# News Shorts

## Alberta's minimum wage increases to \$10.20

Alberta's general minimum wage increased to \$10.20 from \$9.95 per hour on Sept. 1. The liquor server minimum wage rose to \$9.20 from \$9.05 per hour. The increase is based on a formula used since 2011 that links the general wage rate to annual increases in Average Weekly Earnings (AWE) and the Consumer Price Index (CPI) in Alberta. About 25,700 individuals, or 1.5 per cent of employees in Alberta, earn minimum wage.

## 2014 Alberta Official Statistics now available

Did you know that 80 per cent Albertans volunteer, our average weekly earnings are 20 per cent higher than the national average and that 2013 saw increased crop production and a decrease in the number of wildfires? The recent annual release of the province's official statistics covers a wide range of topics from employment, healthcare, social services, the environment and the economy. For more facts and stats see <https://www.officialstats.alberta.ca>

## Klimchuk, new Human Services minister

The MLA for Edmonton-Glenora and the former minister of Culture is the new

Human Services minister. Heather Klimchuk was one of 16 ministers appointed by Premier Jim Prentice to his cabinet on Sept. 15. Prior to becoming the MLA, Klimchuk was a researcher at the Legislative



Assembly and a writer for Premiers Lougheed and Getty. She holds a bachelor of arts degree from the University of Alberta in political science.

## Honourary degree for former EJHS executive director

Maureen Collins, who retired last year from the Edmonton John Howard Society, received an honorary degree from MacEwan University during its June convocation ceremony. A respected leader in Edmonton's not-for-profit sector, Collins was this year's recipient of the Distinguished Citizen Honourary degree. "I felt it was a real honour to be thought of this way by MacEwan and I am very humbled by it," said Collins. Her effective and collaborative leadership qualities

contributed to the growth of EJHS, the development of the staff and the not-for-profit sector. In 2010, she also received a YWCA Woman of Distinction Award.



Maureen Collins

## Council removes downtown height restrictions

At a public hearing in June, Edmonton City Council made the removal of the Airport Protection Overlay (APO) official, passing Bylaw 16859 without debate. The zoning bylaw no longer references height restrictions enabling downtown buildings to rise to whatever height the market will bear.

## Liz O'Neill receives honorary degree

After more than 30 years serving Edmonton's children and youth, Liz O'Neill was

presented with a Distinguished Citizen Honourary degree from Grant MacEwan University during its June convocation.

Liz O'Neill has devoted her life to serving children and youth, much of the time as the



Liz O'Neill

executive director of Boys and Girls Clubs Big Brothers Big Sisters

of Edmonton and Area. She has served on a number of boards, currently as the deputy chair of the Edmonton Community Foundation Board, as a member of both the EPCOR Community Essentials Council and the TELUS Edmonton Community Board.

## New AB Health Advocate named

Deborah Prowse, Q.C. is the new Alberta Health Advocate bringing human rights and patient safety advocacy experience to her new role. She is the former chair of



Deborah Prowse

the Patient/Family Safety Advisory Panel with the Health

Quality Council of Alberta and a former hearing chair with the Alberta Human Rights Commission. She has served as a patient safety champion at the World Health Organization and as the co-chair of the

Minister's Advisory Committee on Health in 2010. The Health Advocate is part of the Office of the Health Advocates, which also includes John Cabral as interim Seniors' Advocate and Carol Robertson Baker as the Mental Health Patient Advocate. To contact the office, call 780-422-1812 or visit [albertahealthadvocates.ca](http://albertahealthadvocates.ca)

### Irene Fraser appointed to Order of Canada

Irene Fraser, now of Millet, was named as a member of the Order of Canada in late June for her work as a social justice advocate working for the fair treatment

of First Nations and Métis people in the justice system. She was one of 86 new appointments announced by Gov. Gen. David Johnston. Fraser was born in Alberta, but spent much of her life working in Saskatchewan where she focused on bringing



Irene Fraser

forward Aboriginal issues. In 2003, she worked with the Indian Residential Schools Secretariat on implementation of the residential schools claims process. "Although there are days when it is a bit of a struggle to find hope in where we are going, I think we are at a crucial time in Canada when Aboriginal people could once again be key to the survival of the people here," Fraser said in an email to the *Edmonton Journal*.

### Vendors OK with AB Street News change

After 11 years as a volunteer-run newspaper, *Alberta Street News* has been acquired by



Martyshuk Housing to be run as a social enterprise. Linda Dumont, founder and editor of *Alberta Street News*, will continue editing the paper. "What is most

important is that *Alberta Street News* will continue to be published and sold by vendors on the street, providing an opportunity for employment and giving a voice to those who are in need," she said.

## \$32 million announced to support Edmonton homelessness projects

The on-going success of the Housing First philosophy to address homeless is resulting in continuing government funding commitments.

In early July, federal Minister of Health and MP Rona Ambrose, announced the renewal of the Homelessness Partnering Strategy for another five years with a \$32 million funding agreement with Homeward Trust Edmonton.

Susan McGee, the CEO of Homeward Trust, said the Housing First approach "really works" by providing people with permanent housing along with consistent case management and support instead of the more typical crisis-based model of homeless shelters and emergency interventions.

Ambrose said the Housing First approach not only works for the homeless individual but is also financially responsible for government. She said that for every \$10 invested in Housing First, government can save \$20 in the reduced use of emergency and social services.

Although recently adopted by the federal government, the Housing First approach has been utilized in Edmonton since 2009. Homeward Trust estimates the program has housed more than 3,100 people.

Over the next five years, the new funding will support outreach and support services, case management, data collection and evaluation and some capital construction projects.

# Prince Charles

## New opportunities in an old neighbourhood



### By Christopher Rudge

Originally subdivided in 1905 and annexed by Edmonton in 1910, the neighbourhood of Prince Charles began to grow with the construction of an electric streetcar along the neighbourhood’s southern border in 1913.

Originally named North Inglewood, the neighbourhood was renamed in honour of, yes, Prince Charles in 1953. By car, the main entrance to Prince Charles is typically 124<sup>th</sup> Street where it narrows into a residential road lined by mature elms. The neighbourhood is quiet and has generally been an affordable choice for seniors, students and families. Approximately three quarters of the dwellings are small, one-storey, single-detached homes, many built during the 1940s and 1950s. In contrast to new suburban lots which typically range from 275 to 400 square metres, these houses are situated on lots up to 700 square metres, which can be very attractive for infill developers.

Between 2009 and 2014, the population of Prince Charles grew from 1,363 to 1,594, an increase of 231 residents. In addition, the total number of dwellings also grew from 578 to 644, an increase of 66, with a relatively even split between owners and renters.

### Zoning in Prince Charles

The majority of lands within Prince Charles were originally zoned RF3 (Low Density Development Housing). This zoning permitted a wide range of homes including duplexes, triplexes, row houses, rooming homes and small apartment complexes. In March 2013, Prince Charles was one of the many established communities in Edmonton affected by changes made to RF3 zoning (now called Small Scale Infill Development). This change, made after extensive consultation by the city, aims to promote greater infill

development in established neighbourhoods. Amongst others, these changes have eased development restrictions on housing type, lot coverage (allowing for larger homes on smaller parcels) and the splitting of lots.

Like many mature neighbourhoods in Edmonton, Prince Charles’ traditional RF3 zoning permitted some infill development over the years. Taking a walk through the neighbourhood today, you will notice that the majority of infill housing constructed is in the form of duplexes. These duplexes are diverse in size, style and age, including one- and two-storey structures, most of which were constructed between 1970 and today.

Small apartment buildings and townhouses can also be found on the edges of the neighbourhood close to 118 Avenue and Yellowhead Trail. In addition, two of the community’s first so-called “skinny homes”, situated on narrow lots, are currently under construction. Skinny homes have gained attention recently in Edmonton for its ability to attract new home buyers who may otherwise move to one of the city’s suburban communities. In addition to the 2013 RF3 zoning changes, city council launched a pilot project in Prince Charles in the summer of 2014 that allows construction of garage and garden suites on all single family lots. Garage suites are typically loft-like rental accommodations built above detached garages, while garden suites (also known as granny flats) are small detached dwellings in the rear or side yard of a single-detached home (CMHC 2006).

Residents had previously expressed concern over the increased construction of duplexes as the dominant form of infill development and wanted more housing options that would retain the architectural character of the neighbourhood while increasing density.



(Above) A newer duplex in the foreground and older duplex in the background situated between a small one-storey home in Prince Charles. (Right) New "Skinny Homes" under construction.



### Additional Resources

Canadian Mortgage and Housing Corporation, 2006. [About Your House.](#)

CBC News. 2014, July 02. [Prince Charles residents want more garage suites, fewer duplexes.](#)

City of Edmonton. No date. Prince Charles, Neighbourhood Profile. Retrieved from [http://www.edmonton.ca/for\\_residents/2006\\_DEMOG\\_RAPHIC\\_Prince\\_Charles.pdf](http://www.edmonton.ca/for_residents/2006_DEMOG_RAPHIC_Prince_Charles.pdf)

City of Edmonton. [2009 Municipal Census.](#)

Mertz, Emily. 2014, January 10. Edmonton welcomes a new form of infill houses: skinny homes. [Global News.](#)

### Infill and Neighbourhood Character

Despite the noticeable size differences between some of Prince Charles' older single-storey homes and the numerous duplexes found throughout, the overall feel of this mature neighbourhood seems to be intact.

The range of homes built before World War II to the present gives Prince Charles a diversity of housing and architectural styles.

Infill development during the past several decades appears to have been gradual, allowing the community to absorb and integrate these developments.

Prince Charles has not experienced the rapid and often disruptive effects of gentrification that more centrally-located communities sometimes experience.

I was previously poorly acquainted with this small neighbourhood, but after taking an afternoon walk to Prince Charles I am left with the impression of an appealing neighbourhood that will likely attract more young families.

With the increased emphasis on urban infill, a renewed interest in mature neighbourhoods, and the nearby planned development of the City Centre Airport (now Blatchford), Prince Charles will likely be faced with the opportunities and challenges that come with greater density.

*Christopher Rudge is an environmental consultant, originally from Ontario, and now calling Edmonton home since 2009.*

In urban planning, a **brownfield site** is land previously used for industrial purposes or some commercial uses. The land may be contaminated by low concentrations of hazardous waste or pollution, and has the potential to be reused once it is cleaned up - [Wikipedia](#)

**By Ben Lemphers**

Throughout Edmonton’s urban core, contaminated brownfield sites sit vacant on prime real estate.

Perhaps the most familiar contaminated sites in the urban core are old service station lots. There are dozens of these around Edmonton. Prominent examples include the former

matter. Fearful of uncovering a “polluter pay” scenario, they prefer to keep a low profile and pay the property taxes on their vacant lots. Likewise, municipalities are concerned about committing to remediation costs that may soar beyond expectations.

Over time, pollution may have spread underground, stretching blocks away from the original contamination site.

This raises questions of how far, and to whom, the responsibility for remediating a contaminated site should extend. Finally, prospective developers are cautious of purchasing and redeveloping land with an environmental past for which liability is unclear.

To counter some of the confusion, the Government of Alberta implemented the Remediation Certificate Program in 2010, intended to provide clarity and closure around liability concerns over

remediation efforts on contaminated property. If Alberta Environment and Sustainable Resource Development is satisfied upon reviewing a specific site, a certificate may be issued for the site and the substances that were cleaned up. The certificate has the effect of ceasing on-going liability for past contamination.

# Brownfield

## Barriers to redeveloping contaminated sites

gas stations along Whyte Avenue at 100 Street, and also at 105 Street. Former manufacturing and industrial facilities can also leave behind swaths of vacant polluted land, such as the former Domtar wood preserving site north of the Yellowhead Trail and east of 50<sup>th</sup> Street, which totals approximately 40 hectares in size.

These bleak spaces provide a valuable opportunity to increase urban density and diversity; however, numerous challenges hinder this potential. Key obstacles include murky regulations around liability for contaminated sites, financial constraints of remediation and lengthy clean-up timelines.

### Liability Issues

Who is considered responsible for contamination, to what extent are they responsible and for how long, is often unclear. The result of this regulatory confusion is a stalemate of responsibility between owners, governments and developers.

Many brownfield owners are not eager to delve into the

### Financial and Time Constraints

Typically, costs of redeveloping previously used sites are higher than those of development on greenfield sites at the city’s edge.

Redeveloping contaminated sites imposes significant costs of time and money on developers’ minimum profit margin, raising concerns that remediation costs could exceed the market value of the redeveloped land. Without assured funding support or substantial municipal tax incentives, the time commitment and costs of preliminary assessments, actual remediation, and ongoing contamination monitoring appear too high to would be developers. As a result, the economic potential of brownfield redevelopment is overlooked.



Uncertainties surrounding brownfield redevelopment, such as how long remediation will last, and whether the venture will be profitable after decontamination, may lead to difficulty in obtaining financial capital. Therefore, banks and investors need some assurance that a brownfield project will be financially viable. Notably, some Canadian cities have greatly reduced developers' charges for remediation in order to encourage recycling of contaminated sites. For example, Ottawa's brownfield redevelopment program will cover up to 50 per cent of rehabilitation costs.

**Benefits and Opportunities**

Redeveloping contaminated sites can play a key role in revitalizing local economies and ending cycles of urban decay. Redevelopment can also promote compact growth that utilizes existing infrastructure and helps maintain affordable housing and retail spaces as land pressure escalates in central Edmonton.

Infill development that incorporates brownfields could contribute to higher densities that are more appropriate to precious land in the urban centre. There are numerous success stories of condominium development in former manufacturing, industrial or warehousing districts. For example, the north end of 104 Street downtown, as well as the Oliver Village housing development, which lies on a previously abandoned and contaminated rail yard. Brownfield development can create new local employment

**Edmonton's Most Visible Brownfield Sites**

- Whyte Ave @ 105 St
- Whyte Ave @ 100 St
  - 99 St @ 90 Ave
  - 76 Ave @ 96<sup>th</sup> St
- Domtar site, north of Yellowhead and east of 50th St
  - 109 St. @ 107 Ave
  - 97 St @ 108a Ave
- Jasper Avenue @ 95 St
  - 118 Ave @ 92 St

opportunities and bring a diversity of uses into communities, especially if street-level retail is combined with residential units above. Plans are afoot for such a development on the long standing Whyte Avenue and 105 Street service station brownfield, which, after 16 years, finally has a clean bill of health.

One of Canada's major brownfield success stories is the transformation of Victoria's century-old Dockside industrial site into the vibrant mixed-use community of Dockside Green. In Edmonton, the Blatchford development presents a similar

opportunity for managing outward growth by increasing density within an existing urban area. Infill development in Edmonton has included polluted industrial lands in the past, like The Village at Griesbach, which was once a military base. The city's new Infill Roadmap, however, is silent on the opportunities contaminated sites present for residential infill.

Several obstacles impede successful redevelopment on contaminated sites in urban areas. These include liability regulations, lengthy timelines, and financial costs of remediation borne by prospective developers. The examples above show these barriers can be overcome to transform contaminated sites into vibrant urban focal points.

*Ben Lemphers is a Housing Outreach Worker with the Bissell Centre's Housing First program, Homeless to Homes. He recently completed a degree in Political Science at the University of Alberta.*



**Additional Resources**

[Brownfield Redevelopment for Housing in Canada –](#)

[Case Studies. CMHC](#)

[Canadian Brownfields Network](#)

[Remediation Technologies](#)

[Symposium 2014, Oct. 15-17, Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel.](#)

[RemTech technical presentations and case studies](#)

[between 2002-2013](#)

[Brownfields Sustainability](#)

[Snapshot, Federation of Canadian Municipalities, 2009](#)

[15th Annual Canadian Brownfields Conference,](#)

[hosted by The Canadian Urban Institute, October 29.](#)

[2014 Toronto's Regent Park](#)

# Infill: A potential growth solution for Edmonton

**By Michelle Harkness**

Edmonton’s current population stands at almost 878,000 people and growing. We live in a thriving city where housing and accommodation is a concern for many. An imbalance, however, is being created when we destroy precious green space, build new developments while under-utilizing existing housing infrastructure. The fact is many mature neighbourhoods are experiencing stagnant or declining populations and half-filled schools while new neighbourhoods are over populated and unable to meet the needs of its citizens.

If we build new developments, while utilizing existing housing infrastructure, our growing city can accommodate all those who wish to live here while sustaining vibrant neighbourhoods. The City of Edmonton shares in this belief as evidenced by the Infill Action Plan. Over the course of two years, the city hopes to implement a successful housing strategy.

**What is the Residential Infill?**

Residential infill is the creation of housing in established neighbourhoods. In Edmonton established neighbourhoods are mostly those built prior to 1995 within Anthony Henday Drive. Housing can take on many forms such as apartments, row housing, secondary suites, garage suites, detached or semi detached housing, duplexes and mixed use buildings.

**Consultation**

City officials sought public feedback on infill in mature neighbourhoods during a consultation between November 2013 and June 2014. 1,000 people attended information sessions enabling the city to collect valuable input.

**Infill Roadmap**

As a result of the consultation, a framework was drafted to provide guidelines for residential infill. There are 23 principles or actions based on communication, collaboration, knowledge, rules and process. Some of the key actions include:

Communication:

**ACTION 1:**

*Develop and implement an infill communication strategy that shares information clearly with a wide and diverse audience and also enhances communication with city officials, residents and builders by simplifying communication.*

Ease of communication is essential for the implementation of a plan. By making it easier for everyone to connect and express their input, infill becomes easier to establish.

**ACTION 2:**

*Create a HUB on the City of Edmonton website dedicated to*

*everything infill, that is not only clear but concise.*

Knowledge is power. Easy access to questions with concise answers will help educate builders and the general public on what infill is, its practices and activities.

Collaboration:

**ACTION 6:**

*Pilot an “Infill Insight Action Group” made up of builders and citizens whose role is to provide a diverse perspective to city administration as work on infill becomes advanced.*

The city not only can learn from these diverse perspectives and benefit from community engagement, but it also builds the trust between city officials, builders and residents.

Knowledge:

**ACTION 11:**

*Undertake a project within city administration to build a comprehensive mature neighbourhood snapshot that includes indicators and investments in groups of established neighbourhoods, that will help to better inform and aid city administration in making planning decisions.*

An understanding of current conditions and activities in mature neighbourhoods will provide the city with information to share with citizens as well as be able to plan for and respond to the needs in different areas.

**ACTION 14:**

*Create more opportunity for garage and garden suites in mature neighbourhoods by amending zoning by laws.*

By amending location and site regulations, regulatory barriers for garage and garden suites will be reduced, increasing the number of and variety of affordable housing options for both home owners and renters

Process:

**ACTION 21:**

*Test new approaches to the city development approval process in order to stimulate the creation of creative residential infill projects and or showcase new to Edmonton forms of infill.*

Edmonton has the potential to become a leader in infill design by improving opportunities that otherwise would not fit into our existing rules and regulations. This is done by creating more effective management processes.

Overall, the concept of residential infill is a smart strategy for a growing city. Residential infill will ensure we are using all of our resources and existing infrastructure which can only increase the vibrancy and attraction of our communities and our city as a whole.

*Michelle Harkness is, in her own words, a proud Edmontonian who is passionate about social issues that have an impact her great city.*

*Karen Bruno is employed by Boyle Street Community Services to manage a 62-unit three-storey apartment building in Abbotsfield. Before Boyle Street acquired the building about four years ago and hired Karen as its manager, it was a typical rental building. Residents rarely spoke to each other. The building was run down. The police and paramedics visited regularly. People felt unsafe and suspicious of others. Today, things have changed. Suites have been renovated. Maintenance and repairs are made quickly. Residents know each other and take turns helping out. People describe the building as feeling “homey.”*



Karen Bruno

*So what happened? To answer that, here are Karen Bruno’s ...*

# Ten ways to create community

## **1. Build relationships**

Get to know – REALLY know – your community members. Find out their interests, passions, experiences, beliefs and background. Get to know their friends and guests as well.

## **2. Learn about the community**

Do an assessment of the community and learn to understand the community’s culture, the problems of the past. Make no quick assumptions about what needs to change. Listen before acting.

## **3. Take care in determining who will be in your community**

Take the time to sit down with everyone interested in joining the community. Explain the culture of the community and make sure the new member knows what they are getting in to and what they can expect.

## **4. Give community members a voice**

Create ways for community members to talk to each other. Create communications tools like newsletters and bulletin boards to encourage residents to express themselves and get to know each other.

## **5. Create ways for community members to actively make their community better**

Discontinue external maintenance contracts and find residents who are interested in cutting lawns, shoveling sidewalks, painting and doing other minor repairs. Reward those residents with honorariums, gifts and other incentives. Encourage residents to share their skills by

offering workshops on their hobbies and interests.

## **6. Organize events that have more than one purpose**

By holding a garage sale, for example, you not only raise some money, but you also connect with the larger community, get residents working together and you might even help a resident with a hoarding problem.

## **7. Engage the unengaged**

In any community, there are extroverts and introverts, keeners and those who stand back. Work on understanding the unengaged and find less obvious ways for those residents to get involved.

## **8. Don’t stand for bullying and gossip**

Ask yourself, why is the bully or gossip going out of their way to bad mouth someone else? Really probe to understand what is really going on and try to address that.

## **9. Be slow to condemn. Give people the benefit of the doubt**

We all make mistakes and deserve a second chance. Give the community member the opportunity to make amends. Take the time to talk about what it means to be part of this community. When all else fails, they may be asked to leave.

## **10. Celebrate people’s differences**

Create opportunities for people to share their cultural background, life experiences, religious beliefs. A healthy community can be measured by how comfortable people feel in sharing information about who they are.

# Yeg's vital signs measured in national research project

You're invited to the public release of the *2014 Vital Signs Edmonton* report at noon Oct. 7 at Edmonton City Hall. The project, conducted by ESPC and the Edmonton Community Foundation, attempts to measure the health and vitality of Edmonton.

Copies of the report will be available at the city hall event, in an eight-page special section in the Oct. 7 *Edmonton Journal* and at [www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca](http://www.edmontonsocialplanning.ca) or [www.ecfoundation.org](http://www.ecfoundation.org)

The project is part of an annual check-up conducted by 25 other community foundations across Canada. It provides a comprehensive look at how each community is faring in key quality-of-life areas. Vital Signs Edmonton was first issued in 2013 with a special focus on food security. The 2014 edition of the report focusses on youth with both quantitative and qualitative results. Results cover topics such as employment,

education, finances, ethnicity, health, lifestyle, crime, voting trends as well as attitudes about living in Edmonton and future opportunities. Besides the special youth focus, the report also measures the average Edmontonians' vital signs



Learn more about the statistics on and the feelings about Edmonton's Youth and community-wide indicators on Oct. 7th in Vital Signs®. Attend the launch in City Hall at noon or pick up your copy in the Edmonton Journal.

such as income, age, home ownership and education levels. The qualitative sections of the report measure the average person's feelings about safety, quality of life, community involvement, cultural diversity and more.

## Halloween deadline for trauma conference proposals

Urban Core Support Network is looking for academics, researchers or front line practitioners to lead workshops during next year's Trauma Informed Edmonton Conference.

Conference organizers are looking for presentations on innovative practices or interventions, program development, policy initiatives and selfcare strategies for the conference held March 4-5, 2015 at the Westin Hotel.

Workshops can be 60 minutes, 90 minutes and 120 minutes in length. The conference is also seeking a 30 minute self-care practice plenary session to take place at the end of each day of the conference.

In 2013 the Urban Core Support Network, along with several community partners, organized a training conference for frontline workers and service providers to improve understanding of the historical and cultural context of trauma.

Participants learned to understand the impact of trauma, with particular emphasis on the relationship between trauma, emotions, neurobiology and recovery with supportive relationships.

The success of the 2013 conference resulted in strong interest in holding a 2015 conference.

For more information on the conference or on how to propose a workshop, contact Madeleine Smith at [Madeleine.Smith@reachedmonton.ca](mailto:Madeleine.Smith@reachedmonton.ca) or contact REACH Edmonton by mail at 901 - Baker Centre, 10025 - 106 St. Edmonton, AB T5J 1G4

## 12 honoured in 3rd Daughters of the Year ceremony

Twelve women making a positive difference in Alberta were honoured Sept. 6 as part of the third annual [Daughters Day celebration](#).

This year's recipients included Jewish Family Services' Jeni Adler, film maker Shreela Chakrabarti, Chinese community leader Lan Chan Marples, long-time Edmonton Public School Board member Joan Cowling, *Alberta Street News* editor Linda Dumont, Indo-Canadian Women's Association program director Rajvir Gill, *Boyle McCauley News* editor Paula Kirman, L'Arche's Laura Manickaraj, Red Deer breast cancer volunteer Zainab Mohamoud, U of A Hospital neurosurgeon Shawna Pandya, Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton and ESPC board member Bridget Stirling and bodybuilder Michelle Van Teeling.

# ESPC contributes to mayor's poverty elimination task force



The Edmonton Social Planning Council is providing vital social research statistics and information for Edmonton Mayor Don Iveson's Task Force for the Elimination of Poverty.

ESPC is a member of the Information and Research Roundtable, a sub-committee of the task force, asked to review current poverty research and data.

The 2011 National Household Survey found, for example, that 100,000 Edmontonians live in poverty, 30 per cent of those being children.

ESPC's John Kolkman and Manuel Escoto are working on a poverty profile for the task force that will examine how poverty varies across age, gender, household and neighbourhood in the city. The profile will also explore what population groups are impacted the most by poverty and what emerging trends will influence the work to eliminate poverty.

The task force, not including those participating in the two roundtables, is made up of 18 members including elected officials, social service agencies staff, religious leaders, business people, academics and consultants.

The resulting ten year action plan expected to be released in 2015 will focus on addressing the root causes of poverty while focusing on

transportation, housing, education, early childhood support and employment.

"A shift in thinking from a charity model to one based on investment is key to making continuous strides," said Mayor Iveson when he announced the task force.

"The formation of the task force will provide all Edmontonians with the chance to think about this issue and the role that governments, institutions, organizations and individuals can play in making a difference."

The mayor's task force resulted following the February release of the Edmonton's Poverty Elimination Steering Committee's report [\*Changing the Conversation About Poverty in Edmonton\*](#). (ESPC Executive Director Susan Morrissey was among the first to initiate the idea of the steering committee.)

The ESPC's [\*2013 Tracking the Trends\*](#) publication reported that the percentage of Edmonton families living below the poverty line has increased steadily since 2007. It also shows that single people are twice as likely to live below the poverty line that those in families.

## Additional Resources

[City of Edmonton, Eliminating Poverty in Edmonton](#) website.

[The Mayor's Symposium on Poverty, What We Heard Report](#), March 20, 2014

[Changing the Conversation About Poverty in Edmonton, Edmonton's Poverty Elimination Steering Committee Summary Report](#), February, 2014

[Edmonton Poverty Fact Sheet](#), no date.

[Poverty and You](#), United Way Alberta Capital Region website.

[Reflections on Edmonton Inner City Poverty](#) blog, by Dan Muthui

[An Analysis of Poverty in Alberta, Final Report](#), Alberta Human Services, May 2013

[Ending Poverty Means a More Prosperous City for All](#), Amarjeet Sohi website

# Renovated Federal Building contributes to downtown

By Hanna Nash

The revitalization of the Alberta government's Edmonton Federal Building and Centennial Plaza is nearing completion and will provide a refreshed year-round experience, complete with water features, green space, an outdoor skating rink and underground public parking by the end of November 2014.

The repurposed Edmonton Federal Building will be a symbol of 21<sup>st</sup> century accessibility to government by the public and will facilitate the rejuvenation of downtown Edmonton. The connected outdoor Centennial Plaza will serve as open space for the public that includes distinctive landscaping features each representing the six different ecological zones found within Alberta.

The Rocky Mountains, grasslands, parklands, Canadian Shield, foothills and boreal forest will be featured in a way that best depicts each of their contributions to Alberta's environmental backdrop.



The nearly completed Federal Building at 107 St.. and 99 Ave.

The Centennial Plaza, which includes a 100-fountain head interactive water feature, is expected to be used by the public for concerts, festivals and public events such as



## Want to volunteer for the ESPC?

Get involved with some of our existing and new volunteer opportunities!

We are looking for people who can:

- research and / or write reviews
- help in the community
- serve on the board
- plan events / fundraise

For more information, visit [edmontonsocialplanning.ca](http://edmontonsocialplanning.ca) and click on **Get Involved**.

## Looking for research advice?

The Edmonton Social Planning Council provides **FREE** research advice to social advocacy organizations in Edmonton! Are you seeking publications or statistics in social policy areas such as:

<b>Housing</b>	<b>Transportation</b>	<b>Health</b>
<b>Education</b>	<b>Food Security</b>	<b>Income Security Programs</b>
<b>Urban Issues</b>	<b>Social Services</b>	<b>Women</b>
<b>Disabilities</b>	<b>Poverty</b>	<b>Immigration</b>
<b>Families</b>	<b>Children and Child Care</b>	<b>... and more!</b>
<b>Seniors</b>	<b>Indigenous Peoples</b>	
<b>Labour Force</b>	<b>Crime and Safety</b>	

If you need a hand finding information about local social issues or related topics, contact Research Assistant Manuel Escoto at 780-423-2031 ext. 351 or by email at [manuele@edmontonsocialplanning.ca](mailto:manuele@edmontonsocialplanning.ca)



# revitalization

the Festival of Lights, Christmas and New Year's celebrations.

The renovation of the Edmonton Federal Building also features the creation of the West Entrance Pavilion that will join the legislature grounds to the Edmonton Federal Building. The transparent glassed-in building will incorporate natural elements alongside a constructed public space that will include a visitor information centre, exhibition galleries, retail and dining options. A large atrium presenting a living wall and water feature will also be present for public enjoyment.

The redeveloped art deco building, that sat empty since 1989, is preparing to create a lasting impression as one of the Edmonton's most architecturally significant buildings, which will communicate the importance of Alberta's past, present and future.

*Hanna Nash is a freelance writer from Edmonton.*



*Jian Ghomeshi*

## Re-Thinking the Canadian Identity Where do I Fit In?

An afternoon discussion with  
Jian Ghomeshi

2 pm Nov. 8 2014

U of A

Myer Horowitz Theatre

8900 114 Street. Tickets: \$10

To purchase tickets

[www.ecfoundation.org](http://www.ecfoundation.org)

## Anne Stevenson

# From London to Vancouver and back again

Anne Stevenson joined the ESPC board in January 2014. She was born and attended school in Edmonton before moving to Ontario to pursue a degree in International Development and Political Economy at Trent University.

She spent a year in Ghana, West Africa, and experienced firsthand the difficulties of development. While initiatives like health, women's rights and, democracy all made sense in and of themselves, there was little tying these elements together or creating long lasting foundations to support these causes.

Inspired by approaches taking place in Brazil that combined urban planning with poverty reduction, Anne travelled to the United Kingdom to study City Design and Social Science at the London School of Economics.



*Anne Stevenson*

This was the start to her career in urban planning that has led from London to Vancouver and back home to Edmonton.

Anne is driven by the potential of urban planning to help mitigate some of the secondary effects of poverty. For example, neighbourhoods can be planned to foster diverse communities where people of all incomes have access to the same high quality services, schools and amenities.

Anne is excited by the work of ESPC in developing knowledge and awareness to support appropriate and effective policy responses that support the well being of all Edmontonians.

# About the Edmonton Social Planning Council

## 2014-2015

### Board of Directors

Vasant Chotai (President)  
Doug Meggison  
Sumeet Shinde  
Jarrod Bayne  
Rose Marie Tremblay  
Oliver Kamau  
Janet Kluthe  
Bridget Stirling  
Anne Stevenson  
Darlene Paranaque  
Candas Jane Dorsey

### Staff Members

Susan Morrissey  
**Executive Director**  
John Kolkman  
**Research Coordinator**  
Terry Jorden  
**Communications Officer**  
Manuel Escoto  
**Research Assistant**  
Stephanie Haar  
**Executive Assistant**

The ESPC is an independent, non-profit, charitable organization. Our focus is social research – particularly in the areas of low income and poverty.

We are dedicated to encouraging the adoption of equitable social policy, supporting the work of other organizations who are striving to improve the lives of Edmontonians, and educating the public regarding the social issues that impact them on a daily basis.

### Our Vision

A healthy, just and inclusive community.

### Our Mission

The Edmonton Social Planning Council provides leadership within the community by addressing and researching social issues, informing public discussion and influencing social policy.

### As a Member

- support our efforts to remain on the forefront in dealing with social issues
- make it possible for us to distribute our materials freely and widely to all
- receive our newsletters, fact sheets, and other publications
- be eligible to vote at ESPC AGMs and have a say in the direction of the organization
- be eligible to serve on the board of directors
- advertise your non-profit events in the *fACTivist*

For more information on becoming a member visit [edmontonsocialplanning.ca](http://edmontonsocialplanning.ca)

## Connect With Us



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