

2001 annual REPORT

Edmonton Social Planning Council

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2000 ANNUAL REPORT

Ron Gaunce—President

The year 2000 was remarkable for the Edmonton Social Planning Council for two reasons: it was a year of transition as key staff members moved on to new challenges and it marked the 60th anniversary of the Council's arrival in our community.

I would like to take this opportunity to wish all the best to Brian Bechtel, Executive Director, 1995-2000 and Suzette Chan, Administrative Assistant, 1995-2000. Their dedication and contribution to the Council's mission will be missed.

Under the original name of the Council of Social Agencies, the Council was incorporated on July 4, 1940. The 60th anniversary was officially recognized at a special celebration held in conjunction with our annual Seasonal Open House. It was wonderful to see so many people who had served the Council as either a Board or staff member. All had an opportunity to reconnect with old friends and took the time to encourage the current Board and staff in today's challenges. Such occasions allow us to reflect on our successes and yet acknowledge how much work is still needed to bring social justice to all members of our community.

Through various initiatives the Council has kept a watchful eye on the housing and homelessness situation in Edmonton. The devastating effects of the cost of housing increasing rapidly beyond that of welfare rates and wages and the diminished availability of affordable housing were highlighted in the February issue of *Edmontonfacts*.

In March came the culmination of months of work on the Children's Forum with the release of the report *First Circle - Uniting for Children*. Our Director agreed to participate in the belief he would be contributing to improving services to children. Although there was a war of words at times, we are proud of our involvement on the Forum's Steering Committee.

The Council's role as a catalyst for discussion around the need to support our poorest and most vulnerable citizens was evident in June when the council hosted a multi-sector symposium entitled *Healthy Incomes, Healthy Outcomes*. National and local experts, from a broad range of backgrounds, presented their views and research findings. The symposium's central theme was that current social policy does not support the health of those who rely on public assistance and that the government's singular focus on the bottom line ultimately does not serve any of our citizens well.

A landmark piece of Council research was released in conjunction with the symposium. The *Cost of Healthy Living* investigates the actual cost of living for Edmonton families. The findings were further legitimized by a Council-commissioned poll about the public's knowledge of poverty, their priorities for reinvestment of government surpluses, and, knowing how much families are forced to live on, if they approved of such income levels. We can safely say that our community is a caring one, and supports a much healthier level of public assistance than the government would lead us to believe.

Market research conducted in the summer of 1999 determined that the Council is a recognized and valued source of data and analysis, particularly for the non-profit sector. We responded to that message in 2000 by re-introducing the very popular publication *Tracking the Trends*.

continued

2000 ANNUAL REPORT

Over the last four years, it has been my pleasure to work with such a high calibre of people - professionals and volunteers - who come together in the hope of a better community and the belief that such a community is possible.

Arlene A. Chapman—Executive Director

The first four months of this year have been incredibly busy. We applied to and have received from the Muttart Foundation a Technology Upgrade Grant providing us with state of the art computer equipment. We have also completed strategic planning, and have clear priorities for the coming three years. Work will continue on community capacity building and addressing poverty issues.

April Kellet, LLB, and Blaire Coulter, paralegal, have been hired for the new Poverty Law Clinic. The Council will continue to make this project a priority and we look forward to the success of the clinic and those it will serve.

Requests for Council presentations continue to be received from the community. These requests allow the Council to get its message out to diverse audiences, including health, education and human rights.

We are working closely with the Social Planning Council of Winnipeg to coordinate activities for the new Prairie Centre of Excellence for Child and Youth Centred Communities. This is an exciting project that will produce action-based research, eliciting change for urban aboriginal youth in Prairie cities. ESPC will coordinate activities for Edmonton and Northern communities.

We have experienced another provincial election and can expect that our affluent province will continue to ignore the needs of the poor. The work of the Council will be more important than ever as we continue to work for families who have not experienced the "Alberta Advantage".

STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Year Ended Dec. 31, 2000

2000—Budget

2000—Actual

1999—Actual

REVENUE

Project revenues			
Community Development	149,438	164,640	236,836
Communications	54,700	56,640	65,093
Research and Demonstration	89,200	134,041	104,515
Other revenue	99,800	112,244	131,358
TOTAL	393,138	467,565	537,802

EXPENSES

Community Development	137,284	166,306	222,455
Communications	42,052	51,203	63,486
Research and Demonstration	75,994	113,898	91,118
Salaries and benefits	49,930	55,505	90,361
Office expenses	29,000	21,071	23,365
Building Occupancy	26,000	18,594	21,939
Professional fees	13,000	10,495	10,497
Transportation	600	182	2,442
Recruitment and education	1,500	2,548	2,126
Insurance	1,300	1,910	1,850
Amortization	-	4,730	4,951
TOTAL	376,600	446,442	534,590

EXCESS OF REVENUE OVER EXPENSES	\$16,478	\$21,123	\$3,212
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STATEMENT OF NET ASSETS

Year Ended Dec. 31, 2000

	Invested in Capital Assets	Unrestricted Suprlus	Total
BALANCE—beginning of year	35,922	(3,976)	31,946
Excess of revenue over expenses	-	21,123	21,123
Amortization of capital assets	(7,977)	7,977	-
Purchase of capital assets	2,159	(2,159)	-
BALANCE—end of year	\$30,104	\$22,965	\$53,069

Notes on Financial Statements:

The statement of operations and the statement of net assets have been extracted from the December 31, 2000, financial statements as audited by Hawkings Epp Dumont. The complete financial statements are available from the Council office.

COUNCIL PROJECTS

Agency Support

The Council provides ongoing support to grassroots advocacy groups, including Poverty in Action, the Alberta Quality of Life Commission, the Downtown Edmonton Community Association and the Philia Family Services Group. Council support ranges from administrative assistance to co-ordination and management support.

Community Based Immigrant Mental Health Project

The Council was approached to play a role in this innovative mental health initiative. Activities in 2000 included involvement in the recruitment of the project evaluation team and helping establish a Policy and Advocacy Working Group. The Council will have a continued role by participating on the Project Management Team and on the Policy and Advocacy Working Group.

Edmontonfacts/Factivist

In 1999, the Council undertook a pilot of a new means of distributing Edmontonfacts. In partnership with *Vue Weekly*, Edmontonfacts was included as an insert on a quarterly basis. The pilot ended in February 2000 with our issue highlighting the housing crisis in Edmonton. It was decided to replace Edmontonfacts with the Factivist as the best way to keep our friends and members informed about our activities and bring the community's focus on critical social issues.

Edmonton LIFE: Local Indicators For Excellence

Edmonton LIFE is a community-based quality of life indicators project. It is the first project in Edmonton to involve representatives from, among others, the University of Alberta, the business community, the municipal government and the social services sector. After the completion of 1997 and 1998 versions of Edmonton LIFE reports, 2000 brought a renewed commitment on the part of the project sponsors. A sub-committee of the Council's Board of Directors, the City of Edmonton Community Services department and the United Way of the Alberta Capital Region all indicated their willingness to support Edmonton LIFE for an additional three years.

Healthy Incomes, Healthy Outcomes

To encourage discussion around income as a determinant of health, the Council, with more than a dozen sponsoring partners, hosted a one day symposium. The enthusiastic support from the partners resulted in participants from all parts of the province. The diversity of attendees, a new way to look at the relationship between health and poverty and the calibre of the presenters resulted in a high degree of positive media coverage. Marg Budd, a Health Promotion graduate student who completed her practicum placement with the Council, deserves special mention, as her hard work was a significant factor in the day's success.

COUNCIL PROJECTS

Listen to the Children: Voices of Children Living in Poverty in the City of Edmonton

The *Listen to the Children* project allowed the Council and the Alberta Quality of Life Commission to work together more closely than usual. The Commission, inspired by the findings of their earlier work, *Listen to Me*, felt the need to give a voice to children living in poverty. The Council was contracted to provide project management and administration. Through countless volunteer hours, the Commission supported the research in any way that they were able and their dedication to fundraising for the project ultimately resulted in the research being completed and report's release in December.

National Children's Alliance Regional Forum

In partnership with the YWCA and YMCA of Edmonton, the Council hosted a one day provincial forum for stakeholders in child poverty issues. This federally funded initiative was intended to support local groups hosting forums across the country. The intended outcomes of the included discussion of the principles for a National Children's Agenda, identifying those services essential for all communities and developing a shared vision for children's well being.

Nobody's Perfect

Nobody's Perfect is a successful and popular preschool parenting program. Health Canada funds the program across Canada through its Community Action Program for Children. In Alberta, the Council coordinates the program. Nobody's Perfect is for parents who may be low income, young, single, have limited formal education, or be socially or geographically isolated. In the year 2000, the Council began a project to identify parent education programs across Alberta, with a view to possibly providing provincial coordination and support to other parenting programs in the province.

Population Health Fund Enhancement Project

This project was sponsored by Health Canada and Alberta Health and Wellness. The Council was contracted to meet three distinct objectives within the project: develop a template for evaluating population health initiatives in the community, conduct a consultation among key stakeholders in the Population Health Fund to determine future funding priorities and host a capacity building workshop for community agencies that would allow for enhanced program delivery.

Poverty Law Clinic

The Council was successful in securing funding for a two year pilot project for a poverty law clinic. The Board and the Poverty Law Clinic Advisory Committee worked hard on finalizing the Terms of Reference and we look forward to the start of operations.

2001 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Karren Brown, BEd (Continuing)

Born and raised in Edmonton, Karren has lived most of her life in the northeast end of the city. Instead of pursuing a career in teaching, Karren became a constable with the Edmonton Police Service for 16 years, 10 as a street police officer. She has done volunteer work for her children's school, her community league, the Edmonton John Howard Society and the Salvation Army. Karren does administration support work for MacKay & Partners Chartered Accountants while raising her teenage daughter and two other teens.

Shirley E. Clement, BSW (Continuing)

Shirley has experience in corrections, child welfare, aboriginal issues, rehabilitation, community mental health and community development. A former case manager with the Kasohkewew Child Wellness Society, Samson Cree Nation, she has worked with Alberta Family and Social Services' Child Welfare native unit, the Office of the Public Guardian and the Young Offender Centre.

Wanda Dannelly (Continuing)

Wanda is a public relations professional with a special interest in poverty and people who are marginalized. She is a former communications co-ordinator with the Alberta Association for Community Living and now works as a public relations/marketing consultant through her company, Vivid Communications.

Jacqueline Devlin, LLB (Second Term Candidate)

A self-employed Barrister and Solicitor, Jacqueline has a long-standing interest in social justice and has acted for families involved with child welfare because of a lack of resources and community support. She has volunteered at a battered women's shelter and was a member of Amnesty International and the Women's Legal Education and Action Fund (LEAF). She served on the Board of the John Howard Society of Alberta and has been employed with the Metis Settlements Appeal Tribunal.

Margaret Dewhurst, Registered Social Worker (Second Term Candidate)

A social worker with a BA in social work from Birmingham University and a Certificate in Mental Health from London University, Margaret also holds an MSW Equivalent from the University of Calgary. She is past chair of the Edmonton Regional Mental Health Advisory Committee and was recently employed as a consultant with Edmonton Community and Family Services. Her experience includes individual and family counselling and in-hospital social work (particularly mental health). Margaret is Past-President of the Alberta Association of Social Workers and President of the Canadian Association of Social Workers. She served six years as Treasurer of the International Federation of Social Workers.

2001 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Kenn Hample, P.Eng (Continuing)

A native Edmontonian, Kenn has worked in public service (municipal and provincial) and as a private consultant. He is also a Personal Success Coach, helping people realize their goals and dreams. His community activities include involvement in the arts, minor sports, Chamber of Commerce, community violence issues and creation of a community food bank.

Michael Henry, MBA (Continuing)

Michael served as an MLA for Edmonton Centre from 1993 to '97. Before joining the Legislative Assembly, he served as Chief of Staff for the Alberta Liberal Caucus under the late Laurence Decore. Michael provides contract services to several organizations and teaches part time at Grant MacEwan College in the B.Comm/B. Management University Transfer Program and in the Bachelor of Human Service Administration Program.

Shelley Jodoin BA, LLB (First Term Candidate)

Shelley has a long track record working within the social justice arena in Edmonton. She is currently with the Workers' Compensation Board and knows first-hand the impact of disability on individuals and families. She served six years on the Board of Directors of the Sexual Assault Centre and has critically analyzed and reviewed public policy issues, legislation and government bills.

Darren Keast, B.Comm (First Term Candidate)

Darren serves as a board member for the Edmonton Non-Profit Housing Corporation and has a strong interest in the well being of children. He completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Alberta and will graduate with an EMBA in May of this year. Darren's career is in banking.

Valerie Nelson (Second Term Candidate)

Valerie is Executive Director of the Barrhead FCSS and chair of both the Dawn Land Children's Health Foundation and the Peter Jang Fund. From 1983 to 1997, she was Executive Director of the Private Adoptions Society of Alberta. Valerie received the 1996 Variety Club International Golden Heart Award as well as the 1995 Adoption Advocate of the Year Award from the Canadian National Adoption Council.

2001 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jackie Specken (Continuing)

Jackie is past director of Partners in Excellence, a program with the Volunteer Centre of Edmonton. She is also an instructor and course developer with Grant MacEwan College's Voluntary Sector Management Program. Jackie has been working in the non-profit and volunteer sectors since 1984 and is particularly interested in adult education and community development.

Joan Welch, BA, History, and MBA (Second Term Candidate)

Joan has 15 years senior management experience with not-for-profit and professional regulatory organizations. She is currently with the Alberta Association of Registered Nurses, responsible for finance, human resources and information systems.

Jeji Varghese, MSc, Rural Sociology (Continuing)

Along with an MSc, Jeji holds two BScs, one in Biological Sciences and one in Environment and Conservation Sciences. Her areas of interest include gender issues, social sustainability, environmental education and international development. Jeji is also actively involved with youth and young adults in a number of settings, including her church, cultural association and university.

HISTORY OF THE COUNCIL

1939

A survey of needs finds that public interest in social services has increased. The Council of Social Agencies is formed with four divisions: Family, Children, Health and Group Work.

1941

A resolution is passed, authorizing the Council to develop a constitution and elect a volunteer board for a community chest.

1943

A report on child welfare made to the government recommends that a survey of services be performed. When the government declines, the Council's Child and Family division undertakes the Whitton Study with the Canada Welfare Council. The results of the survey reveal adoption practices that horrify the public.

1944

The Council begins to add research studies to the major services it offers.

1948

The Council helps to form the John Howard Society.

In the 1950s, focusing on public education, the Council publishes a regular newsletter and becomes the central organization for resolving social crises, bringing diverse interest groups together and playing a liaison role between government and voluntary forces. The Council commits itself to being a voice for and with the whole community.

1951

Name changes to **Edmonton Council of Community Services**.

1953

The Council and Community Chest are combined.

1954

Work around mental health brings about the Edmonton Mental Health Association.

Brief on Foster Care; study on aging; directory of services for the elderly.

1956

Addition of Youth Division; three fall institutes on social welfare issues.

1958

Standing Committee on rehabilitation does extensive research on services, voting rights, employment and vocational training of the physically and mentally disabled.

1959

Recommendation that government set up a Welfare Information and Referral Service (1960).

In the 1960s, the voices of the Council become more identified with the disadvantaged: the Boyle Street population, Aboriginal people, females and youth. A community development worker is hired by the Council. Physical planning issues such as urban renewal, parks planning and co-op housing become a focus, as well as unemployment.

1960

The Council develops a position to retain a separate identification as a social planning body with its own board and budget, but maintain a close working relationship with the United Community Fund (formerly the Community Chest; later to become the United Way in 1973), with whom it can interchange board members.

HISTORY OF THE COUNCIL

- 1960 Major study of juvenile court; study of services for youth in northeast area.
- 1963 Name changes to **Edmonton Welfare Council**.
- 1964 A Council study affirms need for central and suburban area child care after the Creche, a child care place for indigent women, folds. As a result, the City provides preventive social service funding for day care services in Edmonton.
The Council helps to develop the first Head Start program in the Norwood area.
- 1967 Name changes to **Edmonton Social Planning Council**.
- 1968 Helps teens lobby for teen centre; publishes Blue Book of legal rights addressing transient youth. This handbook is criticized as being "subversive."
Works with Indian and Metis organizations around foster care and adoptive homes.
Helps set up women's overnight shelter (now WIN House), with YMCA.

From 1968 to 1972, the Council aids in the development of the Society for the Retired and Semi-Retired, Humans on Welfare Society, Disabled Action group, Boyle Street Community Services Co-op. The Council's constitution is rewritten in 1972 and directions change. The result is a strong orientation toward urban issues and a research approach to social action and social change. Four citizen commissions are set up: 1) participatory democracy; 2) decent standard of living 3) human social controls; 4) human urban environment.

- 1971 "West 10," a community service centre project is started, ending three years later with the publication of *Rape of the Block*—a lay person's guide to neighbourhood defence.
- 1972 *Decent Standard of Living*, the first major Council document on poverty and social assistance, is published after the Progressive Conservative government is elected.
Alternatives to Poverty and Welfare in Alberta is published, recommending a guaranteed annual income with work incentives. It becomes the basis for much of the Council's work.
- 1973 Urban Gladiators—a group operating at the centre of the information network in ESPC and the University, decide the only way to have success in achieving their vision of the City was to run for city Council. The United Community Fund changes its name to the United Way.
- 1974 The United Way undertakes a study of ESPC recommending a return to a traditional board structure. The Council makes consultation with neighbourhood and women's groups their priority.
- 1975 Works with women's groups to begin Edmonton Rape Crisis Centre (Sexual Assault Centre); sets up workshops with Catalyst Theatre on issues of women and rape. Assists the City Planning Department in providing a public awareness campaign for Neighbourhood Improvement Program (NIP).
- 1977 Training volunteers as para-professional community workers becomes part of the Council's work.

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HISTORY OF THE COUNCIL

In the 1980s, the ESPC changes from a predominantly community neighbourhood development agency to one concerned with broader issues of social policy. *First Reading* is published.

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| 1981 | Holds major conference on social policy analysis. |
| 1986 | Publishes <i>Unemployment—Reaping the Costs</i> , reporting on lost revenue through lost wages and the increase in stress-related illness, suicide and child abuse incidence. |
| 1987 | Organizes live, phone-in discussions with seniors on local cable channel.
Helps form the Edmonton Coalition for Quality Child Care. |
| 1989 | The Council coordinates <i>Tracking the Trends (to 1995)</i> a publication highlighting the trends in human services in Edmonton and area. |

In the 1990s, the Council continues with its mandate for educating the public on issues of social justice, advocating for community well-being and supporting communities through research and coordination. Many publications are released such as *Doing It Right (A Needs Assessment workbook)*, the *Family Budgeting Guide*, *Get On Board (Board Development Workbook)* and *Choosing Quality Childcare*. *Two Paycheques Away (Food Bank Study)* is published in 1996 with the help of Edmonton's Food Bank. This study gets national coverage and results in talks with the Minister of Family and Social Services in an effort to amend policy. *Edmonton LIFE—Local Indicators For Excellence* report is first published in 1997. This project was coordinated by the Council and it involved the University, the business community, municipal government and the social sector in reaching a shared definition of what constitutes quality of life in Edmonton. In 1999 the Council successfully led a coalition of stakeholders in a campaign to stop changes to the *AISH* program, and in 1999 and 2000 the *Cost of Health Living* project drew the attention of the Alberta community to the inadequacy of income support rates and minimum wage.

PUBLICATIONS

Tracking the Trends 2000

Tracking the Trends 2000 is a three-part publication, putting several statistics into one document as an easy reference. *Major Social and Economic Trends* is a collection of useful statistics about Edmonton's population, earnings and key cost of living measure. The *Edmonton Social Health Index* combines 15 significant indicators into an overall index of local social health. The *Cost of Healthy Living* is a long awaited, detailed report on how much income Edmontonians need to afford a healthy life for themselves and their children.

Factivist

A newsletter-format collection of facts, statistics and updates on Council projects as well as findings of new research.

Edmontonfacts

A quarterly publication which appears as an insert in the *Vue Weekly*—April 1999.

- February 2000—Homelessness
- November 1999—Welfare
- July 1999—AISH
- April 1999—Hungry children

A Review of the Government Sanctioned Coopers-Lybrand Study-State of the Child Welfare Program

Alberta Family and Social Services (AFSS) commissioned Coopers-Lybrand to conduct a \$90,000 high-level review of the Child Welfare Program. We reviewed the study and found evidence the department is not moving in the right direction.

Often Hungry, Sometimes Homeless—September 1999

The third in a series of food bank studies. The project was a follow-up to the 1998 food bank study, *A Return Look at Two Paycheques Away: Social Policy and Hunger in Edmonton* and the 1996 food bank study, *Two Paycheques Away: Social Policy and Hunger in Edmonton*.

The Redesign of Child and Family Services—A Frontline Perspective—April 1998

We sent over 1,000 surveys to people working with, or concerned with, the well-being of children (and families). We received 240 completed surveys and published the results.

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PUBLICATIONS

A Return Look at Two Paycheques Away: Social Policy and Hunger in Edmonton— January 1998

An updated Food Bank study based on over 200 interviews with families using the Edmonton Food Bank.

Edmonton LIFE: Local Indicators For Excellence—1997 & 1998 (\$30)

A collaborative, ongoing project which monitors health, social, economic and environmental indicators.

First Reading

Social issues magazine on specific topics such as child poverty and income security. In December 1998, we replaced *First Reading* with *Edmontonfacts*.

- Becoming Poor: The Growing Gap Between Rich and Poor (1998)
- Putting kids first: attacking child poverty (1997)
- Bridging the service gap (1997)
- The long, cold wait for income security (1997)
- Button Up on Human Rights (1996)
- The path to new children's services (1996)
- Fundamentalisms: searching out the truth (1996)
- Crowding People's Sexuality (1995)
- Mind matters (1995)
- Investing in the Community (1995)
- Challenging the Fifth Estate (1995)
- A Tattered Safety Net (1994)
- The Other: Women's Perspectives of the 1990s (1994)
- An Issue of Family (1994)
- The Indigenous Challenge (1994)
- Empty Stodkings (1993)
- My Home Town (1992)
- Golden Years? (1992)
- Glory Days (1992)
- Inner City Realities (1992)
- Welcome to Canada (1991)
- Home and Native Land: Healing Society (1991)

continued

PUBLICATIONS

- Supports for Independence: Increased Equality or Equal Poverty (1991)
- Corporate Giving: Is Corporate Philanthropy a Myth? (1991)
- Looking Back, Stepping Forward (1990)
- Health Cuts (1993)
- Wasted Lives (1993)
- Lessons in Learning (1993)
- Behind the Bars (1993)
- Daily Grind (1992)
- A Look at Welfare Reform (1990)
- Let's put people in urban planning (1990)
- The Hundman Report: Action Overdue on Shelter Rates (1990)

Alberta Facts

Fact sheets are published as needed.

- What role does poverty play in rising child welfare caseloads? (1998)
- 1997 Alberta Election
- 1997 Federal Election
- Hunger in Edmonton: Understanding the need for food banks
- Child Welfare in Alberta: 3 years after review (1996)
- Understanding Mental Health (1995)
- Poverty and Illness: An Unhealthy Connection: The effects on infants and children (1994)
- Poverty and Illness: An Unhealthy Connection: The effects on teens and adults (1994)
- We Are Not Racists But... (Revised) (1994)
- Poverty: Myths and Realities (1993)
- In Justice to Women (1993)
- We Are Not Racists But... (1992)
- Constitutional Countdown (1992)
- Women and Poverty: What Gender Engenders
- Measuring Social Health (1998)
- Hey buddy, can you spare a job? (1998)
- People Development: Growth Summit priority, but what does it mean? (1997)
- Beyond Economic Growth: Building healthy Alberta Communities (1997)