

DESCRIPTION OF THE EDMONTON SOCIAL PLANNING COUNCIL'S OPERATIONS

The Edmonton Social Planning Council helps citizens contribute to planning by governments and agencies in areas of social concern.

The Council does this by providing the following services to the Edmonton community:

CITIZENS COMMISSIONS

The Edmonton Social Planning Council maintains citizens' commissions whose responsibility it is to continuously explore present social policies, to recommend social objectives and to appraise the community's progress in reaching these objectives. Each commission's work is directed toward one of the following long-term social goals.

Participatory Democracy, which includes concern with the accessibility of public information, the success of community councils and the development of mechanisms to link citizens and officials.

Decent Standard of Living, which includes concern about the present patchwork of welfare programs and their collective inadequacy to eliminate poverty, the continuing difficulty for many in getting complete and proper health care and the very low wages for which too many people work.

Humane Social Controls, including concerns about our present treatment of criminal offenders, alcoholics, drug addicts, transients, the mentally ill and children.

Humane Urban Environment, focusing on the social consequences of our choices for urban transportation, neighbourhood and downtown design, and the questionable adequacy of present housing standards and supply.

Each of the four commissions is composed of at least six citizens representing a broad range of experience and expertise. The commissions meet regularly throughout the year. The commissions' "social audits" will appear at the end of each year. You are invited to indicate to the Edmonton Social Planning Council's Co-ordinating Committee your interest in participating in one of these commissions.

TASK FORCES

The Edmonton Social Planning Council establishes task forces on issues, problems, government position papers, on-going programs, etc., as the need is seen to exist. The task forces are usually composed of about a dozen people broadly representative of the relevant interests, including people directly affected by the matter under consideration (consumers), government officials from relevant jurisdictions and departments, and people with technical expertise. The task forces typically meet about four times over two months and issue brief factual reports.

Examples of subjects on which task forces have been organized to date are:
Early Childhood Services,
Public Assistance Food Allowance Increase,
Housing Density and Related Problems in Northeast Edmonton.

You are invited to bring your suggestions for establishing a task force to the attention of the Edmonton Social Planning Council's Co-ordinating Committee.

CONSULTATION

Frequently, members of a task force continue to work as a group toward resolution of the problem under consideration, and toward implementation of the task force's recommendations, after the task force itself has completed its work. The Edmonton Social Planning Council provides consultation to such groups as requested.

The Edmonton Social Planning Council staff are also available to provide assistance to other self-help and community groups with regard to funding and information, resources, organizational suggestions, etc.. You are encouraged to inquire about needed help from the Edmonton Social Planning Council staff.

RESEARCH

The Edmonton Social Planning Council finds money for and supervises research which citizens commissions, task forces or community self-help groups feel is necessary for their work.

For further information on how you can make use of any of these services please contact the:

Edmonton Social Planning Council

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