DATE:	February 14, 2012
TO:	Board of Trustees
FROM:	Edgar Schmidt, Superintendent of Schools
SUBJECT:	City of Edmonton – *ELEVATE* Report
RESOURCE STAFF:	Tash Taylor, Director, Executive and Board Relations
REFERENCE:	Community Sustainability Task Force www.CommunitySustainability.ca

ISSUE

The City of Edmonton's Community Sustainability Task Force recently released its findings and recommendations to the public. The Mayor has asked the Board to formally endorse the *ELEVATE* report as a first step in demonstrating collaboration and commitment toward implementation of the recommendations.

RECOMMENDATION

That the Board approve in principle the recommendations outlined in the *ELEVATE* Report (Attachment I).

BACKGROUND

In February 2011, Mayor Stephen Mandel appointed the Community Sustainability Task Force in response to the strain on the city's core neighbourhoods and the need to ensure Edmonton's mature neighbourhoods and schools are viable, vibrant and sustainable.

After extensive input from stakeholders and Edmontonians, exploring related research and work on community sustainability, and much discussion about the best ways to achieve sustainability in the city's mature neighbourhoods, Mayor Mandel and the Community Sustainability Task Force released ELEVATE - its report and recommendations to the public on February 2, 2012.

RELATED FACTS

- Trustee Ripley was the Board's representative on the Community Sustainability Task Force.
- Mayor Mandel is requesting that City Council and local school boards formally endorse the recommendations as a demonstration of shared commitment.
- The Task Force had nine recommendations, each with a number of associated action plans to be implemented.
- The City states that implementation of the recommendations will involve all key stakeholders: the City, school boards and Alberta Education.

CONSIDERATIONS & ANALYSIS - N/A

NEXT STEPS

Should the Board approve the recommendation, a letter of endorsement from the Board will be drafted and sent to the Mayor and Council.

ATTACHMENTS & APPENDICES

ATTACHMENT I - ELEVATE Report

TT:ee

ELEVATE

THE REPORT OF THE
COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY
TASK FORCE

FEBRUARY 2012

"

THE DAY IS COMING WHEN A SINGLE CARROT, FRESHLY OBSERVED, WILL SET OFF A REVOLUTION.

Paul Cezanne

A quote posted in the Carrot Café, a community coffee shop run by volunteers on Alberta Avenue in northeast Edmonton.

"

FOREWORD

Hazeldean, McCauley, Grovenor, McKernan—these are just a few of the many mature Edmonton neighbourhoods with active and vibrant histories. As these and other Edmonton communities have matured, significant changes have taken place within them—we see fewer young families with children with many of the remaining families having fewer children than in the past, we see families moving to newer Edmonton communities, we see declining school populations, we see a loss of small local businesses, we see a discomforting increase in poverty and urban decay in some neighbourhoods. This kind of sea-change led to Mayor Stephen Mandel creating the Community Sustainability Task Force in February 2011, and the task was this: To examine the challenge of retaining vitality as communities mature and change, and to create recommendations that address the changing roles and relationships between the city, school boards and the province to ensure ongoing vibrancy.

The Community Sustainability Task Force that we have led for the past year was comprised of twelve citizens from the general Edmonton community along with elected representatives from City Council, the Edmonton Public and Catholic School Boards, and the Province (from the Office of the Minister of Alberta Education). As a group, the Task Force reviewed reports and studies on issues and suggestions for supporting neighbourhood vibrancy from such groups as the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues and Edmonton's NextGen, as well as findings from other cities faced with similar situations. We listened. We consulted. We discussed. We debated. And we deliberated. Our report, ELEVATE, is the result of our examination of community sustainability and it offers recommendations as a 'blueprint' for the next steps Edmonton can take in seeking ongoing community vitality.

Over the course of the last year, we learned that mature communities and the issues of changing family composition, vibrancy, sustainability, and resiliency are highly complex. Demographic change, population of communities, density, number of schools, and the continuous outward growth of the city were among the many factors that led us to realize that current strategies and efforts are not enough—new solutions, solutions different from those of the past, are needed. These new solutions, as we see it, will call for every partner—individuals, schools, communities, province, and city—to look beyond their traditional concerns, mandates, and 'silos', and to commit time, energy, and resources to implement the report's recommendations. New partnerships between traditional elected bodies and communities, new thinking about schools and communities, new and effective ways of engaging local communities and residents, fresh approaches to school buildings and usage, and the adoption of new formal and informal structures and local decision-making processes are all key findings in our Report.

As the Chair and Vice-Chair we would like to thank and commend the commitment and wisdom of all of the Task Force members. We acknowledge the tremendous support that we received in carrying out our task from administrative staff of the City, school boards, Alberta Education, and the Federation of Community Leagues. Finally we are thankful and appreciative of the many voices—groups and individuals—who contributed their thoughtful questions, ideas, and recommendations to the Task Force.

Producing ELEVATE has been an exciting journey! Our report envisions a better and vibrant Edmonton as our neighbourhoods mature and our city continues to grow, a journey that will no doubt prove to be challenging, exhilarating, and life-affirming.

Michael Phair, *Chair*
Teresa Spinelli, *Vice-Chair*
COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE
February 2, 2012

CONTENTS

Photo Note:

*The photographs used in
ELEVATE were taken by
Edmontonians and posted on
Flickr, a popular photo-sharing
site. They capture both the spirit
of our city and the creativity of
Edmontonians.*

Cover Photo:
HEY! YOU'RE UPSIDE DOWN
Parkview, Edmonton

section one

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

INTRODUCTION

We are fortunate indeed to live in Edmonton, blessed as it is with so much to offer, so much to feel passionate about: A strong economy. A stunning river valley. A meaningful history. A citizenry famous for its volunteerism and participation. An arts and culture scene that is the envy of cities five times the size. What we have in Edmonton is unique and extraordinary, and would be impossible to replicate anywhere else.

2010 TAIL BLAZERS 5K
Sir Wilfrid Laurier Park, Edmonton

Yet articulating the complex ingredients that go into making a strong and sustainable city is a difficult task, not least because the flip side of this investigation is (and must be, if we wish to honestly engage in improving our communities), *What is it about my community that requires change, transformation, honest reappraisal, urgent action?* This document, ELEVATE, the report of the Community Sustainability Task Force, aims to express what it is that makes a community great—that makes *our* community great—as well as what it is we need to do to instigate change for the better.

MANDATE AND VISION

In forming the Community Sustainability Task Force (CSTF) in the winter of 2011, the City of Edmonton acknowledged that many parts of our city, especially mature neighbourhoods, face the challenge of keeping our communities liveable, lively, and vibrant when confronted with historical and demographic change. In collaboration with the Province, school boards, parents, and community groups the CSTF was tasked with bringing together a group of citizens to look for and recommend courses of action for supporting and enhancing the viability of mature neighbourhoods and neighbourhood institutions.

The ELEVATE report is meant to both support and challenge our city to be better and stronger, but to do so in ways that demonstrate a commitment to the well-being of all citizens. The stated vision of ELEVATE will guide the manner in which we enact the report and its recommendations. Our hope is that this report will support a community resolve to ELEVATE us all.

THE ELEVATE VISION

Edmonton is a city in which engaged and informed citizens work together to create strong and sustainable neighbourhoods and communities. Our community will embrace diversity, will provide a physical and social environment where we can live, learn, work, and play, and will meet the needs of current and future Edmontonians through their entire lifetime.

WORKING GROUPS

Early in the work of the CSTF it was felt that the job of fulfilling the mandate was too complex to be approached by the group as a whole. Four Working Groups were created (1. Achieving Mature Neighbourhoods: Social Environments, 2. Achieving Mature Neighbourhoods: Built Form, 3. Local Businesses in Communities, 4. School Revitalization Zones), and each was given the task of investigating a specific aspect of the mandate. Each Working Group conducted research, public engagement, interviews, and held numerous meetings, throughout the spring, summer and early fall of 2011. The Working Group reports were delivered to the task force in the early fall of 2011, and the ELEVATE recommendations were created using a considerable amount of the material generated by the Working Groups.

THE ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN

The creation of ELEVATE involved speaking to and hearing from many people, whether through direct conversation, guest speakers, public meetings, online polls, engagement in forums, newsletters or website traffic. This broad public dialogue was essential to creating the ELEVATE recommendations. Although it would be impossible to capture the full extent of that dialogue, there were fundamental discussions that offer insight into the exchange of ideas that took place throughout the creation of ELEVATE. These included meeting with and hearing from groups and individuals such as: The Centre for Public Involvement; the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues; the social policy scholar Lisbeth Schorr; the team from The Center for Cities and Schools, University of California-Berkeley; the Edmonton Public School Board; the Edmonton Catholic School District; NextGen; and Edmonton City Council. There was also extensive work done in terms of searching out current and valuable reference material, such as: The REACH Report; the Great Neighbourhoods Program; and "The Ways" – The City of Edmonton's planning documents.

THE ELEVATE RECOMMENDATIONS

Edmontonians care deeply about their community and are highly motivated to work towards solutions that make our city a better place to live, learn, work, and play. The recommendations of this report work toward achieving the ELEVATE Vision by identifying gaps, pointing out opportunities, and articulating action plans. The recommendations are grouped under three focus areas, and each recommendation (in the body of the report) comes with numerous action items. The core focus is to create solutions for Edmonton's mature neighbourhoods already in distress or that are at risk of distress, and to break down boundaries, share resources, and build effective community partnerships. It's important to also note that the recommendations and their associated action items may also apply equally well to Edmonton's newer and newest neighbourhoods, given that these are our mature neighbourhoods of the future.

FOCUS A:
DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP AND BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

RECOMMENDATION 1

Bring together the four jurisdictions (federal, provincial, municipal, school boards) to create innovative partnerships and re-configured policy and funding models designed to assemble a new urban agenda.

RECOMMENDATION 2

Create a channel for collaborative community sustainability work in Edmonton. This channel—which may or may not be a new body, depending on the resources brought to bear—will act as the focal point for the city's community sustainability network.

FOCUS B:
EMPLOY COMMUNITY-DRIVEN APPROACHES TO STRENGTHEN NEIGHBOURHOODS

RECOMMENDATION 3

Create a template for the development of an asset-based development plan for every mature neighbourhood (which will change over time), to understand strengths and areas of need, to engage the community directly, and to ensure that community goals and input are prioritized, particularly when development is being pursued and/or advocated.

RECOMMENDATION 4

Ensure that initiatives for community sustainability are based on good information. The channel—the Edmonton Community Sustainability Partnership (ECSP)—will oversee the effective distribution of this information.

RECOMMENDATION 5

Develop a collaborative regulatory environment that strengthens and supports communities.

RECOMMENDATION 6

Create and support business diversity within communities, and develop stronger partnerships with and between the community, Business Revitalization Zones, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Department of Sustainable Development.

RECOMMENDATION 7

Foster healthy communities through offering a diversity of housing, and through encouraging and educating around issues of diversity and densification.

FOCUS AREA C:
PROMOTE LIFE-LONG LEARNING

RECOMMENDATION 8

Recognize that education is the foundation of a successful future for both communities and individuals, and that life-long learning is a foundation for community sustainability. Ensure that all community-driven plans include the delivery of life-long learning opportunities for all.

RECOMMENDATION 9

Encourage the Province of Alberta to provide innovative and sustainable infrastructure funding so that existing and new schools are modern, multi-functional and able to accommodate a diversity of programs.

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY IN EDMONTON

The community sustainability work of our civic future will be a mix of optimism and pragmatism, the blending of a strong and clear vision with a sense of going about our business seriously and with purpose. There are few places in the world that can match Edmonton's unique civic ecosystem. Yet our hard work and good fortune can be exponentially multiplied if we build upon our strengths (one of those strengths being our mature neighbourhoods). The ELEVATE report is but one component of a broader process, yet ELEVATE will be a vital tool to guide community sustainability activities in our city. The ELEVATE recommendations are meant to spur activity, inspire individual citizens, bring together organizations and orders of government, and contribute to an environment in which Edmontonians work toward the shared goal of making our city stronger, more equitable, more liveable, and more community-oriented. ELEVATE is designed to contribute to a stronger Edmonton in the near future and to creating stronger processes that will help fashion a great Edmonton in the long term. It is our hope that this report will play a part in the work we all need to do to continue to ELEVATE our lives and our city.

SLOW, CHILDREN AT PLAY
Mt. Royal Elementary School, Edmonton

HAVING RELATIONSHIPS WITH PEOPLE ON THE STREET—WITH PEOPLE ON *YOUR* STREET—MAKES FOR A GREAT COMMUNITY.

MAKING EDMONTON STRONGER:
THE ZOCALO STORY

What drove Miranda Ringma and Ken Bregenser to open their giftware/coffee shop, Zocalo, back in 2003 was a passion for colour. Serious, bright, dizzying colour. That passion touches every flower, plate, plant, vase,

and frame in the store—even the muffins are colourful. The couple felt that Edmonton lacked a bit of jazz, particularly in the winter in McCauley across from Caboto Park. "There were only a couple of colours in fall and winter," says Bregenser, over coffee in their bustling shop down the street from the Italian Centre. "And they weren't very bright, either."

One of the biggest challenges in launching their business was finding the right location. They looked along Whyte Ave, up and down 124th St, in the Quarters, but finally settled on a place in their own backyard. "This particular block was a bit dodgy back then," recalls Ringma, laughing. Bregenser nods. "There were certainly problem elements," he adds. "But it's amazing how once you fill vacant space with better things, the not so good things tend to go away."

They ended up buying the old Lusitania Bakery building and converting it to their needs, opening in the fall of 2003. The one question they got endlessly throughout their first few years was, *Great shop, why here?* "We got so sick of answering that question," says Bregenser, smiling. "We don't get asked so much any more." The shop itself has helped transform the block and the street (though both give great credit to the Italian Centre for being the anchor). They never felt McCauley was the wrong place to open a business, and thought

from the start that Edmonton was too much a mall culture. "We have always firmly believed in independent streetside retail," says Ringma.

The community has responded; business has been steady from the start, and they recently received approval to expand their space. As a flower shop it's only fitting they are sinking roots. "It's how communities develop," says Ringma. "We've developed roots here. We're part of this community, and it's part of us."

"It's all about relationships," emphasizes Bregenser. "Having relationships with people on the street—with people on *your* street—makes for a great community. That one thing solves all kinds of problems." Ringma has been living in McCauley for 25 years, Bregenser not as long, but he tells the story of how, within his first year of living in McCauley, he came home one day and said to Ringma, "You know, I've only been living in this neighbourhood a year, and already I know a dozen of my neighbours. I didn't know that many of my neighbours from all the places I grew up combined!"

ELEVATE: A PURPOSE AND A PLAN

BUILDING ON WHO WE ARE

There's something we all instinctively know about Edmonton. We are fortunate indeed to live in this place, blessed as it is with so much to offer, so much to feel passionate about: A strong economy. A stunning river valley. A meaningful history. A citizenry famous for its volunteerism and participation. An arts and culture scene that is the envy of cities five times the size. What we have in Edmonton is unique and extraordinary, and would be impossible to replicate anywhere else.

CROWDS
Churchill Square, Edmonton

But does that mean our work is done, that striving for better stops, that we congratulate ourselves on our good fortune and pat ourselves on the back? On the contrary: As anyone who excels in his or her field knows, it's about proving yourself every day *and* improving yourself every day. We must sustain what we have achieved, yet work to be better. We are always engaged in trying to elevate who we are and what we are, to lift ourselves and our families up to the next level. It's who we are in Edmonton, not least because it's a significant part of our prairie and settler tradition. The life and success of our city, our collection of great communities, is no different. What we have in Edmonton, therefore, is simply the strong foundation of today upon which to create an even better tomorrow.

But what is it, precisely, that makes a city strong and liveable? Or a community? Or a neighbourhood? What is it that makes these places not just where we live, but where we want to live, where we're happy to live. Where we have neighbourhoods we are proud of, programs and people to inspire us, streets that invite us, communities that make us proudly say, *This is where I live and here's what is wonderful about it.*

Articulating the complex ingredients that go into making a strong and sustainable city is a difficult task, to be sure, not least because the flip side of this investigation is (and must be, if we wish to honestly engage in improving our communities), *What is it about my community that requires change, transformation, honest reappraisal, urgent action?* This document, ELEVATE, the report of the Community Sustainability Task Force, aims to express what it is that makes a community great—that makes *our* community great—as well as what we need to do to instigate change for the better and ensure those changes endure. Although not part of our formal mandate, we hope this report stimulates increased civic engagement and participation. As the city grows and urban issues become increasingly complex and pressing, citizens must take greater and greater ownership. Edmonton must be *our* city. As citizens, we have basic civic duties, but we also want and need inspiration to stay informed, remain engaged, and to participate in the democratic process we, in fact, own.

CITY OF EDMONTON MATURE NEIGHBORHOODS MAP
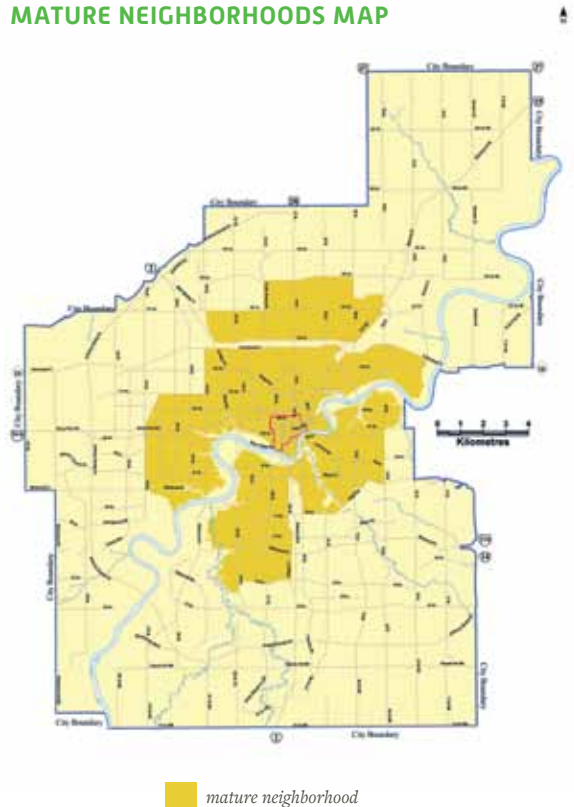
mature neighborhood

DEFINING A MATURE NEIGHBORHOOD
Edmonton's mature neighbourhoods are the neighbourhoods within the Mature Neighbourhood Overlay (MNO). These neighbourhoods are well-established and were effectively built out by 1970. These areas are primarily residential.

THE MANDATE OF THE TASK FORCE

In forming the Community Sustainability Task Force in the winter of 2011, the City of Edmonton acknowledged that many parts of our city, especially mature neighbourhoods, face the challenge of keeping our communities liveable, lively, and vibrant when confronted with historical and demographic change. In announcing the formation of the CSTF (made up of Edmontonians from all walks of life and professional backgrounds) Mayor Stephen Mandel noted that, "One of the biggest challenges facing our city is the strain on core neighbourhoods where schools and communities need support to revitalize neighbourhoods. This task force will take an important first step by building bridges between stakeholders and find unique ways to challenge and inspire new innovations and new partnerships that will help sustain and grow these vital neighbourhoods." Edmonton's mature neighbourhoods (roughly speaking, those communities built before 1970) make up approximately one-third of the neighbourhoods within the City of Edmonton (over 100 distinct neighbourhoods). It should be added that although the broader consideration of our inevitable urban expansion was not part of our formal CSTF mandate, it clearly must be on the table for future discussion, as it will become a more pressing issue over time.

The mandate and terms of reference of the CSTF laid out a path of investigation and action. In collaboration with the province, school boards, parents, and community groups the CSTF was tasked with bringing together a group of citizens to look for and recommend courses of action—both short- and long-term—for supporting and enhancing the viability of mature neighbourhoods and neighbourhood institutions that are community based, break down boundaries, share resources, and build effective community partnerships. The CSTF was given six principal purposes (listed on the next page) to guide its work.

This final report, which outlines the work and recommendations of the Task Force, was presented to the City, Alberta's Minister of Education, the Public and Separate School Boards, other stakeholders, and the public. ELEVATE constitutes the fulfillment of the CSTF's mandate.

CITY OF EDMONTON MATURE NEIGHBORHOODS LIST

Abbotsfield	Alberta Avenue	Allendale	Argylle	Aspen Gardens	Athlone
Avonmore	Balwin	Beacon Heights	Bellevue	Belvedere	Bergman
Beverly Heights	Bonnie Doon	Boyle Street	Britannia Youngstown	Calder	Canora
Capilano	Central McDougall	Cloverdale	Crestwood	Cromdale	Delton
Delwood	Dovercourt	Downtown	Duggan	Eastwood	Elmwood
Elmwood Park	Empire Park	Evansdale	Forest Heights	Fulton Place	Garneau
Glengarry	Glenora	Glenwood	Grandview Heights	Gold Bar	Greenfield
Griesbach	Grovenor	Hazledean	High Park	Highlands	Holyrood
Idylwylde	Inglewood	Jasper Park	Kenilworth	Kensington	Kildare
Kilkenny	King Edward Park	Killarney	Landsdowne	Lauderdale	Laurier Heights
Lendrum Place	Lynwood	Malmo Plains	Mayfield	McCauley	McKernan
McQueen	Meadowlark Park	Montrose	Newton	North Glenora	Northmount
Oliver	Ottewell	Parkallen	Parkdale	Parkview	Patricia Heights
Pleasantview	Prince Charles	Prince Rupert	Queen Alexandra	Queen Mary Park	Quesnell Heights
Rideau Park	Rio Terrace	Ritchie	Riverdale	Rossdale	Rosslyn
Royal Gardens	Rundle Heights	Sherbrooke	Sherwood	Spruce Avenue	Strathcona
Strathern	Terrace Heights	Virginia Park	Wellington	West Jasper Place	West Meadowlark Pk
Westmount	Westbrook Estates	Westwood	Windsor Park	Woodcroft	York

CSTF GUIDING PRINCIPLES

1 Building and sustaining mature neighbourhoods that can, in turn, address schooling.

2 Examine and develop a plan for "school revitalization zones."

3 Identify structural (social and physical) improvements for mature neighbourhoods.

4 Examine the links and benefits between local business and local communities.

5 Facilitate positive changes for communities with the collaborative efforts of the public/separate school boards, City of Edmonton, and the Province of Alberta.

6 Search out focused, made-in-community recommendations ensuring liveability and enhanced learning opportunities for children and their families.

A VISION OF COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY

ELEVATE is meant to both support and challenge our city to be better and stronger, but to do so in ways that demonstrate a commitment to the well-being of all citizens. This report is strategic and pragmatic, but also optimistic and creative, and so we have created an overarching vision to frame the report and its recommendations, and to guide the manner in which we enact these recommendations moving forward.

This vision is the distillation of many meetings, discussions, focus groups, analyses of reports, and simply hearing what Edmontonians had to say. The overarching goal of the CSTF is the Vision as expressed above. The recommendations detailed later in the report set us on a path to the realization of this vision. The CSTF sees the recommendations as giving shape and support to the work of so many Edmontonians in creating and sustaining vital mature neighbourhoods, vibrant schools and educational opportunities, active and healthy local businesses, and so much more.

This document is meant to encourage proven success and support needed change. Together, we will create a community that builds on today's strengths to forge an even stronger tomorrow. We want this document to be part of a larger civic process that empowers citizens to work with one another on what should be viewed as a shared project. Our hope is that this report will support a community resolve to ELEVATE us all.

THE ELEVATE VISION

Edmonton is a city in which engaged and informed citizens work together to create strong and sustainable neighbourhoods and communities. Our community will embrace diversity, will provide a physical and social environment where we can live, learn, work and play, and will meet the needs of current and future Edmontonians through their entire lifetime.

THE EMPHASIS FOR US… IS TO PROMOTE THE POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS THAT AFRICANS ARE MAKING OUT THERE…

MEMEZA AFRICA CHOIR CONCERT
Centre for Spiritual Living, Edmonton

MAKING EDMONTON STRONGER:
THE AFRICAN CANADIAN PROFESSIONALS NETWORK ASSOCIATION

Too often in the Edmonton media, when the word Africa comes up, it's related to some of the negative stories around gangs and recent crime statistics. But if people like Mary Duku and John Hogan have their way, we'll hear many more of the positive stories

that are *Africa*. "We need to multinationalize the story," says Hogan, who moved to Canada from Ghana in 1981, "and promote the continent and what it has to offer in Edmonton, not just a particular country."

Mary Duku is the driving force behind the African Canadian Professionals Network Association (ACPN), a newly formed group whose mission is to promote, mentor, and advance the positive contributions of African Canadian professionals and entrepreneurs. When Mary and her husband moved here from Uganda, her husband was a skilled worker whose credentials were not recognized here, an all too common challenge for immigrants. His experience became the motivating force for her to form this association.

John Hogan also had to re-educate himself in order to work in his field. Today, he is an internal auditor for the federal government. He became involved with the African Canadian Professionals Network Association last June. "The emphasis for us," Hogan says, "is to promote the positive contributions that Africans are making out there," and then adds that many other organizations, such as the Africa Centre, play a large role in the community. The ACPN, however, makes its sole

focus bringing skilled professionals together to enjoy a networking system designed to help individuals succeed.

There are already some success stories. Four African youth said that their motivation to go into business and to attend university was a direct result of attending the last two events sponsored by the ACPN. "Edmonton is filled with skilled Africans and African Canadians," Hogan says. "We want to emphasize the positive contributions they are making."

The aim of the ACPN is to become a self-supporting non-profit organization, and they hope to attract sponsors to make that possible. When the United Nations proclaimed 2011 as the International Year for People of African Descent, the City of Edmonton, spearheaded by Mayor Stephen Mandel, proclaimed June 18, 2011 as "Africa Connect" Day. In June 2012, the ACPN will host an Accountability Summit that will present speakers on accountability in social communities, at home, and in politics, work and business. They hope to have as many as 600 attendees.

FARMERS' MARKET FIDDLER
City Market Downtown, Edmonton

THE WORKING GROUPS

PREAMBLE

Early in the work of the CSTF it was felt that the job of fulfilling the mandate was too complex to be approached by the group as a whole. Therefore, four Working Groups were created, each given the task of investigating a specific aspect of the overall mandate and returning to the Task Force with a report that would be used to help shape the final recommendations. These four Working Groups were: 1) Achieving Mature Neighbourhoods: Social Environments; 2) Achieving Mature Neighbourhoods: Built Form; 3) Local Businesses in Communities; 4) School Revitalization Zones.

E ach Working Group conducted research, public engagement, and interviews, as well as numerous meetings, throughout the spring, summer and early fall of 2011. They were assisted in this process by a variety of stakeholders, including many community members, the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues, NextGen, the school boards, the Edmonton Police Service, various developers, members of the academic community, as well as visiting scholars, such as Lisbeth Schorr, and Deborah McKoy and Jeff Vincent from the Berkeley Center for Cities & Schools.

The Working Group reports were delivered in the early fall of 2011 and are summarized below. The ELEVATE recommendations (which follow the Working Group summaries) were created using a significant amount of the material generated by the Working Groups.

ACHIEVING MATURE NEIGHBOURHOODS: SOCIAL ENVIRONMENTS

T he Achieving Mature Neighbourhoods: Social Environments Working Group (AMNS/SE) studied a variety of issues that revolved around the following questions:

1. What does a sustainable mature neighbourhood look like in Edmonton?

2. How do residents, all orders of government, and the private sector cooperate to invest in mature neighbourhoods in Edmonton, both socially and economically?

3. How do we ensure that schools in mature neighbourhoods remain viable focal points for all residents?

4. How do we attract and retain families in mature neighbourhoods?

5. How do we establish and strengthen a sense of community?

6. How do we sustain neighbourhood diversity?

A considerable amount of study was done on the city's current state of mature neighbourhood sustainability with relation to social environments. The Working Group held numerous meetings and did research

into the topic. It found that many City of Edmonton planning documents and many City initiatives support general improvements to the infrastructure of mature neighbourhoods, as well as more targeted efforts to support the revitalization of neighbourhoods considered in distress.

The Working Group found that there are currently 13 *high threshold* and 25 *medium threshold* (distressed) neighbourhoods in Edmonton. The 10 Neighbourhood Indicators are: economic, education, employment, housing, personal and community safety, physical and natural environments, social health and wellness. The Working Group noted that there is a lack of clarity around the precise process of change that results in neighbourhoods moving from some state of relative well-being to one of distress. There are many models and theories (analyzed by the Working Group), but a predominant variable was poverty.

Certainly, strong services and infrastructure contribute to community sustainability and include factors such as schools, child and family services, health services, public libraries, housing and related support services, community organizations, and spaces and services for recreation and association. Rich networks of social relations and interactions between local residents, and between local residents and the larger urban community, are also vital, as is a mix of residents. The physical environment also supports the social environment: there must be room for private and public interaction, and a relative absence of urban decay and blight. Furthermore, the Working Group found it is important that asset-based development plans for communities include a focus on business and educational/lifelong learning realms.

The Working Group brought these considerations back to the CSTF, also highlighting that there are certain key principles for supporting sustainable mature neighbourhoods in relation to social environments, which are: focusing on leadership and intergovernmental partnerships; highlighting the connection and relationships between mature neighbourhoods and the larger urban area; utilizing strategic and comprehensive approaches; ensuring that actions are collaborative and neighbourhood-driven; and ensuring that these actions are sustained and accountable.

ACHIEVING MATURE NEIGHBOURHOODS: BUILT FORM

The Achieving Mature Neighbourhoods: Built Form Working Group (AMNS/BF) examined a different aspect of mature neighbourhoods, using the same guiding set of questions put to the AMNS/SE Working Group. The AMNS/BF Working Group investigated the questions, with a focus on issues such as walkability and safety, infrastructure, neighbourhood focal points, and diversifying housing in mature neighbourhoods.

Through meetings, extensive feedback, and public discussion, the Working Group brought many observations and/or discussion points back to the CSTF. These included the fact that school quality plays a major role in families' housing choices, adding that when schools function as focal points for communities, opportunities emerge for shared use of public space. Complete communities offer opportunities for renovating and building new schools, which in turn attracts families. It also highlighted that a wide mix of housing units is needed to attract a diverse mix of residents, and that housing unit mix, school enrolment, and school funding are intricately related. Transit was noted as important in supporting families' access to school options, while walkability and safety also form part of a complete community. Such communities also include amenities and services for families and seniors.

LOCAL BUSINESSES IN COMMUNITIES

The Local Businesses in Communities Working Group (LBC) was given three principal areas to consider in its deliberations:

1. Examining safety, policing, bylaw enforcement, look/ aesthetics/ urban design and how these issues relate to mature neighbourhood sustainability.

2. Investigating how to increase local business prosperity, increase local business ownership of their own space, new development, how to increase the residential base and how to capture local disposable income.

3. Assessing how transportation issues affect businesses in mature communities.

The LBC Working Group discussed issues such as the enforcement of bylaws and zoning guidelines that meet the needs of the residents. Educating around the interaction between local business and a strong local community was considered, since that interaction is important to community revitalization and sustainability. The LBC also looked at language barriers as a hindrance to the successful operation of a local business. Transportation was examined, in that access to local businesses is often challenging, particularly for seniors. Long term street front vacancies were studied with respect to how they present business growth challenges. Issues such as street safety and targeted community policing were also considered.

SCHOOL REVITALIZATION ZONES

The School Revitalization Zone Working Group (SRZ) was tasked with, first, examining how "school revitalization zones" could best support community sustainability in mature neighbourhoods, and, second, creating a picture for the CSTF as to what a successful SRZ might look like, including what steps would need to be taken by communities, the School Boards, the City of Edmonton and the Province of Alberta to achieve successful SRZs. The SRZ Working Group explored three main areas:

1. To understand if Business Revitalization Zone concepts could be applied to SRZs and to determine what a successful SRZ, rooted in the idea of a full-range learning community, might look like.

2. To examine the attractors/detractors to successful, stable community schools as well as to identify the barriers that prevent some schools from remaining vibrant, viable places of learning.

3. To explore how collaboration and partnership might assist in the development of SRZs.

The SRZ Working Group was comprised of members of all three city school boards (Public, Catholic, and Conseil Scolaire Centre Nord), as well as the Policy Advisor to Alberta's Minister of Education. The Working Group conducted meetings with several City departments (such as Planning and Legal), the respective school boards, a parent association for one of the programs of choice within Edmonton Public Schools, former Alberta Education Minister Hancock, as well as visiting scholars and academic experts. Through this work, the Working Group arrived at a set of discussion points built around seven key words, each of which expressed an action central to achieving life-long learning opportunities in all communities and to the creation of a successful SRZ (which the Working Group recommended broadening to a vision of every community having a plan for life-long learning for all ages, relevant to their unique needs). These words were *Commit, Share, Ensure, Empower, Build, Implement and Utilize*, each of which formed an entry point into specific discussions for both the Working Group and the CSTF.

WHAT THE WORKING GROUPS CONSIDERED

There were naturally many points introduced unique to each Working Group. However, there were also intersecting ideas, concerns, and suggestions. The CSTF took what the Working Groups learned and used this wealth of information in its broader discussion around the creation of the ELEVATE recommendations and the writing of this report. A summary of these discussion points is presented below, not in order of importance or according to their relation to the final recommendations, but simply to provide an insight into the deliberations of the Working Groups:

☞ The introduction of a new partnership/entity/ structure to support mature neighbourhoods, which draws on the resources (new and existing) of the federal, provincial, and municipal governments, the school boards, public and private philanthropy, and private business, and which engages the local community and related stakeholders in working towards fundamental or transformational change at the community/ neighbourhood level.

☞ How best to support changes in communities identified as being in 'distress' or 'at-risk' of distress in the areas of community health and well-being, economic and social development, and community capacity building.

☞ The possibility of giving the new partnership/ structure resource allocation authority and how to have it remain accountable to the different levels of government and the community partners for the delivery of outcomes.

☞ Moving beyond conventional approaches including but not limited to innovations in financing individual and community capacity building, local redevelopment of housing, education, employment and training, and local economic development.

☞ Ensuring access to empirical data collected at the community, municipal, provincial, and federal levels, which describes the current status of community social and economic well-being and identifies related trends or changes.

☞ Examining the structural elements in creating or forming partnerships or entities, which might include the development of an overall enabling framework for the support of neighbourhood revitalization between the various orders of government and the formation of one or more local/neighbourhood partnerships/entities (on the basis of geography) to manage and implement local development strategies. These more local entities/partnerships would work directly with local residents, community organizations, and business to effect social and economic change.

☞ The notion of a clear and strong municipal commitment to future urban development and growth that supports the well-being of mature neighbourhoods.

☞ Addressing the community perception of enforcement of programs, policies, and bylaws that support the sustainability of mature neighbourhoods.

☞ How best to empower communities to be proactive in the development of their community.

☞ The fact that there is no "one size fits all" approach since every community is unique.

☞ How to create integrated and identifiable public realms linking people to community focal points, so as to create a sense of place.

☞ Look at ways for mature neighbourhoods to intensify and diversify, to broaden from the existing predominantly single-family dwelling built form in order to bring more people back to these areas of the city (since mature neighbourhoods need a diversity of residents and housing to remain stable).

☞ The importance of enforcing bylaws and creating acceptable standards for local businesses.

☞ How best to educate the community around the vital interaction between local business and a strong local community, given that local businesses are so important to community revitalization and sustainability.

☞ Look at the need to reach out to small business owners and offer incentives for English language education, small business loans and workshops, as language is often a barrier to local business success.

☞ Transportation is key in providing access to local businesses.

☞ Examine long term street front vacancies, which create poor community self-esteem and hinder business growth.

☞ Create zoning guidelines to develop neighbourhoods that meet the needs of the residents.

☞ How to frame the discussion around the relationship between ever-expanding urban growth and our vanishing rich agricultural land.

☞ The nature and value of the community school model.

☞ In those areas where crime rates are traditionally high, how to develop a targeted community policing strategy.

☞ The best way to develop a local purchasing and bidding preference, since this would likely benefit many local businesses.

☞ Having more beat patrol officers and encouraging meetings between police, store owners and community members.

☞ The importance of committing to and sharing responsibility for a common vision around life-long learning in every community.

☞ How to ensure government legislation, priorities, planning, and resourcing support communities in realizing their aspirations around life-long learning.

☞ How to empower communities as equal partners in creating opportunity-rich life-long learning.

☞ The opportunities that a new Education Act might provide.

☞ The need to build capacity in citizens and stakeholders for collaboration and democratic decision-making related to life-long learning in every community.

☞ How to implement a holistic, community-rooted plan for life-long learning in every community.

☞ Ways to utilize schools as centres for opportunity-rich life-long learning in every community.

MAKING EDMONTON STRONGER:
LIZ O'NEILL,
A COMMUNITY VOICE

F or the past 30 years, Liz O'Neill has been devoted to helping children lead better lives. She is the recipient of the YWCA Women of Distinction Award in Social Services, she has been named a Woman of Vision by Global TV, she has received the Government of Canada's

125th Anniversary Medal for Community Service as well as the Alberta Centennial Medal for Community Service. Edmonton's children are fortunate indeed to have her working on their behalf.

In 1979, O'Neill moved from Ontario to Edmonton and became the Executive Director of Big Sisters of Edmonton. At that time, the agency served 50 children and had a budget of $60,000. In 1991 Big Sisters and Big Brothers merged and created Big Brothers Big Sisters of Edmonton and Area. Twenty years later, in 2011, Big Brothers Big Sisters merged with Boys and Girls Clubs of Edmonton to create Boys and Girls Big Brothers Big Sisters, the first merger of its kind in North America. Today the agency has over 3000 volunteers, serves more than 5500 children and youth, and has a staff 110 and a budget of $7.9 million dollars.

Big Brothers Big Sisters focused more on getting volunteers to be positive role models in children's lives. Boys and Girls, by contrast, is primarily a school and after-school program that involves volunteers mentoring children in a variety of activities ranging from helping with school work to organizing recreational programming. "We realized that if we merged the two programs," says O'Neill, "we might be able to serve more kids at less cost and reframe infrastructure dollars to the front lines."

"It's the volunteers of Edmonton that make us successful," O'Neill is quick to point out. "Currently, we have 3,000 volunteers. Nowhere else in the country can match our numbers. And we have a waiting list for people who want to sit on the Board."

O'Neill, on top of everything else, has also served as the co-chair of Success by Six, a community initiative managed by United Way focused on ensuring that all Edmonton children from 0 to 6 have the support they need to reach their maximum developmental potential.

Now that the merger has allowed for more funds to go directly to children, there are 62 sites in high-need neighbourhoods where after-school programming is now available. Some sites even offer a hot, nutritious meal to children five nights a week.

O'Neill's tireless efforts come with many rewards. Last year, Alberta became the first province that offered a four- credit course in the high school curriculum on how to be a mentor. Students can complete the course in school, take the test on line, and become certified to be mentors in the schools. "One day," O'Neill says, "I was at Norwood School and a number of kids during recess were playing 'mentor.' They were pretending to teach each other how to read. That's a direct result of our having mentors in the schools to help."

IT'S THE VOLUNTEERS OF EDMONTON THAT MAKE US SUCCESSFUL...

EDMONTON AFTERNOON
North Saskatchewan river bank, Edmonton

section four

THE ELEVATE RECOMMENDATIONS

BACKGROUND

The critical factor validated through the research and engagement phases of creating this report was that Edmontonians care deeply about their community and are highly motivated to work towards solutions that make our city a better place to live, learn, work and play. The recommendations of this report have been designed to help achieve the ELEVATE Vision by identifying gaps and pointing toward opportunities, and articulating action plans.

MARKET
Old Strathcona Farmers' Market, Edmonton

In creating a context for the recommendations, it's important to distinguish their core focus and to define key pieces of terminology. The core focus is to create solutions for Edmonton's mature neighbourhoods already in distress or that are at risk of distress, and, as our mandate stated, to break down boundaries, share resources, and build effective community partnerships. Working closely with school boards and community leagues, as well as various orders of government, has been essential to the process of creating this report and its recommendations. The recommendations are grouped under three focus areas:

A. Demonstrate Leadership and Build Partnerships

B. Employ Community-Driven Approaches to Strengthen Neighbourhoods

C. Promote Life-long Learning

Each Focus Area opens with a *What We Heard* section that offers a sampling of the input and feedback that helped shape the recommendations.

DEFINING SUCCESS

It's also important to know and define what constitutes 'success'. In other words, what does a healthy, vibrant, and sustainable community look like? *The Way We Live: Edmonton's People Plan* defines a *complete* community as a community that:

✓ is fully developed and meets the needs of the local residents through an entire lifetime,

✓ provides certainty to residents on the provision of amenities and services,

✓ includes a range of housing, commerce, recreational, institutional and public spaces, and

✓ provides a physical and social environment where residents can live, learn, work and play.

This same document defines a great neighbourhood as one that:

✓ possesses a well-maintained infrastructure,

✓ features interesting and accessible amenities,

✓ provides safe, clean and pedestrian-friendly environments, and

✓ has residents who support each other and work with government and other organizations to make their neighbourhood the place they want it to be.

The concept of embracing diversity is also vital to a strong community: this includes working collectively towards providing those living in poverty with the chance to improve their circumstances; striving to meet the needs of those with physical and/or emotional challenges; and recognizing that some neighbourhoods are in greater distress than others and may require more support and resourcing than others.

This is the context in which we hope these recommendations will be enacted: in a city where individuals have a passion for working together to find solutions; a city that wants to address the current and future problems of mature neighbourhoods; a city in which urban expansion is not another word for sprawl; a city that recognizes the value of education as well as schools (and other neighbourhood institutions) and the many roles they play in life-long learning; a city that embraces diversity; a city that offers choice and opportunity to its citizens and which sees the reduction of poverty as a priority. A city, in other words, that recognizes its strengths, yet which is continuously engaged in elevating itself.

FOCUS A:
DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP AND BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

WHAT WE HEARD

☞ Greater collaboration and coordination between stakeholders is essential and should underpin any and all recommendations. Currently, differing orders, jurisdictions, and departments of government communicate with mixed success, all of which dilutes municipal energy and focus. A new, detailed, pointed, and concrete urban agenda—which will highlight what is currently missing at both the technical and philosophical levels—must be discussed, debated, jointly agreed upon, and then pursued vigorously.

☞ The Task Force was told through many channels that as things currently stand the impact of federal and provincial policies are felt locally, but our municipal government and school boards have limited resources and powers with which to address, shape, or alter these impacts. In short, we heard that municipalities must drive the change for recognition that we live in an increasingly urban society. Only then will appropriate levels of municipal self-determination evolve.

☞ A new kind of partnership is required in our city. Once we are underway in realizing Recommendation One, a channel will be required to direct activity, disseminate information, organize lobbying efforts, and broker partnerships. Such a channel might be called the Edmonton Community Sustainability Partnership (ESCP). One of its core mandates should be to advance a mature neighbourhoods agenda with the appropriate commitments by the partners.

☞ The ECSP could also play a key role in linking communities and neighbourhoods directly to groups and organizations, such as the EFCL, the ACPN or Big Brothers Big Sisters, as well as to relevant local, provincial, and federal government departments, such as the City's Great Neighbourhoods office or Alberta Advanced Education and Technology or School Board Planning Departments. Given that we heard from many sources that there is a serious lack of coordinated planning and policy execution between government jurisdictions, the ECSP would be ideally placed to identify the handicaps/barriers and work to influence better alignment between jurisdictions and to act as a bridge to better communication and common goals.

☞ In short, we heard that there are many, many valuable initiatives under way, but also too many disconnected processes and activities; there are plenty of chefs in the kitchen and they're making different meals from different cookbooks—the ECSP will help put the same book in everyone's hands.

FOCUS A/   RECOMMENDATION 1

Bring together the four jurisdictions (federal, provincial, municipal, school boards) to create innovative partnerships and re-configured policy and funding models designed to assemble a new urban agenda.

ACTION:

1.1 The four jurisdictions are encouraged to develop a common vision of community sustainability for the City of Edmonton.

1.2 The jurisdictions are encouraged to develop working agreements, such as urban agreements.

1.3 The Province of Alberta is encouraged to enable and support a Cross-Ministry initiative to address local issues as articulated in the new urban agenda.

1.4 Shared definitions, outcomes, and measures based on quantifiable research will be created and widely disseminated.

1.5 Formal collaborations will be created to develop a new urban agenda designed to align federal, provincial, municipal, and school board jurisdictions.

1.6 The newly articulated urban agenda will be pursued through empowering communities, communication, lobbying, and programming.

FOCUS A/   RECOMMENDATION 2

Create a channel for collaborative community sustainability work in Edmonton. This channel—which may or may not be a new body, depending on the resources brought to bear—will act as the focal point for the city's community sustainability network.

ACTION:

2.1 Create a channel of operations—tentatively titled the Edmonton Community Sustainability Partnership (ECSP)—to offer a convergence point for all community sustainability information, knowledge, policy, and activities. Create the channel of operations through joint formal agreement of all stakeholders.

2.2 Put formal protocols in place and assign responsibilities, allowing the ECSP to liaise between individual communities, school boards, and orders of government.

2.3 Create a mature neighbourhoods agenda overseen by the ECSP, to encourage appropriate multi-sectoral commitments from partners.

2.4 Create a formal liaison between the ECSP and grassroots organizations (such as community leagues, arts groups, business organizations and faith communities) to ensure collaboration at the closest levels. The empowerment of individual communities must be not only validated, but formally recognized in this process, so that communities not only feel empowered, but *are* empowered.

2.5 The ECSP will encourage partnerships and communication between the community sustainability network and the not-for-profit sector.

FOCUS B:
EMPLOY COMMUNITY–DRIVEN APPROACHES TO STRENGTHEN NEIGHBOURHOODS

WHAT WE HEARD

☞ Vibrant, sustainable communities need lively, active focal points that draw and retain residents, and public space in sustainable communities must, at a minimum, be maintained. Communities must define a sense of place for their residents, and there is no "one size fits all" solution for communities, which is why community development will be very different in one community compared to another.

☞ There remains the perception in older communities that more single family housing is required, but we learned that this is not necessarily true. Often, it's better to get seniors out of existing housing and into multi-unit housing that suits their needs. Adding this housing form to older neighbourhoods will help create neighbourhood wellness.

☞ It's important to build structures in mature neighbourhoods that can be adaptable to the market. They can be changed to provide 1, 2 or 3 bedroom units depending upon the need. Zoning needs to be flexible to allow this to occur. We also need to explore innovative ways to add "quiet density," such as changing single detached zonings to allow duplexes and semi-detached development, and to allow carriage home developments on large single detached lots. It's also vital to reinvest in the existing infrastructure already in our mature neighbourhoods.

☞ There are three orders of government but do they co-ordinate their reinvestment? Does the left hand know what the right hand is doing?

☞ Some of the tools needed to ensure communities are supported are just not used. They exist, but for a variety of reasons, they are not enforced. This is often a particular problem in distressed neighbourhoods.

☞ We heard that complete communities include land uses that allow business opportunities. This is key to our mature neighbourhoods, and all neighbourhoods, since small, locally owned businesses are the life-blood of our communities. We know that mixed-use developments are needed in our mature neighbourhoods, since many residents there want to be able to walk to a local store.

☞ It was also commonly heard that a valuable expenditure of energy and resources would be to help prospective home buyers and renters understand the benefits that come with living in mature neighbourhoods: such as, existing schools with openings, already built playgrounds and parks, and readily available community and recreational activities.

☞ Overall, we simply need to draw more families and seniors back to our core areas. This should be viewed as an investment in our neighbourhoods, and a positive direction for our communities and our schools. To remain stable, mature neighbourhoods need a diversity of residents and housing.

☞ The most successful communities are directly supported and led by their residents, so sustainability over time will be achieved through empowering and enabling residents in all communities to plan for themselves. However not all citizens have the capacity for collaborative planning and effective community engagement, which draws in all voices within a neighbourhood, and thus, building this capacity in communities will be critical.

Create a template for the development of an asset–based development plan for every mature neighbourhood (which will change over time), to understand strengths and areas of need, to engage the community directly, and to ensure that community goals and input are prioritized, particularly when development is being pursued and/or advocated.

ACTION:

3.1 The ECSP will work to support a coalition of partners that will create a template for an asset-based development plan. This will include an "Indicators of Distress" metric to determine neighbourhoods at risk. This review/plan will include examining vacant and derelict land, underutilized public facilities and school buildings, safety issues, and would also consider such solutions as financial/planning incentives for investors, developers, builders and homeowners.

3.2 Once the template has been established individual communities, and in particular mature neighbourhoods, are encouraged to create an asset-based development plan (with the support and encouragement of school boards and vertically-aligned levels of government). The initial focus will be on those communities in greatest need.

3.3 Create and supply "Community Toolkits" and incentives pliable enough to be applied to individual communities and to provide solutions tailored to that community.

3.4 Create a transparent process and equation to identify that equitable levels of investment and resource allocation exist across all neighbourhoods.

3.5 Encourage all development plans to include public space, so that streetscaping contains a variety of walking destinations and encourages safety, community interconnectivity, and multi-modal transportation. Beautification and public art are also to be encouraged.

3.6 To reduce crime, Community Leagues and other community-based organizations will be encouraged and supported to develop strategies to reconsider public spaces that are suffering from inappropriate use and abuse. The ECSP and its partners will support the redevelopment of vacant lots and derelict housing.

3.7 To make Edmonton a stronger and more cohesive city, the ECSP will work with community partners directly, and will liaise with REACH, the Homeless Commission, and the Violence Reduction Strategy team to address the challenges faced by the hard to house.

FOCUS B/ RECOMMENDATION 4

Ensure that initiatives for community sustainability are based on good information. The ECSP will oversee the effective distribution of this information so as to build on and support ongoing work in the community.

ACTION:

4.1 The ECSP will work with its partners to develop common indicators and outcomes of success. This data will be made available to all communities. This Recommendation will overlap with Recommendation 3, so that these indicators and outcomes are part of every community "toolkit."

4.2 Information and research (containing current policy parameters and financial realities) will be distributed to the local communities and the public, so that communities can understand themselves, where they fit in the broader community, and can take a more active and informed role in shaping their future.

4.3 The ECSP and its partners will work together to create shared understandings of boundaries and definitions.

4.4 The ECSP will be proactive in investigating and collecting innovative ideas and programming both within and outside Edmonton, information that will be widely and freely available to communities and other stakeholders.

4.5 The ECSP and its partners will work with the City's Great Neighbourhoods Program to ensure that there is no duplication of work, and that knowledge and insight are shared.

4.6 The ECSP and its partners will encourage transparent cooperation and information-sharing with successful programs such as Partners for Kids and Schools as Hubs.

FOCUS B/ RECOMMENDATION 5

Develop a collaborative regulatory environment that strengthens and supports communities.

ACTION:

5.1 Reinforce and properly apply existing programs, policies, and bylaws, and assign neighbourhoods a community liaison officer (within the existing structure and pool of such officers) as a single point of access for solution-oriented community assistance.

5.2 The ECSP will work with the City and communities in a collaborative manner to address concerns about the enforcement of regulations and distribution of information that keep residents and businesses safe.

5.3 The ECSP will act as a support for and link between developers, builders and investors to connect with the communities in which they wish to operate, and vice versa.

5.4 Redevelopment options in mature neighbourhoods are to be identified by all stakeholders (communities, developers, landowners, public sector).

5.5 Develop a beautification and public façade improvement policy that incorporates Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design (CPTED) principles.

5.6 Evaluate the existing processes (laws, bylaws, area redevelopment plans) related to redevelopment to ensure they are in alignment with the goals and/or the principles of sustaining mature communities.

5.7 Commercial corridors in mature neighbourhoods should incorporate winter design principles to create comfortable and active public spaces throughout the year.

5.8 Encourage active transportation to and around commercial corridors in mature neighbourhoods with on-street bicycle lanes, secure bicycle parking, end of trip facilities (showers, storage, repair, etc.), and safe, wide sidewalks.

Create and support business diversity within communities, and develop stronger partnerships with and between the community, Business Revitalization Zones, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Department of Sustainable Development.

ACTION:

6.1   The ECSP will conduct thorough research on the emerging literature on community economic development and will make this information widely available to communities and other parties.

6.2   As part of the asset-based plan, the ECSP will liaise with communities and business stakeholders to complete an inventory and business needs assessment that evaluates the needs and assets of every community.

6.3   As part of the asset-based plan, the ECSP will help bring together action-oriented members from the community, business and government to develop a template for a Business Action Plan that each community can utilize, if they choose.

6.4   Educational campaigns will be created by all stakeholders to help reinforce the notion, in new and mature communities, that strong local businesses contribute to community sustainability, densification, and diversity.

6.5   The ECSP will liaise with the school boards to ensure that they have representation and input into the types of businesses that go into a community.

6.6   The ECSP will work with communities to advocate for local businesses that strengthen their communities through offering high-quality employment.

6.7   The ECSP can facilitate the establishment of education programs to encourage and support local businesses, given the high return on local investment in the community.

6.8   The ECSP will work with partners to encourage and enhance multi-modal accessibility (pedestrians, bicycles, transit and vehicles) to local commercial businesses in mature neighbourhoods.

6.9   The City and the Province are encouraged to work together to address the use of restrictive covenants on commercial sites in mature neighbourhoods that preclude redevelopment opportunities.

6.10 The City is encouraged to support the redevelopment of existing underutilized commercial areas and to foster intensification around these areas.

FOCUS B/   RECOMMENDATION 7

Foster healthy communities through offering a variety of housing, and through encouraging and educating around issues of diversity and densification.

7.1   Increase the demographic density and diversity in mature neighbourhoods, including support for families, as well as supports for housing for seniors and singles. Direct examples include zoning for a mixture of built forms in mature neighbourhoods and allowing semi-detached dwellings as a permitted use in all low-density residential zones.

7.2   Make provisions for adequate housing (including child-friendly housing) and supports to all income levels for families, which might include incentives and regulatory changes that support a mixture of housing.

7.3   Create a panel of citizens and professionals devoted to developing a campaign aimed at deconstructing the misconceptions that lead to the NIMBY factor (Not In My Back Yard). This is one of the Task Force's "asks" to citizens; that each of us accepts that diversity in our own neighbourhoods ultimately strengthens our city.

7.4   A similar campaign can be created around the issue of densification, which too often carries negative overtones to many communities. The concept of "quiet densification" can be introduced, so the concept is understood.

7.5   Encourage the Province and other stakeholders to develop a formal poverty reduction strategy, including steps to reduce the concentration of poverty in individual neighbourhoods.

7.6   Design an information campaign highlighting the viability of housing in mature neighbourhoods, including marketing and analysis around issues such as transportation and taxation.

FOCUS C:
PROMOTE LIFE–LONG LEARNING

WHAT WE HEARD

☞ The Task Force was often given the feedback that everyone in the community, from individuals to institutions, must broaden their understanding of "schooling" so as to better respond to differences in neighbourhoods and cyclical changes in demographics. The traditional K-12 and post-secondary concepts of education could also include, as examples, child care, arts programming, library services, wraparound services, community schooling and English for immigrant children and families.

☞ We also heard that the best results for community vibrancy occur when residents themselves choose to support their schools and neighbourhoods through active involvement and working with others and thus , ideally, all parties should come to a common table willing to share their resources, expertise and ideas.

☞ It was a common refrain that our current policies, programs and funding are too narrow to address change in communities over time—multi-year cooperative planning between the Province, City, schools and mature communities must become the new model with an openness to seeing public programming and services and the usage of public buildings change over time to suit the needs..

☞ Many groups and individuals told us that Transportation-Oriented Development (TOD) projects present an excellent opportunity for community sustainability, as housing, schooling, and city services can be planned together in new ways.

☞ There is much potential in the "Schools as Community Hubs" model of delivering health, social and recreational services to children and families but resourcing this model should be additive and not take away from classroom funding.

☞ As our future leaders, it is important that children and youth value education and learning how to learn. In this way they will be able to adapt to, and lead, our ever-evolving communities in the future. To this end, it was suggested that youth should always be engaged in any community development planning at the grassroots level.

☞ The perceived quality of a school, the proximity to day care or after school programs, a safe neighbourhood around a school, the offering of alternative programs, a growing or stable enrolment, evidence of strong parent support, and the welcoming nature of the principal all impact satisfaction with a school.

Recognize that education is the foundation of a successful future for both communities and individuals, and that life-long learning is a foundation for community sustainability. Ensure that all community-driven plans include the delivery of life-long learning opportunities for all.

ACTION:

8.1 The ECSP will take a lead role in establishing a shared knowledge base in each community around the interaction of urban planning and educational planning, to give communities the tools to create life-long learning opportunities geared to their community.

8.2 Create regular iterative planning opportunities between the City and School Boards to discuss municipal planning documents and education plans, to align communication and future strategies. Include communities and the Province in this process.

8.3 Ensure that all life-long learning opportunities are high quality, responsive, and viable. If numbers inhibit viability within the immediate neighbourhood, look to facilitate easy access/transportation to similar opportunities in nearby neighbouring communities.

8.4 The ECSP will act as a partner in assisting communities to work with Alberta Education and Alberta Advanced Education and Technology to access the resources required to consider and institute programs devoted to life-long learning.

8.5 Examine partnerships with diverse groups (arts organizations, social service organizations, volunteer organizations, other not-for-profits) to collaborate on maximizing a school or community building's potential, focusing not just on the program, but also on finding areas of policy convergence so that future partnerships are simpler.

FOCUS C/   RECOMMENDATION 9

Encourage the Province of Alberta to provide innovative and sustainable infrastructure funding so that existing and new schools are modern, multi-functional and able to accommodate a diversity of programs.

ACTION:

9.1 The ECSP will spearhead formal joint sessions between the City and the school boards, with the participation of the Province and the communities, to ensure coordinated short- and long-term planning for building usage.

9.2 Encourage the Province to participate in joint sessions aimed at examining policy and regulations around funding structures and streams for schools so as to increase partnerships and more flexibility around leasing, as examples.

9.3 Encourage the Province to assign additional funding to schools to maximize their potential for multi-functional use (such as schools as hubs, community schools, or the delivery of wrap-around services).

9.4 Create an inventory of every school in mature communities in the city, including its current physical status, current usage (both in terms of programs and hours), and planned future uses. Make this inventory available to partners and stakeholders.

9.5 The ECSP will assist in creating a public education program designed to inform the public about the realities of school closures and the benefits of modernization and diversification of schools that are reconfigured or newly built.

9.6 The ECSP will support and encourage individual communities and other stakeholders to examine each mature neighbourhood school for its potential for multi-functional use. Once a school's potential for such programs has been determined, programming strategies can be pursued through partnerships between the City, the Province, the school boards, and the communities.

9.7 Broaden the concept of "school" in the public's understanding so that school buildings are seen, and used, as multi-generational, multi-functional, and accessible community life-long learning centres.

9.8 Communicate to the public that innovative programming and vibrant K-12 educational opportunities exist in mature neighbourhoods, particularly as new multi-functional programs and services are established in aging schools. Convey in this campaign the inspirational nature of these opportunities and programs, of how they link naturally to a desire to elevate our entire community, and how we are all part of the same process of life-long learning.

SUMMARY OF THE ELEVATE RECOMMENDATIONS

FOCUS AREA A: DEMONSTRATE LEADERSHIP AND BUILD PARTNERSHIPS

1 Bring together the four jurisdictions (federal, provincial, municipal, school boards) to create innovative partnerships and re-configured policy and funding models designed to assemble a new urban agenda.

2 Create a channel for collaborative community sustainability work in Edmonton. This channel—which may or may not be a new body, depending on the resources brought to bear—will act as the focal point for the city's community sustainability network.

FOCUS AREA B: EMPLOY COMMUNITY-DRIVEN APPROACHES TO STRENGTHEN NEIGHBOURHOODS

3 Create a template for the development of an asset-based development plan for every mature neighbourhood (which will change over time), to understand strengths and areas of need, to engage the community directly, and to ensure that community goals and input are prioritized, particularly when development is being pursued and/or advocated.

4 Ensure that initiatives for community sustainability are based on good information. The ECSP will oversee the effective distribution of this information.

5 Develop a collaborative regulatory environment that strengthens and supports communities.

6 Create and support business diversity within communities, and develop stronger partnerships with and between the community, Business Revitalization Zones, the Chamber of Commerce, and the Department of Sustainable Development.

7 Foster healthy communities through offering a diversity of housing, and through encouraging and educating around issues of diversity and densification.

FOCUS AREA C: PROMOTE LIFE-LONG LEARNING

8 Recognize that education is the foundation of a successful future for both communities and individuals, and that life-long learning is a foundation for community sustainability. Ensure that all community-driven plans include the delivery of life-long learning opportunities for all.

9 Encourage the Province of Alberta to provide innovative and sustainable infrastructure funding so that existing and new schools are modern, multi-functional and able to accommodate a diversity of programs.

EXPECTATIONS

THE CITIZENS OF EDMONTON (IN PARTNERSHIP WITH THOSE LISTED BELOW) ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

i. Develop a new, cooperative and solution-oriented focus on community sustainability for all neighbourhoods, but particularly our mature neighbourhoods.

ii. Choose to support their neighbourhoods by getting involved.

iii. View change as an opportunity.

iv. View diversity as a strength.

ALL ORDERS OF GOVERNMENT ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

i. Commit to communities being an equal partner in planning.

ii. Commit to enabling communities to work in an informed way.

iii. Commit to joint planning, common outcomes and measures, and align planning timeframes (no more 'silo' planning/projects.)

iv. Share data on a regular basis.

v. Use common data, demographic projections, and boundaries.

vi. Institutionalize collaborative practice by agreeing to clear communication with partners and building capacity in the organization for this work.

vii. Prioritize the value of and champion life-long learning, and work with partners to develop sustainable strategies for developing, monitoring, and maintaining life-long learning opportunities.

viii. Report regularly (annually) on progress.

SCHOOL BOARDS ARE ENCOURAGED TO:

i. Support and realize implementation of planning in collaboration with communities and the City and the Province.

ii. Work with other boards, with communities, and with partners to create long-term plans for excellent education opportunities that respond to diverse community needs.

iii. Recognize the community's need for 'community space' for life-long learning opportunities, early education/daycare/out-of-school care/summer/weekend programming, and/or delivery of family services from school buildings (and support as able).

iv. Discuss and plan with communities how to handle demographic changes.

v. Consider its educational plans in conjunction with the City's planning priorities.

THE CITY IS ENCOURAGED TO:

i. Provide opportunities for regular planning meetings between school boards and the City to discuss municipal redevelopment plans, so that communication and future strategies are aligned.

ii. Support and realize implementation of planning in collaboration with communities and school boards and the Province.

iii. Prioritize support for life-long learning opportunities in plans and decisions.

THE PROVINCE IS ENCOURAGED TO:

i. Realize and support implementation of planning in collaboration with communities and school boards and the City.

ii. In collaboration with communities, create Cross-Ministry shared outcomes and measures based on reliable longitudinal research (so that we better understand how resources put into the front end will result in long-term savings).

iii. Continue to develop outcomes which consider both qualitative and quantitative measures.

THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS ENCOURAGED TO:

i. Use the goal of community sustainability as one criterion when assessing proposals or programs for areas such as infrastructure and transportation.

ii. Champion life-long learning and reflect this as a priority.

iii. Recognize the fundamental importance of quality early education opportunities and ensure equitable access for all families.

iv. Commit resources to an urban agenda.

MAKING EDMONTON STRONGER:
PARTNERS FOR KIDS AND YOUTH

P artners for Kids and Youth (PKY) is a unique partnership of social agencies that provides services for children and families in the northeast Edmonton community of Abbottsfield and Rundle Park.

Staff members come from a variety of agencies such as Alberta Health Services, Family Community Support Services, Child and Youth Services, and CASA (Child, Adolescent and Family Mental Health), to name a few. There are community counselors, social workers, aboriginal workers, and public health nurses available. There's also an early Head Start program and a "mommy & me" drop in for young parents with children.

Strategically located in a walk-in centre in Abbottsfield Mall, PKY recognizes that bringing services to people who may have transportation issues increases their usage. That's why PKY has been located in Abbottsfield Mall for the past 15 years. Ken Allen is the executive director of PKY. "Our strength," he says, "is the walk-in service. Anybody can walk in and talk to a counselor. We try to meet the concerns of the clients at the moment, or we refer them to the proper place."

"Roughly 400 families a year come through our services," Allen explains. "One of our biggest challenges is dealing with addictions, but too often clients' basic needs have to be met first. If they don't have food and shelter, for instance, that will be their most pressing need."

Allen has 40 years of experience as a social worker and in dealing with the mental health system. "One of the things that makes my job worthwhile," he explains, "is that people are surprised that they're treated with respect. They're not used to that, and when you do treat them with respect and try to be helpful, they just glow."

There are challenges, however, and one of them is dealing with staff turnover that too often is the result of despair from the daily exposure to human grief and suffering. But there's gratification, too. As Allen says, "We get people who come back and say, 'if it wasn't for us, they wouldn't be in good shape at all.'" Seeing first hand that change can occur is enough to keep most people going. "If there's anything I'd want people to know," he continues, "it's that our services are available to everybody, and that we're here for them."

2011 SILVER SKATE FESTIVAL
Hawrelak Park, Edmonton

ONE OF THE THINGS THAT MAKES MY JOB WORTHWHILE ... IS THAT PEOPLE ARE SURPRISED THAT THEY'RE TREATED WITH RESPECT. THEY'RE NOT USED TO THAT...

section five

ELEVATE'S ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN: WHO WE TALKED TO

The work of the CSTF involved speaking to and hearing from vast numbers of people, including through direct conversation, guest speakers, public meetings, online polls, engagement in forums, newsletters, or website traffic. This broad public dialogue informed the thinking of the CSTF throughout and was essential to creating the ELEVATE recommendations.

BRITTANY, OUR COMMUNITY MANAGER WITH THE MOSTEST
Wunderbar, Edmonton

Although it would be impossible to capture the full extent of that dialogue (which included meetings and consultations with groups such as the Central Area of Community Leagues, the Area F Community Leagues, the Eastwood Community League, and the Seniors Association of Greater Edmonton), there were some discussions the CSTF feels it would be useful to summarize to offer insight into the exchange of ideas that took place throughout the creation of ELEVATE.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: THE CENTRE FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

The CSTF recognized early on and clearly that involving the community in the creation of this report was vital, both technically and philosophically, but the question was how to do that effectively. After much discussion, the CSTF decided to engage the Centre for Public Involvement (CPI) and to let the Centre pursue the public engagement aspect of the creation of this report. There were, however, many other significant modes of public engagement, such as the monthly newsletter posted online to document the activities of the CSTF, as well as public surveys and online questionnaires.

The CPI, a new and innovative partnership between the University of Alberta and the City of Edmonton, responded to the challenge by creating and implementing a Citizen Planning Circle designed to contribute strategies to address the complex challenges for neighbourhoods in Edmonton, to demonstrate the value of meaningful citizen participation for developing public policy, and to assist and support City Council's decision making.

The Citizen Planning Circle (CPC) worked to give voice to the concerns and considerations of citizen participants from several of Edmonton's mature neighbourhoods and provide the environment and effective process for them to collaborate across their communities toward the creation of a collaborative vision for a strong, vibrant, and sustainable city core.

Over the course of three half-day sessions in June 2011, the Citizen's Planning Circle examined issues facing mature neighbourhoods and arrived at a set of ten recommendations, which were delivered to the CSTF both in written form (in August 2011) and in a presentation. These recommendations, which follow, were carefully weighed by the CSTF and directly, and positively, influenced the ELEVATE recommendations. Each of the Circle's recommendations had action-oriented strategies attached to them, which were also considered by the CSTF.

RECOMMENDATION 1: Assess the potential for aging and/or closed schools to become the heart and soul of our neighbourhoods: repurpose them as community focal points that are multifunctional, multigenerational, accessible community hubs and resource/learning centres.

RECOMMENDATION 2: The Province of Alberta, City of Edmonton, and Public and Separate school boards collaborate on determining school closures, school consolidations, and resource allocation.

RECOMMENDATION 3: Support diverse, quality, collaborative programming that meets unique community needs and strengthens social relationships.

RECOMMENDATION 4: The creation of healthy, attractive, and environmentally responsible communities.

RECOMMENDATION 5: Land use and transportation planning that reflects democratic processes and contributes to communities that are inclusive, cohesive, accessible, and safe.

RECOMMENDATION 6: Integrate mature neighbourhoods more fully into the broader community by providing a safe, efficient, and flexible transportation infrastructure.

RECOMMENDATION 7: Empower communities through resources, support systems, and democratic processes that encourage, respect, and validate citizen input.

RECOMMENDATION 8: Promote diverse communities with a healthy combination of ages, cultures, and incomes.

RECOMMENDATION 9: Collaboration is commonplace among various levels of government, departments, stakeholders, and citizens.

RECOMMENDATION 10: Create a comprehensive strategy for revitalizing business that uses research, planning and action to ensure that responsibility for success is shared between stakeholders and all actors remain accountable to the community.

THE EDMONTON FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LEAGUES

The CSTF was in regular contact with the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) throughout the process of producing the ELEVATE report. Community Leagues are a valuable and historic resource in community building, and the CSTF wanted to ensure as many of these voices as possible were heard. In meeting with the CSTF, the EFCL noted that many historically vibrant communities, with nearby amenities and services for their residents, have been challenged in recent years, and their future is uncertain. They engaged in dialogue with Community Leagues in mature neighbourhoods around the topic, among others, of sustaining their Leagues and their communities. A number of areas of concern for mature neighbourhoods were identified, including: a) demographic imbalances and housing, b) schools, c) concentration of poverty and neighbourhood stressors, d) public safety, street vibrancy, and neighbourhood shopping, and f) lack of long-term collaborative planning.

As part of its presentation and report, the EFCL created a number of strategies for the CSTF to consider. These are listed below (noting that each strategy also carried detailed sub-recommendations):

1. Neighbourhood Reinvestment Strategy:
    /a/ All levels of government establish and fund a Neighbourhood Redevelopment Corporation with the mission of revitalizing older urban neighbourhoods by mobilizing public,

private, and community resources at the neighbourhood level, and investing in private properties.
    /b/ The City reinvests in the public infrastructure of mature neighbourhoods, including the retention of surplus school grounds as neighbourhood parks.

2. Community School Investment Strategy:
    /a/ The City and various departments of the Provincial government support the retention of mature neighbourhood schools as community hubs and learning centers for present and future generations.
    /b/ The City and School Boards do joint long-range planning.

3. Family Housing Strategy:
    /a/ The City and the Province develop policies and incentives which promote attractive, affordable housing for young families in mature neighbourhoods, in addition to developing policies which promote long-term residency.

4. Public Safety Strategy:
    /a/ To increase traffic safety, the City and Province enable speed limit reductions and support protected bike lanes in mature neighbourhoods.
    /b/ To reduce crime, Community Leagues and other community-based organizations animate public spaces, and all levels of government support the redevelopment of vacant lots and derelict housing.
    /c/ The Province develops a poverty reduction strategy, and a strategy to reduce the concentration of poverty in individual neighbourhoods.

5.   Strategy to Revitalize Neighbourhood
      Commercial Areas:
      /a/   The City and the Province work
            together to remove restrictive grocery
            store covenants in order to allow the
            re-establishment of local grocery stores.
            EFCL and local associations promote
            shopping local.

6.   Collaborative and Coordinated Strategy:
      /a/   A permanent multi-jurisdictional Mature
            Neighbourhood Sustainability Agency is
            established with the mandate to sustain
            healthy, vibrant mature neighbourhoods.
            This body would oversee the above
            mentioned strategies.

The EFCL met with the Task Force on various
occasions for open dialogue and a sharing of viewpoints,
and these discussions, in addition to internal work by
the EFCL, resulted in the delivery of this report to the
CSTF in September of 2011. This report, its strategies,
and its recommendations were carefully considered in
shaping the ELEVATE recommendations.

LISBETH SCHORR

Lisbeth Schorr is a Senior Fellow at the Center for
the Study of Social Policy and is a Lecturer in
Social Medicine at Harvard University. Over the last
three decades her work has focused on "what works"
in social policies and programs to improve outcomes
for disadvantaged children and families. From 2000 to
2008, she and her colleagues at the Pathways Mapping
Initiative explored novel approaches to assembling and
organizing actionable information to help communities
solve urgent social problems. Currently, she is focusing
on lessons learned about how complex community
initiatives can be assessed, held accountable, and
spread without diluting their effectiveness. The CSTF
viewed her work as directly relevant to Edmonton's
challenges and opportunities. Her influential book,
Common Purpose, was provided to every member of the

CSTF; this book lays out a convincing argument that
when communities act strategically, focus on results,
and put together what works in a supportive climate,
they strengthen children and families, and rebuild
communities. Lisbeth Schorr visited Edmonton in
late June 2011, and after visiting some of Edmonton's
neighbourhoods and meeting some of its residents, she
engaged in an afternoon presentation and discussion
with the CSTF.

Schorr's words and work struck a chord with
the CSTF. She spoke about how vital it is to focus on
systems in terms of sustainability, so that progress isn't
dependent upon individuals alone. She talked about
measuring what can be measured. She reminded the
CSTF that the difference between results and vision
is that results are the detailed expression of the vision.
She spoke to the importance of adhering to principles,
rather than trying to replicate programs, which too
often leads to actions that are not organically suited to
fit the specific situation. And she zeroed in on three key
pieces of advice in forming the recommendations of the
ELEVATE report, and in our community sustainability
work in general.

1.   It is vital to work in a results framework.
2.   We must always connect activity to results.
3.   It is crucial to create deep collaboration with
      people who can make substantive decisions.

Focusing on results, she emphasized, is important,
but it's also important to agree on what constitutes a
result, because this imposes discipline. And once you
have common understandings of what it is you're after,
then you can agree on how to measure it. This, she
stated, is where real progress starts to happen. "It's
worth trying to count what you can count," she told the
CSTF, "because it gives people a sense this is not just
about do-gooders, it's about people trying to achieve and
move towards what we're all trying to move towards."
And goodwill, she reinforced, makes a huge difference.

THE CENTER FOR CITIES AND SCHOOLS, UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA-BERKELEY

In June of 2011, two representatives from the Center for Cities and Schools (CCS) at the University of California-Berkeley visited Edmonton to present to the CSTF on the topic of *Opportunity-Rich Schools and Sustainable Communities: Seven Steps to Align High-Quality Education with Innovations in City and Metropolitan Planning and Development.* Two of the three authors of the highly-regarded study—Deborah L. McKoy and Jeffrey M. Vincent—spent two days in Edmonton and shared their insights, witnessed Edmonton's strengths and challenges, and engaged in dialogue with the CSTF.

McKoy and Vincent noted at the start of their presentation that the CCS's fundamental purpose is to promote equitable, healthy, and sustainable cities and schools for everyone. They firmly endorse the connection between educational, housing, and neighbourhood policy, and believe that engaging students and schools in the planning and revitalization of schools and communities is vital. It's about cultivating leadership; we build capacity in our communities through collaborative policy-making.

The CSTF considered how the CCS information and approach could impact and be relevant to Edmonton. The CCS presentation is summarized below.

SEVEN STEPS TO ALIGN HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION WITH INNOVATIONS IN CITY AND METROPOLITAN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

STEP 1: **GET TO KNOW YOUR EDUCATIONAL LANDSCAPE**
Local or regional land use planning efforts should consider the current educational options and policies that affect families.

STEP 2: **ENGAGE SCHOOL LEADERS, FAMILIES, AND YOUNG PEOPLE IN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT**
Ensuring opportunity-rich and sustainable communities will in part depend on the effective engagement of residents of all ages.

STEP 3: **ESTABLISH A SHARED VISION AND METRICS FOR LINKING HIGH-QUALITY EDUCATION TO ECONOMIC PROSPERITY AT COMMUNITY AND REGIONAL LEVELS**
A robust, inclusive visioning process can begin to bridge rigid policy and institutional silos.

STEP 4: **SUPPORT THE WHOLE LIFE OF LEARNERS THROUGH SERVICES AND AMENITIES**
A fundamental component of opportunity-rich communities is the right mix of services and amenities that will support and attract a diverse set of residents.

STEP 5: **ALIGN BRICKS-AND-MORTAR INVESTMENTS FOR REGIONAL PROSPERITY**
To structure opportunity and increase sustainability, cross-sector partners should coordinate capital investments in schools, housing, and neighborhoods.

STEP 6: **MAXIMIZE ACCESS TO OPPORTUNITY THROUGH AFFORDABLE TRANSPORTATION**
Taking advantage of increasing educational options and regional opportunity resources for families requires affordable, multimodal transportation options.

STEP 7: **INSTITUTIONALIZE WHAT WORKS TO SECURE GAINS AND ENSURE ONGOING INNOVATION**
Inclusive and integrated planning should become "business as usual," with a set of formal relationships and processes that guide wise and efficient investments.

The CSTF engaged in a vibrant dialogue with the CCS team, a dialogue that undoubtedly influenced the thinking of the CSTF in creating the ELEVATE recommendations. The discussion included such topics as the nature of accountability, how to formalize new structures and processes, how to work in scale so that we don't get overwhelmed by the enormity of the task before us, how to deal with the issue of neighbourhood life cycles, how to work with the inevitable 'silo' effect,

and the maximization of joint use agreements in schools. It's also relevant and useful to note that as far back as the Spring of 2011, the CSTF was influenced by the CCS focus on creating "opportunity-rich environments"— a concept also noted by Alberta Premier Alison Redford at the end of 2011 when she stated that, "Alberta IS opportunity." The CSTF agrees, and the challenge is to maximize that opportunity in a way that, in this case, best serves Edmontonians.

THE EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOL BOARD

On May 31, 2011, a meeting was held with Edmonton Public School Board trustees and members of the CSTF. The conversation covered many topics, including the City's role in addressing community sustainability, the pressure to close various schools and what other options exist, and the nature of urban sprawl. The notion of moving away from working in silos at all levels of governance was explored. A frank dialogue was held about the need for future coordination between the school boards, the City, and the provincial government; the benefits would flow both ways.

Other topics included transit, using other infrastructure resources besides schools to support kids, childcare, and, in particular, creating wraparound services. The notion of having, for instance, a medical clinic located in an inner city school was discussed. It was noted, too, that while the goal of creating a strong community is worthy, that's not what gets funded; education gets funded. School closure regulation was also a key piece of the discussion.

THE EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOL DISTRICT

In the spring of 2011, the CSTF met with the Edmonton Catholic School District (ECSD). The discussion was vibrant and wide-ranging, and the trustees in attendance responded to the questions put to them by the CSTF. In talking about how the ECSD

defined community, the trustees noted that a school is the hub of a community, a meeting place. Education is central, of course, but schools also have playgrounds and soccer fields. They are places where seniors meet students, where every member of a community can play a part. Wraparound services also featured in this conversation; schools can serve as a hub, the CSTF heard, so that even if services were not offered directly in a school building, there are often libraries, health units, and seniors' centres near a school, making a school part of a greater fabric of connectivity.

The ECSD noted that the City of Edmonton plays a prominent role as a future partner with the ECSD, as does the Province. When talking about school closure, the ECSD noted that on its own it does not have the resources to keep schools open, and that finding the best way to create a long-term vision is to break down silos and look at how to serve the broader community. Revitalization is about more than just getting young families into communities; it's about comprehensive approaches.

The actual nature of collaboration was also discussed. How do we know what genuine collaboration looks like? We need to define what we want to achieve out of our collaborations, to measure what we do and how we succeed. Well-defined roles of all stakeholders is vital. It was recognized that a great opportunity awaits our community if we can work together, communicate well, break down defensiveness and "turf" protection, and plan as coordinated units.

PLANNERS FROM EDMONTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS AND EDMONTON CATHOLIC SCHOOLS

In the late spring of 2011, planners from both school boards presented to the Task Force about the realities and pressures facing school districts in providing education in mature neighbourhoods where the school-aged population is declining and school facilities are aging. It became clear that in both districts, the number

of children attending many mature neighbourhood schools is increased due to children travelling from other neighbourhoods to attend, often for alternative programs or for family reasons (such as daycare proximity). The idea of consolidating several older schools into one new school was also discussed.

NEXTGEN

In March of 2011, NextGen administered a survey to its constituents regarding sustainable communities, and 469 responses were received from across Edmonton. The results brought to light numerous aspects younger Edmontonians feel make their communities liveable, vibrant, and sustainable. A report summarizing the key themes identified in the survey was presented to the CSTF. These themes included the areas of accessibility/ amenities, character/beauty, people/community, parks/ recreation, infrastructure, activities, and walkability.

Under the theme of accessibility/amenities, the survey noted primarily the desire for easy access to amenities. Vibrant street life results from this level of accessibility, with ample public transit factoring into the equation. In terms of character and beauty, the survey found that cleanliness was often referred to as being key to neighbourhood character, as well as greenery and a diversity of housing. Unsurprisingly, when it came to discussing sustainable communities, people were highlighted as being vital to a positive feeling about one's community. Great neighbours help make great neighbourhoods. Being able to walk your streets, shop local, know your neighbours, see them at the store or community centre, all contribute to enhanced community spirit. Walkability in general was mentioned repeatedly in the survey, in that people desire walking access to services, recreation, and amenities in their own community, and that such access would clearly increase community attractiveness and closeness.

Parks and recreation were also identified in the survey as being important to creating and sustaining vibrant neighbourhoods. Easy access to recreation, green spaces for walking and congregating, linked paths, sports parks, and less reliance on the automobile, all, it was felt, help bring people together to create a community where people want to stay. Activities were highlighted

as contributing to a high community living experience, including cultural activities, children's activities, active community leagues, local festivals, even neighbourhood barbecues. All were seen as examples of what provides balance to community life.

Certainly, one area of identified frustration was that of infrastructure. The respondents noted that bad sidewalks, crumbling roads, street gravel, traffic noise, and general physical disrepair were true hindrances to community cohesion.

EDMONTON CITY COUNCIL

In the summer of 2011, the CSTF met with City Council to provide an update and to exchange ideas and feedback. CSTF Chair Michael Phair also outlined activities and possible timelines for achieving various aspects of the ELEVATE report, such as the development of the recommendations and the public release of the report. Council was also informed of the forums and discussions that had taken place or were due to take place. The Working Groups offered synopses of their activities for Council.

The discussion following the updates ranged widely across the issues the CSTF had been considering, including, among others, transit, commercial corridors in mature neighbourhoods, joint use agreements, the needs of mature communities relative to those of new neighbourhoods, and the nature of special programming in schools in mature neighbourhoods.

One focus in this dialogue was that of collaboration and working relationships. It was noted there is sometimes a "disconnect" between city administration and the school boards. As was heard in other forums, the breaking down of silos is key, and Council noted that the public was hoping to see a formal mechanism for collaboration emerge from the work of the CSTF. Furthermore, Council highlighted that even in communities where motivation is high, there is often a shortage of human capital. The session ended with a discussion around the demographic changes in our city (an aging population increasingly relying on immigration for growth), and the impact these changes will have on sustaining and/or revitalizing the physical and social forms of all neighbourhoods.

WICIHITOWAN CIRCLE ANNUAL GATHERING
McCauley Community, Edmonton

IF IT WASN'T FOR THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY, THE CITY WOULDN'T BE WHAT IT IS TODAY.

MAKING EDMONTON STRONGER:
ROBB CAMPRE, A COMMUNITY VOICE

Robb Campre is a member of the Fort McKay First Nation, an Edmonton businessman, and Chair for the Edmonton Urban Aboriginal Economic Development Commission, among many other affiliations. He grew up in the Beverly neighborhood,

in a large single-parent family that did not have much disposable income. "My mom would go out of her way to find resources to get me sports equipment," he recalls. Sports in his early years played a huge role in giving him a healthy goal to aspire towards, which was realized when he played for the Edmonton Eskimos. Campre attributes much of his current success to sports. "It gave me an outlet to connect with positive role models," he says. "I learned how to have good self esteem, how to be a team player, and how to be a good sport."

All of these lessons continue to help him in his day-to-day interactions with both individuals and businesses. While he hopes to one day develop an Aboriginal Sports Academy in Edmonton, one that would merge education with high-achieving athletics, for now he's wearing a number of different hats, the most notable being that of President of Wicihitowin, a Cree word that means "they help each other," appropriate given that it's a community-driven, collaborative-minded group advocating for the needs of Edmonton's urban Aboriginal people.

"Our biggest Achilles heel," Campre says, "is the lack of collaboration within the Aboriginal community." Wicihitowin aims to form partnerships with mainstream communities, industries, governments, and philanthropists, a primary goal being to engage the Aboriginal community and to help them build their capacity.

"Too often people have a negative version of the aboriginal community," Campre acknowledges, "but that's just a layer, a residual of victims of circumstance." He believes there needs to be a true appreciation of the prosperity that aboriginals bring to Edmonton—which has the second largest aboriginal urban population in the country—making it a huge part of Edmonton's economy.

Campre outlines seven current action circles that the aboriginal community identifies as priorities and focal points—justice, health, housing, education, training, cultural preservation, and economic development. "Once these circles start to work together (the Housing Circle, say, with the Economic Development Circle), that's when I see the real magic taking place," Campre says. "It's the community working together through collaboration, and it's very exciting."

Campre says that part of the vision, through Wicihitowin and other initiatives, is to showcase the real contributions of the aboriginal community, and in so doing, move things forward. "We need to see Aboriginals as an asset and as a contributing group," Campre says. "If it wasn't for the aboriginal community, the city wouldn't be what it is today. From an historical perspective, we want to tell our story and showcase the real contributions our community has made. We want to go forward, recognize our legacy, and make Edmonton a place that we can call home."

SUNRISE IN THE UNDERGROUND
Bay/Enterprise Square LRT Station, Edmonton

section five

ELEVATE'S ENVIRONMENTAL SCAN: INFORMATION WE EXAMINED

As with the dialogue element of the Environmental Scan, there was also extensive work done in terms of searching out current and valuable reference material, particularly material that was directly related to Edmonton. The CSTF wanted to ensure there was no duplication of effort and/or service in its final recommendations. A considerable number of academic and program searches were conducted (often by the Working Groups, often by the CSTF support staff), and several are summarized below to offer a snapshot of some of the Edmonton-specific documents and programs that informed the creation of ELEVATE.

THE REACH REPORT

The CSTF paid very close attention to the 2009 REACH report and the work it has initiated to build a culture of community safety in one generation, significantly reduce Edmonton's crime rate, and increase citizens' sense of safety and to engage them as crime prevention activists. There were nine essential recommendations, and each highlighted investing in youth and children, which is clearly a core aspect of community sustainability. The nine recommendations were: 1) A new model of family and community safety focusing on schools as hubs; 2) The "Turn Away from Gangs" initiative; 3) Community coordination on fetal alcohol syndrome; 4) 24/7 service delivery model for high needs populations; 5) Cultural community groups; 6) Neighbourhood organizing initiatives; 7) New community safety council to integrate sustainable community safety efforts; 8) Sustainability strategy for prevention; 9) An innovative evaluation framework to measure success.

REACH very much focused on preventative rather than punitive solutions, and also noted the financial benefit to crime prevention, as well as the fact that poverty–a community sustainability issue–often leads to crime. The report also noted that Aboriginal children are twice as likely to live in poverty as non-Aboriginal children. REACH pointed out that schools play a significant role in long-term success in life, as do sports and recreation activities.

The REACH Report pointed to four critical components for success: 1) Inspiring leadership; 2) A strategic imperative (integrated city-wide plan); 3) Cultural shift (to prevention); 4) Integration of effort, as well as three key elements of implementation – sustainable funding, transforming institutions, and targeting transitions. The REACH Report did not address, for instance, the issue of mature neighbourhoods, but did address the need for community-based programs, resource-sharing, and community partnerships in all neighbourhoods, while also highlighting the value of schools acting as hubs for communities.

THE GREAT NEIGHBOURHOODS PROGRAM

The Great Neighbourhoods Program (GNP) of the City of Edmonton was considered in the deliberations of the CSTF, given that the GNP is related to the work that ELEVATE hopes to engender and support. In fact, much of what ELEVATE is about is reflected in the thinking behind the GNP, which is meant to champion vibrant, equitable, and sustainable neighbourhoods. It's a made-in-Edmonton approach based on what has worked well in other cities across North America, and the GNP has built on much of the excellent work already happening in neighbourhoods by improving collaboration with other organizations and among City departments (through conducting comprehensive neighbourhood planning, by enhancing two-way communication with residents and supporting their efforts to create the place they want their neighbourhood to be, and by investing in targeted capital projects of varying sizes).

The CSTF was influenced by the GNP's definition of what makes a great neighbourhood, noting that everyone can agree that it has a well-maintained infrastructure, that it has interesting and accessible amenities, that it is a safe, clean and pedestrian-friendly environment, and that it has residents who support each other and work with government and other organizations to make their neighbourhood the place they want it to be.

The GNP makes it clear that its goal is to help make Edmonton one of Canada's most liveable cities, a city where you feel you are in the heart of somewhere special, no matter which neighbourhood you call home. The GNP was useful in the creation of the ELEVATE report, both in clarifying and focusing so many issues, but also in helping the CSTF to remain aware of the community sustainability work already being done in Edmonton. This will allow the initiatives recommended in ELEVATE to support the work of the GNP, build on it where necessary and avoid the inefficiency of duplicating effort and services.

CITY OF EDMONTON – THE WAY AHEAD

The Way Ahead is the City's strategic plan for dealing with growth over the next 30 years. The creation of the plan was an extensive, four-step process that involved the gathering of input from thousands of Edmontonians in order to create a vision, focusing efforts on actions towards a global strategy, a strong implementation plan, and performance measures to gauge success. The Way Ahead highlighted that Edmonton is an "energy city," a city of design, a recreation and arts city; it links the continent with the north and with Asia. This is a city of many cultures and politics, but we share a vision that the city is one of the most special places on earth. Four principles underpin The Way Ahead: these are Integration, Sustainability, Livability, and Innovation. Using these principles, the plan lays out six 10-year strategic goals: 1) Preserve and sustain the environment; 2) Improve Edmonton's livability; 3) Transform Edmonton's urban form, which would include building neighbourhoods differently, so as to create more of an urban centre; 4) Shift transportation modes, to create a more integrated transportation network; 5) Financial sustainability; and, 6) A more diversified economy.

This overarching strategic plan is rather general in terms of its connection to community sustainability, but the CSTF nevertheless found it useful in considering long-range planning around established and mature neighbourhoods, as well as the notion of increasing community involvement in things such as transportation, safety, and housing.

CITY OF EDMONTON – THE WAY WE GROW

The Way We Grow is designed to guide the city's growth and development, and it looks at how the city will address Edmonton's regional relationships, future land use, growth patterns, and transportation systems (in coordination with neighbouring municipalities). Essentially, it lays out a holistic and integrated approach toward city building, with an emphasis on economic, social, environmental, cultural and financial sustainability, noting clearly that continuing to build and grow as we have in the past is unsustainable.

The Way We Grow focuses on nine strategic goals: 1) Sustainable urban form; 2) Integrated land use and transportation; 3) Complete, healthy, and liveable communities; 4) Urban design; 5) Supporting prosperity; 6) Natural environment; 7) Working within our region; 8) Managing land and resources; and 9)Food and urban agriculture.

The Way We Grow also notes that Edmonton's reliance on the car has a negative impact on many areas of life, and that downtown revitalization must be a focus. Improved affordable housing and housing choice are vital, as is improving park safety and facilities. Mature neighbourhood revitalization is a key component of The Way We Grow, and numerous sections refer to the need to revitalize these neighbourhoods and make them more liveable. The reference to community groups in this regard is muted, although implied, but collaboration with school boards is called for to support long-term intensification efforts in these neighbourhoods.

CITY OF EDMONTON –
THE WAY WE MOVE

The Way We Move comprises the City's master transportation plan; in large part it speaks to the ongoing and inevitable shift from single passenger vehicle use to more public transit and personal modes of transport, such as walking and cycling. This document is also aligned with the City's Strategic Plan 2009-2018, which, in part, stresses the link between land use and transportation.

The Way We Move features seven strategic goals: 1) Transportation and Land Use Integration; 2) Access and mobility; 3) Sustainability; 4) Health and safety; 5) Transportation mode shift; 6) Well-maintained infrastructure; and 7) Economic vitality. The overall thrust of the document is to increase awareness about our unsustainable reliance on the automobile, calling for expansion of the LRT and other transit, as well as better walkways and cycle corridors. It highlighted an emphasis on measuring progress in these regards through long-term and easily understood metrics suitable for public discussion.

The Way We Move addresses sustainability issues through a focus on advocating for a compact city (meaning, increased density) in which people do not have to travel long distances in their daily lives. There is considerable attention in the document to making neighbourhoods more liveable, and to the notion of moving goods efficiently and safely through business corridors. The CSTF noted that there are references made in The Way We Move to suburban expansion being fiscally and environmentally complicated. In general, the notion of community sustainability here refers to enhancing transit use in areas of greater population density (which could mean mature neighbourhoods, although this is not stressed).

CITY OF EDMONTON –
THE WAY WE GREEN

The Way We Green, the City's environmental plan, focuses on two essential points: sustainability and resilience. It features twelve goals that amount to a community plan requiring every citizen to practice principles of sustainable living. The twelve goals are: 1) Healthy Ecosystems: Land—in which residents can in the course of everyday life experience a strong connection with nature; 2) Healthy Ecosystems: Water—in which the water quality of the North Saskatchewan River sustains healthy people and ecosystems; 3) That Edmonton's water supply meets our needs; 4) Healthy Ecosystems: Air – in which Edmonton's air sustains healthy people and ecosystem; 5) That Edmonton's sources and uses of energy are sustainable; 6) That Edmonton is resilient to disturbances that could affect its energy supplies and distribution system; 7) That Edmonton is a carbon-neutral city; 8) That Edmonton is resilient to disturbances from climate change; 9) That Edmonton has a resilient food and agriculture system that contributes to the overall sustainability of the city; 10) That Edmonton generates zero waste; 11) That Edmonton strives for sustainability and resilience in all it does; and 12) That the lifestyles of Edmontonians contribute to the city's sustainability and resilience.

The Way We Green certainly encourages Edmonton to move faster and further than implied in other plans. We have a solid reputation as an environmental leader in many areas, including waste management, energy and climate change, water, air, and sun, but community input found that a significant majority of Edmontonians believe we will face serious challenges within the next three decades, especially regarding energy (followed by water supply, biodiversity, food, water quality, air quality).

Community sustainability is certainly an aspect of The Way We Green for the obvious reasons of environmental sensitivity, but the plan also speaks to

many of the things the CSTF considered in creating the ELEVATE report. For instance, The Way We Green encourages renewal and densification of mature neighbourhoods, as does ELEVATE. In short, the plan speaks widely to issues of sustainable communities, community-based partnerships, and livability related to density and neighbourhoods.

CITY OF EDMONTON – THE WAY WE LIVE

The Way We Live considers how Edmonton's population is growing and changing: our city has grown by over 20% in the last decade; we have one of Canada's largest urban aboriginal populations; and we have an increasingly internationally diverse citizenship. And so delivering services is more important than ever; partnering and advocating between organizations and governments to address issues like homelessness, safety, housing, health care and education are vital. The Way We Live is the City's first planning document that focuses on "people issues" and quality of life, and it follows certain key values: 1) inclusiveness; 2) a unique relationship with our aboriginal population; 3) accessibility (physical designs for persons with disabilities); 4)public involvement (seeking diverse opinions); and 5) integration (being aligned with the City's long-range plans).

The Way We Live proposes six overarching goals for our future: 1) That Edmonton is a vibrant, connected, engaging and welcoming city; 2) That Edmonton is a caring, inclusive and affordable community; 3) That Edmonton celebrates life; 4) That Edmonton is a safe city; 5) That Edmonton is an attractive city; and 6) That Edmonton is a sustainable city. The Great Neighbourhoods Program is highlighted in The Way We Live, which points out that great cities are built one neighbourhood at a time, and that it takes coordinated, deliberate planning across all City departments, with residents, neighbourhoods, and other stakeholders to make it happen.

The notion of community sustainability is addressed in The Way We Live, to the degree that it highlights sustainability as one of our six long-term goals, and in that it calls for collaboration and partnership with and between community leagues, school boards, and other organizations to build community. It also encourages businesses to locate near LRT stations and major transit centres. Generally, The Way We Live is very much focused on forging community partnerships and encouraging community activity. It does allude to the building of great neighbourhoods but does not specifically refer to mature neighbourhoods or school revitalization zones.

MAKING EDMONTON STRONGER:
THE SHERBROOKE STORY

I ncorporated in 1948, Sherbrooke is a northwest Edmonton community with roughly 2000 residents, three-quarters of whom live in single family dwellings, with the other quarter in row houses and low-rise apartments.

Sherbrooke was built mostly during the oil boom of the 1950s, and in general, the character of the neighbourhood is changing. Early on its lifecycle, there were many children, then a spell when there were very few. Now, as young families replace the aging demographic, the area is growing young again. The Sherbrooke Public School was utilized by miscellaneous groups and clubs until 2006, at which point the Aurora Charter School took over its lease and brought some life back to the empty field and playground.

In April, 2011, Matthew Smith West became the new president of the Sherbrooke Community League. He moved into the neighbourhood in 2005 and notes that his community faces challenges similar to others close to the city centre; some crime, drugs, suspicious vehicles, break and enters. "But we're not plagued by crime," Smith West says, "because we're quite active in our community monitoring. We encourage proper reporting and our Neighbourhood Watch is fairly active. One of our biggest challenges was getting the reconstruction that our aging neighbourhood required. The sidewalks were cracked, and the roads were rough. But that's being done now, so it's a major victory for us."

In 2010, The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues hosted the first Edmonton Community Challenge. The $15,000 prize went to the league that had the most points for completing various activities; this was won by Sherbrooke.

Still, maintaining volunteers is always a challenge. Often, the people who care the most end up burning out, and that's something that Smith West is trying to address. "Right now," he says, "we have a very active gardening group. They've started 'Fruits of Sherbrooke,' a project that has them harvesting the local fruit crops and making sure it gets used instead of filling the landfill." The League kitchen gets very busy during canning season. The product of their labour (pie fillings, preserves, and jams) is sold locally at Earth's General Store, through the Good Food Box, and at the Callingwood Farmers' Market.

"We're all about getting to know our neighbours and being active in our community," Smith West says "Our motto is 'have a party, not a meeting'."

OUR MOTTO IS 'HAVE A PARTY, NOT A MEETING'.

section six

THE FUTURE OF COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY IN EDMONTON

ONE LEGGED PEOPLE
Dr. Wilbert Mcintyre Park, Edmonton

The community sustainability work of our civic future will be a mix of optimism and pragmatism, the blending of a strong and clear vision with a sense of going about our business seriously and with purpose. In so many ways, this very combination is what defines Edmonton; we are a government and university town with a strong working class component, a hard-working and largely middle-class city that is nevertheless something of an impossibly fine creation. There are few places in the world that can match Edmonton's unique civic ecosystem.

Yet our hard work and good fortune can be exponentially multiplied if we build upon our strengths. The ELEVATE report is but one component of a broader process that includes many initiatives. What makes ELEVATE important is that it aims to act as a kind of divining rod for community sustainability activities in our city. The ELEVATE recommendations, which focus on Leadership and Partnerships, Using Community-Driven Approaches to Strengthen Neighbourhoods, and Promoting Life-long Learning, are meant to spur activity, inspire individual citizens, bring together organizations, school boards and orders of government, and contribute to an environment in which Edmontonians work toward the shared goal of making our city stronger, more equitable, more liveable, and more community-oriented. But it's not just about achieving these specific goals today; it's about laying a foundation of processes and mechanisms that are sustainable, flexible, and durable over time. In other words, the ELEVATE report is designed to contribute to a stronger Edmonton in the near future and to creating stronger processes that will serve Edmonton in the long term.

The Community Sustainability Task Force is honoured that it has been able to work on and produce a report that may contribute to the larger project, the project we call home. Edmonton is your home and it is our home. And it is our hope that this report will play a part in the work we all need to do to continue to ELEVATE our lives and our city.

appendix one

ELEVATE PARTICIPANTS

THE COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY TASK FORCE

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Teresa Spinelli, *Vice Chair*

Councillor Jane Batty

Barbara Fung

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PLEASE NOTE: Much of the supporting material and documentation commissioned and/or assessed by the Task Force is available for public viewing on the CSTF website. Please visit us at: www.CommunitySustainability.ca

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ELEVATE

**THE REPORT OF THE
COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY
TASK FORCE**

FEBRUARY 2012

THE CITY OF
Edmonton