

SOCIAL SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

REFRESH - 2023





The City of Spruce Grove is honoured to acknowledge the land we work, play and make our homes on as Treaty 6 territory, and the Métis Nation of Alberta Region 4. This is sacred land that holds the hearts, footsteps and spirits of many First Nation, Métis and Inuit Peoples, and in particular, Paul First Nation, Enoch Cree Nation, Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, Michel First Nation, Alexander First Nation, and the Lac Ste. Anne Métis. We recognize and acknowledge Indigenous values, traditional teachings, ways of being, contributions, and historical inequities. The City is dedicated to Truth and Reconciliation to help in healing and learning to build reciprocal and trusted relationships. We commit towards strengthening relations and building bridges with the Indigenous Nations whose traditional territories the City is located within.

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Spruce Grove Social Sustainability Plan - Refresh

The City of Spruce Grove is committed to improving and sustaining quality of life for all residents through supporting a resilient, inclusive, and equitable community. A key component of this commitment focuses on social sustainability, which recognizes the importance of meeting the needs of current and future generations. This is achieved by creating systems and structures that enable all residents to thrive.

The City's Social Sustainability Plan acts as a guide for achieving long-term goals and provide objectives and actions that address complex-social issues. The strategies are designed to strengthen the existing social fabric of the community by working with partners to raise awareness of social issues and support initiatives that enhance social well-being.

The refreshed Social Sustainability Plan builds on many existing community strengths and strategies. It provides action-focused strategies and identifies the City's role in addressing social issues over the next five years, specifically focusing on collective efforts to support basic needs and the health, happiness, and well-being of all residents.



Building the Plan

Three community engagement sessions were held over a two-day period in November 2022 and an additional session was held in December 2022. Participants from both City Administration and the community were engaged in facilitated exercises to review past community plans and identify new objectives and actions to continue building momentum on issues important to the community.

Detailed information was generated by participants, collected and transcribed, and used to create this "refreshed" Social Sustainability Plan.

This document is designed to highlight the themes, goals, objectives, and actions based on the detailed information gathered. Operational plans prepared by the Community Social Development Department and other City Departments will reflect further details, thoughts, and ideas shared by participants over and above the objectives and actions captured here. The timeframe for the actions within this plan have been reflected as short term (within the next year), medium-term (within the next two to four years), long-term (five or more years), or ongoing (reflects areas where some work has been completed and will continue to be built upon). Actions will be prioritized based on immediate community needs, operational capacity, strategic efficiencies, and emerging trends.

While the intent of this refresh is to update the City's 2016 Social Sustainability Plan, other reports that have contributed to the development of this update include *New Beginnings: An Indigenous Engagement Strategy (2017-2018)*, *Pathways Home: Spruce Grove's 5-year Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Homelessness (2019)*, and *City Council's 2022-2025 Strategic Plan*. Going forward this document will be updated regularly and act as the Community Social Development departments guiding document for service delivery.



Approaches to Implementing the Plan

Outlined below are the foundational approaches being used to implement the plan and address the identified complex social issues. Collaboration and coordination by City departments is essential for success and implementation of this plan. Further collaboration must also occur with the community to support implementation of the plan's actions.

Generating Awareness

The City values a shared understanding of complex social issues and believes this is an essential first step in effectively addressing such issues. Therefore, we will promote widespread awareness of complex social issues.

Engaging Community

The City believes it is important that all residents have the opportunity to be heard and influence decisions that impact their lives. We are committed to offering diverse ways to engage and support participation in decision making processes, as well as connecting with residents whose voices are not often heard.

Mobilizing Capacity

The City values the knowledge, passion, expertise, and abilities of residents and community groups and believes these are what makes Spruce Grove such a great place to live. We are committed to supporting residents and community groups in sharing these gifts with one another and encouraging innovation in response to community issues.



Collaboration

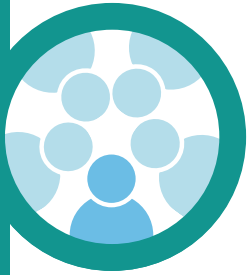
The City values partnership and collaboration and believes we are stronger and more efficient when we work together. We will continue to work with community groups and organizations to provide quality services and create innovative and progressive change that strengthens the community.

Advocacy

The City values the support and contributions of all levels of government and believes there is a shared responsibility to address many of the complex issues identified in this plan. Administration and Council are committed to advocating to the Provincial and Federal Governments to provide the community with equitable and sustainable funding to effectively address these complex social issues.

Acknowledgements

The City of Spruce Grove thanks all community organizations and individuals who contributed their time, expertise, and perspectives to the development of the Social Sustainability Plan - Refresh 2023. The community engagement sessions reflected that Spruce Grove is comprised of passionate community members and organizations that work daily to contribute positively to the City's social fabric. The City looks forward to working alongside the community in the coming years to achieve our plan's identified goals.

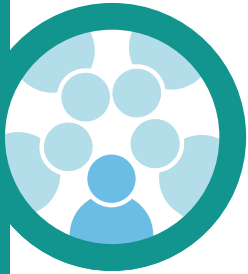


THEME 1

Supporting the HEALTH, HAPPINESS and WELL-BEING of residents

This theme speaks to the City's ability to anticipate challenges and opportunities to support community wellbeing. It recognizes individuals needing support and resources, provides effective programs and services, and strengthens the community's collective ability to respond to needs. Engaging with community groups to deliver these programs and services to address complex social issues is a key aspect of working towards building social sustainability in Spruce Grove. Supporting the health, happiness, and wellbeing of residents builds individual and family resiliency, which in turn, supports the overall well-being of our community.





THEME 1

Supporting the HEALTH, HAPPINESS and WELL-BEING of residents

The Goals within this theme work towards addressing the following complex social issues:

Community Connection and Belonging

Connected communities foster a sense of belonging. Together, we establish connections and build capacity to celebrate diversity within our community. By working together on common issues and opportunities, we can cultivate a strong sense of community. An inclusive approach and reducing barriers are key components of community connection and belonging.

Domestic Violence/Abuse

Everyone should be able to live free from fear in all aspects of their life. Incidents of domestic violence and abuse are comparatively high per capita in the Tri-Municipal Region and the community has continually identified this as a significant concern. A collaborative approach to the prevention, intervention, and recovery from domestic abuse is required to ensure physical and psychological safety in all relationships.

Mental Health and Addiction

As we continue to realize the long-term impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the occurrence of mental health and addiction concerns is increasing. Supporting mental health is essential to individual well-being, as well as that of the community. This requires understanding the mental health needs of residents, the availability of and access to services, and the gaps in service delivery to ensure all residents can access the supports they need.



GOAL 1
 Spruce Grove residents can access the supports and resources required for individual and family well-being.

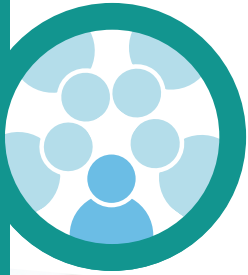
Council's 2022-2025
 Strategic Plan
 Alignment

Goal 1
 Goal 2

Update
 SSP (2016)
 Key Area 7
 Key Area 5

Alignment to
 2021-2023
 Community
 Inclusion
 Initiative

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIME FRAME
A. Community organizations have easy access to training and professional development opportunities across the mental health community.	1. Provide skill-based training and programs to help community members and groups recognize, understand, and respond to those who need support to obtain/maintain psychological and emotional well-being.	short/ongoing
	2. Continue building and leveraging external partnerships to respond to the needs of the community through coordination of professional development opportunities.	short/ongoing
B. Residents have easy access to various mental health programs and supports.	1. Foster relationships that increase the coordination of programming between schools and community-based services.	short/ongoing
	2. Continue to provide system navigation support, short-term accessible counseling, and mental health programming to residents.	short/ongoing
	3. Complete an environmental scan to determine collective resident needs in comparison to available resources with a focus on complex social issues.	medium
	4. Develop and implement programs and services in response to the needs identified in the environmental scan.	medium/long
C. Residents impacted by complex social issues feel understood and supported.	1. Provide learning opportunities that encourage and support community efforts to reduce inequities.	short/ongoing
	2. Engage with groups that welcome and connect newcomers with the supports and resources they require.	medium

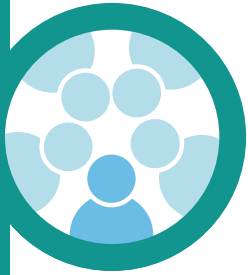


GOAL 2

Spruce Grove residents have access to supports that allow them to engage in safe and healthy relationships.

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIME FRAME
A. Residents have access to a variety of preventative programs and initiatives to support them in developing and maintaining safe and healthy relationships.	1. Gain a robust understanding of the existing provincial "Framework to End Family Violence in Alberta" and determine alignment of current City approaches and opportunities to leverage existing resources.	short/ongoing
	2. Provide ongoing education and preventative programs tailored to specific target audiences.	medium
	3. Develop and implement a community awareness campaign that promotes the qualities of a healthy relationship.	medium
	4. Provide healthy relationship and conflict resolution programming in the community and schools.	medium

Update
SSP (2016)
Key Area 2
Key Area 5
Key Area 8



GOAL 3

Spruce Grove residents live in environments free from fear and violence/abuse.

Update
SSP (2016)
Key Area 2
Key Area 5
Key Area 8

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIME FRAME
A. Community groups collaborate to pursue the elimination of domestic violence/abuse.	1. Collaborate with community groups on initiatives that increase awareness of domestic violence/abuse and empower residents to respond appropriately	short/ongoing
	2. Partner with community service providers to develop and implement client-centered strategies for information sharing, data collection, and outcome measurement.	medium/long
	3. Support Council advocacy efforts to the Provincial and Federal governments for equitable resource allocation to support community-training and direct service delivery.	medium/long
B. Residents experiencing abuse are supported with local services, supports, and resources.	1. Provide logistical support for peer-support programs for those impacted by domestic violence/abuse.	short/ongoing
	2. Support the implementation of short-term options for those impacted by domestic violence/ abuse to meet housing and other basic needs.	medium
	3. Explore existing interventions (i.e., Violence/Threat Risk Assessment (VTRA)) and their potential application to occurrences of domestic violence/abuse when charges have not been laid.	medium/long

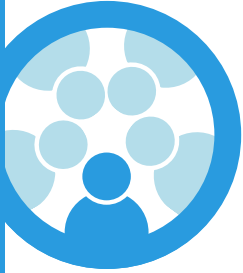


GOAL 4

Spruce Grove residents and community groups actively engage with their community through enhanced opportunities for community connections.



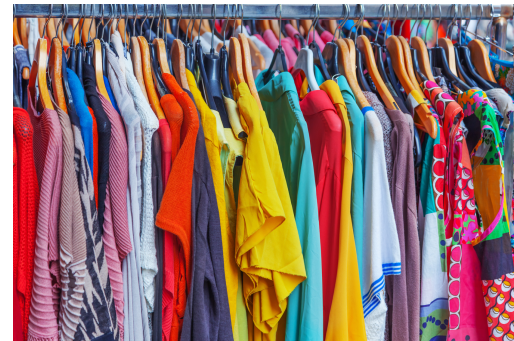
OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIME FRAME
A. Residents and community groups have access to resources to create community connections.	1. Create the conditions required for residents to informally gather and connect.	short/ongoing
	2. Provide and support programming that strengthens social connections among residents.	short/ongoing
B. Residents benefit from the diversity of community partnerships to deliver diversity, inclusion, equity, and belonging (DIEB) opportunities.	1. Determine the feasibility of providing small grants to local organizations to enable social change.	medium
	2. Collaborate with the community on events and campaigns that celebrate diversity and reflect the fabric of our community.	short/ongoing
C. Residents contribute to the development of strategies that address community priorities.	1. Provide public engagement opportunities to inform the City's program and service delivery.	short/ongoing
	2. Facilitate the development of the Community Inclusion Action Framework and work with community groups and residents to implement.	short/ongoing
D. The City will actively engage with Indigenous Nations and Peoples in the spirit of reconciliation	1. Support current and new programs that are rooted in Indigenous Ways of Knowing.	short/ongoing
	2. Support Indigenous led initiatives, including a gathering space for Indigenous Peoples.	short/ongoing

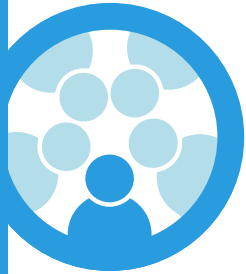


THEME 2

Working collectively to meet basic needs.

This theme focuses on ensuring that the conditions exist for each Spruce Grove resident to meet their physical needs, including housing. Residents whose basic needs are not met may be limited in their ability to participate in their community. Meeting basic needs is, therefore, essential to achieving a community goal of inclusion. A community with a strong foundation may also be better positioned to respond to changing social, economic, and environmental conditions. Some of the suggested actions to meet basic needs such as efforts to support those who are unsheltered, make Spruce Grove a more livable community for everyone.





THEME 2

Working collectively to meet basic needs.

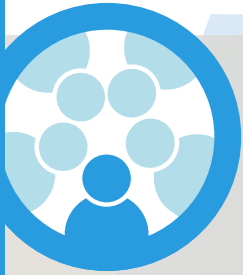
The Goals within this theme work towards addressing the following complex social issues:

Meeting Basic Needs

To thrive, people must first be able to meet their basic needs. Inflation has made this more difficult for an increasing number of individuals and families. Many local non-profit organizations are at capacity in terms of available resources and supports due to a drastic increase in service demand and decrease in donations over the past three years. These realities have emphasized the need for long-term, sustainable change to decrease the reliance on emergency relief services and increase individual financial security. This change can help support residents to be confident in their ability to meet their needs on an ongoing basis.

Living without Shelter

Communities of all sizes across North America are seeing a significant increase in individuals living without shelter. Systemic factors, like a lack of affordable housing; lack of access to coordinated supports and services; and economic conditions (e.g. employment rates and cost of living), and individual factors like chronic illness; past trauma; and domestic abuse have complex and compounding effects that can contribute to being unsheltered. Creating the conditions so that everyone can access housing options that meet their needs requires a multi-pronged approach that addresses both individual vulnerabilities and systemic failures.



GOAL 5

Spruce Grove residents have access to housing options that meet their needs.

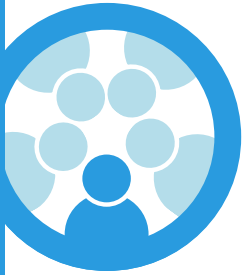
OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIME FRAME
A. Residents have opportunities to experience housing security.	1. Update the required housing thresholds to meet the current and future needs of the City.	short
	2. Develop an evidence-based housing strategy that addresses the variety of housing needs in the City.	medium

Council's 2022-2025
Strategic Plan
Alignment

Goal 2
Goal 6

Update
SSP (2016)
Key Area 4

Alignment to
PathwaysHOME:
5 year Strategy to
Reduce Poverty &
Homelessness



GOAL 6

Spruce Grove residents are supported in meeting their basic needs.

Council's 2022-2025
Strategic Plan
Alignment

Goal 1
Goal 2
Goal 5

Update
SSP (2016)
Key Area 3
Key Area 5

Alignment to
PathwaysHOME:
5 year Strategy to
Reduce Poverty &
Homelessness

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIME FRAME
A. Residents have the capability to be more food secure.	1. Leverage urban agriculture opportunities to increase food security.	medium
	2. Research community food security strategies.	medium
B. Residents are aware of the social programs and supports in the community.	1. Develop and implement a robust communication plan to inform residents of existing resources and supports.	short/ongoing
C. Residents have access to social supports and resources.	1. Provide supports and programs that strengthen financial resilience in youth, families, adults, and seniors.	short/ongoing
	2. Support advocacy efforts to the Provincial and Federal governments to resume walk-in, in-person assistance to access government services, including support with applications and gathering documentation.	short/ongoing
	3. Determine the feasibility of a space to co-locate community social services.	short/ongoing
	4. Determine the feasibility of a City accessibility pass to support equitable access to transportation, recreation, programming, culture, and other programs.	short or medium



GOAL 7

Spruce Grove residents living without shelter (or at risk of) will have greater access to supports to meet their needs.

Council's 2022-2025
Strategic Plan
Alignment
Goal 1
Goal 2

Update
SSP (2016)
Key Area 1
Key Area 5

Alignment to
PathwaysHOME:
5 year Strategy to
Reduce Poverty &
Homelessness

OBJECTIVE	ACTION	TIME FRAME
A. Residents who are unsheltered or at risk of living without shelter have access to desired supports.	1. Deliver and support life skills programming and services.	short/ongoing
	2. Develop a City strategy to meet the needs of those living without shelter.	medium
	3. Continue building and leveraging external partnerships to effectively respond to the needs of residents living without shelter.	ongoing
B. Residents and community groups understand the root-contributing factors to poverty and living without shelter.	1. Complete a jurisdictional scan to determine best practices of successful initiatives for supporting residents living without shelter.	short/ongoing
	2. Evaluate the City's process for determining how many residents are (or are at risk of) living without shelter and understanding their needs.	medium
	3. Integrate the City's understanding of the contributing factors and needs of those living without shelter into existing programming or educational/awareness opportunities available to the public.	medium



The following plans and initiatives can be found on the City of Spruce Grove website:

www.sprucegrove.org

[City of Spruce Grove Strategic Plan 2022-2025](#)

[New Beginnings - An Indigenous Engagement Improvement Strategy](#)

[PathwaysHOME: Spruce Grove's 5 year Strategy to Reduce Poverty and Homelessness](#)

[City of Spruce Grove Social Sustainability Plan - 2016](#)