

2000s

2000 A June symposium called "Healthy Incomes, Healthy Outcomes" was held, and the Council began to focus attention on poverty as a social determinant of health.

Brian Bechtel resigned as Executive Director, with Board Chair Arlene Chapman taking on the role in his place.

2001 The Council established the Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Centred Prairie Communities, and focused particularly on researching services for Indigenous youth.

2002 In response to its own research on the legal needs of low-income Edmontonians, the Council and community partners formed the Edmonton Centre for Equal Justice (ECEJ). The Council supported the service sector by co-ordinating the Tap In project, which placed employees, volunteers and clients of non-profit agencies into low-cost surplus training at educational institutions.

2003 The Council partnered with the Edmonton Food Bank to do a comprehensive study on user needs.

The Council joined with a number of organizations to form the Sacred Heart Community Collective, housed in a former inner city school. In co-operation with Edmonton Catholic Schools, the Council coordinated space usage and allocation within the building.

Nicola Fairbrother became the new Executive Director.

2004 Inclusive Cities Canada, a national 3-year project that explored local and national dimensions of inclusion, began. The understanding of inclusion in Edmonton was enhanced through research and engagement with local leaders, and the findings were published the following year.

A focus on health led to the publication of newsletters, fACT Sheets, and a major discussion paper on the social determinants of health.

2005 Susan Morrissey was hired as Executive Director.

2006 The Council moved to the Trinity Building.

2007 The Council released an updated Tracking the Trends, following a 5 year gap.

Funding from the Edmonton Community Foundation was used to update the Council's website and expand its services.

The Council hosted two renter listening forums with the city, resulting in the report A Roof Over Their Heads. Follow up surveys of Edmonton renters lead to further work on affordable housing.

2008 The Council began work as a lead partner in a coalition advocating for a comprehensive poverty reduction strategy in the province.

2010s

The Council continued its focus in the areas of low-income and poverty, expanding its digital presence and advocating for data-driven social policy analysis.

2010 The Council participated in Edmonton's Social Enterprise Fund, a network of community researchers and practitioners which emphasized the value of community development through a social return on investment (SROI) lens. The Council developed a local SROI database as a result.

The online library was updated and relaunched as threeSOURCE: an information hub for Alberta's third sector. Its aim was to collect and house grey literature and publications from the non-profit sector.

2012 The provincial government sought input on a new social policy framework to prioritize addressing social challenges. In response, the Council held discussions with over 100 participants living in low-income. Eight reports were submitted to the government based on participants' input and words.

The Council released a position statement on the benefits of reduced fares on public transit. This eventually resulted in the implementation of a low-income transit pass (launched September 2017).

2013 In partnership with the Edmonton Community Foundation, the Council began development on the Vital Signs reports. These are part of a nationwide initiative that serve as a quality of life report card for communities. Each publication focuses on a different theme or population.

2015 As part of the Mayor's 2015 Task Force on Poverty Elimination, the Council produced the first edition of A Profile of Poverty in Edmonton. This report focused on the increasing poverty rates among low-income working Albertans, and proposed ways to reduce and eliminate poverty. It is updated every other year.

The Council, along with other community partners, co-hosted conversations on gay-straight alliances (GSAs) in schools in the wake of the controversial Bill 10 legislation. This allowed the opportunity for teachers, students, and parents to voice their support and the positive benefits these peer-supported networks brought to LGBTQ+ communities.

2018 The Council moved to the Bassani Building.

2019 The Council joined Keep Alberta Strong, a coalition of agencies calling for the provincial government to maintain key investment in social programs (such as AISH, child benefits, and child care) in the lead-up to the 2019 provincial budget.

ESPC'S

DEEP ROOTS in our COMMUNITY

NOTABLE MILESTONES



The "We Are Listening – Sparking Conversation on GSAs." forum was hosted by the Council in response to Bill 10, which allowed schools to reject Gay-Straight Alliances.



ORIGINS

1940s

1929 Following the First World War, a movement to improve social services took hold. A survey of existing services was conducted, followed by meetings to establish the formation of a social planning agency for Edmonton. The Great Depression put a hold on further action.

1939 Renewed interest in a social planning agency. Existing social service agencies voted unanimously to officially form a social planning agency.

Laura Holland was hired to conduct a follow-up to the 1929 survey that would provide guidance for next steps and operations.

The Edmonton Council of Social Agencies was formed with four divisions: Family Welfare, Child Welfare, Health, and Group Work. Three additional sub-agencies included: the Social Service Exchange, the Christmas Exchange, and the Family Welfare Bureau.

1940 The Council began operations in February, on the 3rd floor of the Tegler Building in downtown Edmonton. Lillian Thomson was the agency's first Executive Director.

1941 The Council was authorized to develop a constitution and elect a volunteer Board for the Community Chest of Greater Edmonton in order to centralize the collection of funds for various social agencies.

1943 The Council's Child Welfare division produced the Whitton Study with the Canada Welfare Council. The results of the survey revealed adoption practices that horrified the public and became a national scandal.

The Council helped coordinate In-the-City camps—summer day camps for children living in less-fortunate neighbourhoods.

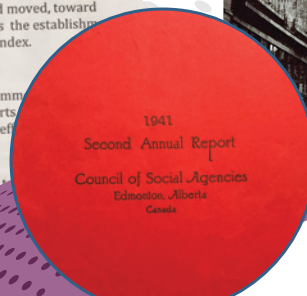
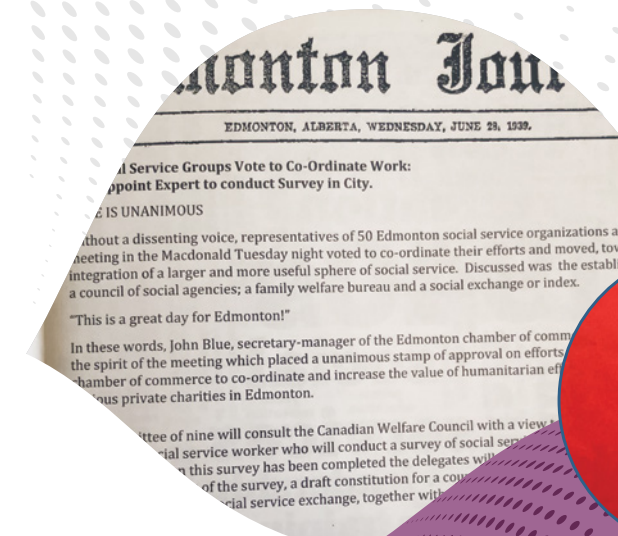
1944 Hazeldine Bishop became the second Executive Director, and shifted the Council's focus to research and planning.

The Council identified a need for social services at the Royal Alexandra Hospital, resulting in the hiring of a trained medical social worker—a first for hospitals in Alberta.

1946 The Council moved to the old police building on 98th Street and 102nd Avenue.

The Council helped form the Emergency Housekeeper Service for people experiencing emergency health issues at home.

1948 The Council helped establish an Edmonton branch of the John Howard Society.



Second Annual Report.
An early annual report from the Edmonton Council of Social Agencies.

1950s

More focus on public education, and the Council became a central organization to resolve social crises. It committed to speaking out for, and with, communities.

- 1950** A name change to become the Edmonton Council of Community Services. Membership expanded to include service clubs, educational associations, and ethnic and cultural organizations.
- 1951** A. C. Ashby became Acting Director following the resignation of Hazeldine Bishop.
- 1952** Jack Anguish became Executive Director. Divisional structures were abandoned in favour of project-based committees.
- 1953** The Council and Community Chest merged to facilitate co-operation between the social planning and financing areas.
- 1954** An Edmonton branch of the Canadian Mental Health Association was formed. Studies were conducted on foster care and aging, and a directory of services for the elderly was developed.
- 1955** Jack Anguish resigned as Executive Director. William Nicholls took over duties.
- 1956** A Youth Services committee was added to address preventative measures in relation to concerns over gang activity in the city. Three conferences on social welfare issues were held to encourage greater community participation and engagement within the wider social welfare sector. Use of the Social Service Exchange declined, and the program was suspended.
- 1957** The Council moved to the 6th floor of the Civic Block building on 99th Street.
- 1958** Extensive research on rehabilitation was conducted, looking into access to services, voting rights, employment, and vocational training for people with disabilities.

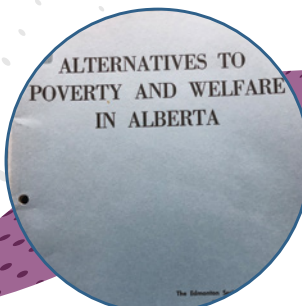
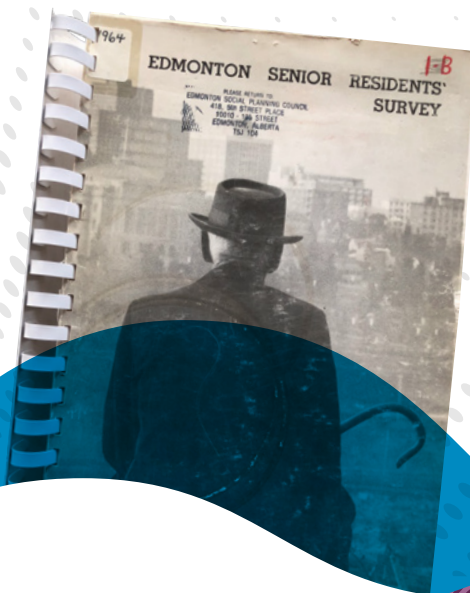


Archival photo of Edmonton's inner city during the 1950s/60s

1960s

The Council took on more advocacy work for communities that were marginalized: the Boyle Street population, Indigenous people, women, and youth. A community development worker was hired by the Council. Physical planning issues such as urban renewal, parks planning, and co-op housing became a focus, as well as unemployment.

- 1960** The Community Chest was re-named the United Community Fund of Greater Edmonton and separated from the Edmonton Council of Community Services. The Council moved to the Clarke Building on 103rd Street. The government established the Welfare and Information Service at the recommendation of the Council. Major studies were conducted on juvenile court and services for youth in Northeast Edmonton.
- 1962** The Council supported the establishment of an Edmonton branch of the Canadian Native Friendship Centre to help bridge the gulf between Indigenous culture and western urbanization.
- 1963** Another name change, to the Edmonton Welfare Council, reflected the Council's greater interest in community development. William Nicholls resigned, and Gus de Cocq became Acting Executive Director.
- 1964** Council research showed a need for central and suburban child care after the closure of the Creche, a child care facility for impoverished women. As a result, the City provided preventive social service funding for daycare services in Edmonton.

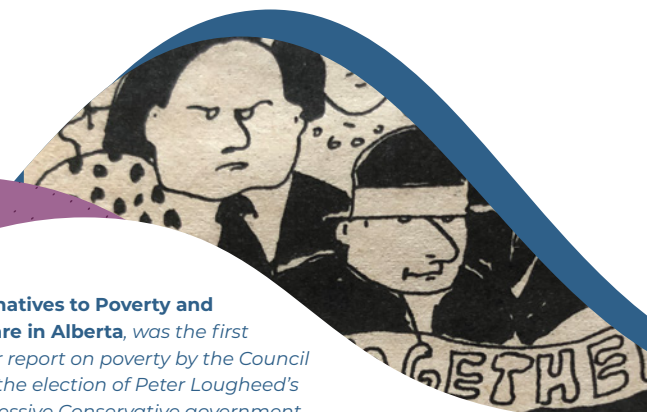


Alternatives to Poverty and Welfare in Alberta, was the first major report on poverty by the Council after the election of Peter Lougheed's Progressive Conservative government.

1970s

From 1968 to 1972, the Council supported the development of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired, Humans on Welfare Society, Disabled Action group, and the Boyle Street Community Services Co-op.

- 1970** E. Stewart Bishop resigned as Executive Director, and Bettie Hewes became Acting Director. The Christmas Bureau outgrew the Edmonton Social Planning Council, and established itself as an independent organization—with the support of the Council. Changes in the Council's constitution resulted in more focus on urban issues and a research approach to social action and social change. Four citizen commissions were set up: Participatory Democracy, Decent Standard of Living, Human Social Controls, and Human Urban Environment. Alternatives to Poverty and Welfare in Alberta, produced by the Decent Standard of Living commission, was the first major Council document on poverty and social assistance and published after the election of the provincial Progressive Conservative party. It recommended a Guaranteed Annual Income with work incentives, which became the basis for much of the Council's work. Peter Boothroyd became the Executive Director, adding urban planning, urban environment, and participatory democracy to the Council's agenda.
- 1973** Dissatisfied by City Council's lack of participation in neighbourhood preservation, ward reformation, and green space management, Urban Gladiators (a group at the centre of a network that included the Council and the University of Alberta) ran for City Council in an attempt to change the city's status quo.
- The United Community Fund changed its name to the United Way of Greater Edmonton. The Christmas Bureau separated from the Council to become an independent agency.
- 1974** In response to concerns, the United Way conducted a study on the Council, recommending a return to the traditional Board structure rather than commissions. The Council consulted with neighbourhood and women's groups to determine their priorities. West 10, a community service centre project that started in 1971, ended with the publication of Rape of the Block—a guide to neighbourhood defence.
- 1975** The Council collaborated with women's groups to establish the Edmonton Rape Crisis Centre (now the Sexual Assault Centre of Edmonton), and set up workshops with Catalyst Theatre to address issues that women faced. It also worked with the City Planning Department to run a public awareness campaign for the Neighbourhood Improvement Program. Elwood Springman was hired as the next Executive Director.
- 1977** The Council offered training workshops for women to become community development workers in their own neighbourhoods. Some of these women went on to become leaders for other community organizations. Alan Shugg became the new Executive Director.
- 1978** Trevor Thomas replaced Alan Shugg as Executive Director.



Tracking the Trends, first released in 1989, is the flagship publication of the Edmonton Social Planning Council.

1980s

The Council changed from a community neighbourhood development agency to one focused on broader social policy issues, including urban planning.

- 1980** Hope Hunter became Acting Executive Director.
- 1981** Peter Faid became Executive Director. The Council held a major conference on social policy analysis.
- 1982** The first issue of its flagship publication, First Reading, was launched, looking at a broad range of issues such as Medicare and the Young Offenders Act.
- 1986** Unemployment—Reaping the Costs was published, reporting on lost revenue through wage-loss and increased stress-related illness, suicide, and incidences of child abuse. Publication of the first edition of The Other Welfare Manual, an independent guide to the welfare system.
- 1987** The Council coordinated live, phone-in discussions with seniors on the local cable channel. The Edmonton Coalition for Quality Child Care was formed with the support of the Council.
- 1988** Presented the report Health Care for Albertans: Making a Good Health Care System Better to the Premier, suggesting community health initiatives to lower health costs.
- 1989** Publication of the first Tracking the Trends, highlighting local trends in human services.



Edmonton's Food Bank in 1995. The Council worked extensively with the food bank as food security was a pressing issue.

1990s

The Council continued with its mandate: to educate the public on issues of social justice, advocate for community well-being, and support communities through research and coordination.

- 1990** Peter Faid resigned as Executive Director. Jonathan Murphy stepped into the position.
- 1991** More focus on Indigenous issues.
- 1992** The Council helped to create the Intercultural and Race Relations Committee of Northeast Edmonton. Publication of a report on Indigenous urbanization titled City Service Improvement for the Aboriginal Community in Edmonton.
- 1993** Several reports on non-profit capacity building were published: Doing it Right! A Needs Assessment Workbook; Family Budgeting Guide; Get on Board the Non-Profit Board Development Workbook; and Choosing Quality Childcare. A special feature in Tracking the Trends is published, focused on Indigenous issues.
- 1994** The Council organised a pilot project for the Success by Six program, looking into the importance of early childhood education.
- 1995** Brian Bechtel became Executive Director.
- 1996** Two Paycheques Away was published with the help of Edmonton's Food Bank. The study received national coverage and resulted in talks with the Minister of Family and Social Services to amend policy.
- 1997** Edmonton LIFE (Local Indicators for Excellence) published a report providing a shared definition for quality of life in Edmonton. The project was coordinated by the Council, and involved the University of Alberta, the business community, municipal government, and the social sector. Despite its role on the committee, the Council was disappointed with the outcomes of the Alberta Children's Forum report, and published a response. The OTHER Children Forum Report made recommendations for more appropriate policy changes.

