YEAR 2 KICKOFF WORKSHOP SUMMARY |  11.22.18

# RECOVER EDMONTON'S URBAN WELLNESS PLAN

*In July of 2017, City Council directed administration to develop RECOVER, Edmonton's Urban Wellness Plan, to better understand the cumulative impacts of all the different activities and systems that affect wellness in the urban core.*

**RECOVER** is about the wellness of every person, neighbourhood, community and the businesses, social services and environments that support them.

Our RECOVER team spent the last year working in the five core neighbourhoods, **Boyle Street**, **Central McDougall**, **Downtown**, **McCauley** and **Queen Mary Park**.

To kick off our second year, we hosted a workshop at NorQuest College on November 22, 2018, inviting participants from the first year along with other residents, businesses, service and community organizations and government ministries who are interested in the continuing work of RECOVER.

# GOALS FOR THE WORKSHOP

Our goals for the workshop were:

1. **Share what we learned from our first year of RECOVER and our Evaluation**

2. **Provide an update on our work since the last time we gathered and where we're going next**

3. **Create a safe space for conversation between diverse opinions**

4. **Hear from participants how we might move forward together in the coming year**

We started by sharing an overview of RECOVER and our key learnings about **grounded research**, **strong relationships,** and **co-designing prototypes**.

We then reviewed the results of our first year participant **evaluation**, and gave an overview of our developing **work plan** for year 2, outlining pieces of work that we will collectively take on to improve urban wellness. This includes another round of ethnography and prototyping.

We ended the evening with a reflection about how each person can play a **role in RECOVER**.

We captured what was most **promising**, what was **puzzling**, and what was **most alive**. We also asked for suggestions of who else we can connect with for our next gathering in January.

# WHY ARE WE HERE

At the start of our session to kick off year 2, we asked participants what brought them into the room that day. We wanted to understand everyone's reason for being here. If what brought them here was an answer rooted in **love, joy, enthusiasm, or uplift**, then they were symbolised with a heart sticker. Conversely, if what brought people into the room was a reason based on **confusion, puzzlement or angst**, these answers were symbolised with a banana split sticker.

Throughout the evening, participants used these motivations and symbols to help guide them through a series of worksheets.

# LEARNINGS FROM OUR FIRST YEAR

We spent some time sharing what we learned from our first year and how will it frame our work going forward.

First, we'll use our **"framework" for urban wellness innovation**. That means creating space for this work to happen and ensuring that we keep people at the centre. For our City leadership, it also means a mindset shift that we're not creating another "plan."

If RECOVER is going to make a difference, we need to disrupt the way we are currently working to improve urban wellness.

It's critical that we **ground our approach in data**, embracing both *quantitative* (big data) and *qualitative* (thick data aka ethnography).

We also need to make space for everyone at the table. RECOVER is about co-design. **Uncovering tensions and building relationships** are of utmost importance.

Finally, we will ensure we are action-oriented and **test solutions with the community** using a rapid-prototyping approach incorporating multiple perspectives.
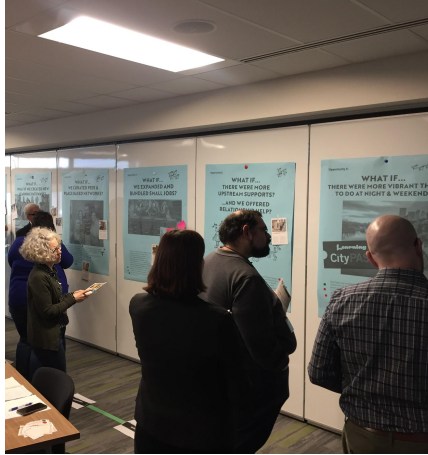
# LEARNINGS FROM OUR FIRST YEAR

# EVALUATION OF OUR FIRST YEAR

The RECOVER project team created an **online survey** and invited 167 individuals that were connected to the project (directly involved or supported) to respond.

Between August 29th and September 12th, 2018, there were 34 respondents to the online survey – a response rate of 20.4%. The survey also asked if respondents would be open to a follow-up conversation. 14 of these respondents agreed to participate in a **follow-up telephone conversation** to answer additional questions. Out of these answers, we have created an evaluation report with learnings and recommendations.

**Key themes** that emerged from our evaluation were:

- Stakeholder engagement
- Relationships and trust
- Communication
- Governance

# EVALUATION OF OUR FIRST YEAR

**5 key recommendations** have emerged from our evaluation:

Recommendation #1. Confirm that Social Innovation as a **framework is inclusive and not a barrier** by having stakeholders engage in the design of the process.

Recommendation #2. **Utilize an ethnographic approach** to broaden the understanding of other stakeholder groups. After all, intersectionality influences experiences. Explore the dimensions of age, culture, socio-economic status and others.

Recommendation #3. Create time and space to **identify and address the tensions** between stakeholders. This requires us to be open and vulnerable – no easy task.

Recommendation #4. Develop a **communication framework** for stakeholders. What does one need to know? What does one want to know? How best can this information be given?

Recommendation #5. Develop a **single committee governance structure** with representation from all stakeholder groups.

# THE WORK AHEAD

During the session, we shared what we think our work will look like in the year to come, guided by the recommendations approved by City Council in August.

**Work will continue in the core neighbourhoods**, focusing on the existing prototypes that are moving forward and taking in a second round of prototypes based on the opportunity areas in the last phase, and perhaps introduce some new ideas.

The process many of you saw in the last round will be shared with the **Strathcona neighbourhood** - we will do ethnographic research, which will start in January with InWithForward, analyze and look at opportunity areas that will emerge from that research, prototype and action them in the field, and continue to build relationships with stakeholders in that community.

We will be working with some of you here, and reaching out to others to develop a **shared leadership model** for stronger collaborative governance, and explore creative partnerships to sustain RECOVER in the long run.

We will **apply our social innovation framework, research, prototype, and relationship building**, to two key policy areas that emerged from RECOVER 1.0 (among other things): the distributed service model, and public realm improvement.

Through it all, we intend on having a stronger, intentional evaluation approach, ongoing reflection, communication, and maintaining ties with all of you.

# REFLECTION | **YOUR PLACE IN RECOVER**

*Once we shared our framing of the work for the year ahead, we wanted to understand where people in the room saw themselves in our three major "buckets" of* **research**, **relationships** *and* **prototyping**.

*Interestingly, most people in the room were able to identify opportunities for them to contribute to every bucket.*

# REFLECTION | **YOUR PLACE IN RECOVER**

*Where do you see yourself contributing to research?*

People in the room offered to provide data, baseline measurements, and connections to other people (those with lived experience, and those who have data that would be of interest).

We also received offers of support to help with interviews, convening others, and providing various resources.

*"Ability to capture vulnerability data baselines prior to an intervention/prototype"*

*"Working on specific research projects directly"*

*"Hosting information gathering in my community"*

*"Conducting/facilitating interviews"*

*"Data access"*

# REFLECTION | **YOUR PLACE IN RECOVER**

*Where do you see yourself contributing to relationship building?*

People and relationships are central to RECOVER, and this was widely understood by those who were in the room with us. We received lots of good advice and offers to help us connect with others.

"*Arts organizations and artists*"

"*U of A, NAIT, Grant MacEwan, Norquest, Concordia, Vanguard*"

"*Need more connection with seniors centres, health organizations, individuals*"

"*Find common space/ground for motivation/alignment*"

"*How do we include visible minorities? Mostly caucasian in the room*"

"*Governance structure - for what? What are the decisions that need to be made?*"

"*Helping understand how government can/should be involved in the outcome*"

# REFLECTION | **YOUR PLACE IN RECOVER**

*Where do you see yourself contributing to prototyping?*

Prototypes continue to be a key motivating factor for many people. There are also some questions about what is happening next.

*"Very interested, not totally sure how I could contribute but am really interested in observing at first"*

*"Accepting new, more ideas"*

*"Connecting to incubators to grow prototypes to pilots"*

*"How are the prototypes evaluated? Where is the data? Can they be reused?"*

*"Need to capture the activities/actions that are inspired by prototypes as well... don't lose sight of them."*

*"Join an existing prototype as a health professional"*

*"What is RECOVER's role in scaling up prototypes to pilots to full fledged ventures?"*

# ELEPHANTS IN THE ROOM

In RECOVER, we are committed to uncovering tensions -- and to work through them. We asked people to identify any elephants in the room. This is what we heard:

*"Who has the power?"*

*"How to make the City go faster and change itself?"*

*"I'm not sure whether I'll be continuing with RECOVER."*

*"Interesting idea: do we need a governance structure for a social innovation initiative?"*

*"Who in the city administration will actually do the thing based on prototypes? Who takes the work forward administratively?"*

*"Tough conversations on impacts and how to improve it"*

*"Platinum level service delivery fight(s) for sustainability in an environment where bronze level service delivery chases funding in the same space. This creates mistrust and compromises relationships"*

*"Why is the City spending all this money when it could be going straight to the groups that deliver the services?"*

# MORE ELEPHANTS IN THE ROOM

*"Expansion / redevelopment plans by individual agencies in downtown core"*

*Need for: "More community members, marginalized folks, meet people where they're at"*

*"Timelines: communication, not too quick or drawn out."*

*"Alignment between agendas and interests (personal and professional"*

*"What has been tried, worked and didn't work in terms of engaging the business community?"*

*"Building healthy, intelligent, friendly relationships in the RECOVER group"*

*"Farmers markets, OFRE, organic food community, personal trainers -- missing?"*

# REFLECTION

Throughout the session, we asked participants to reflect on a series of questions:

*What's promising?*

*What's puzzling?*

*What's most alive for you right now?*

# REFLECTION | **WHAT'S PROMISING?**

Overall, people in the room were excited for the work ahead, and noted the potential of prototypes, collaborations, the importance of data, and the continued support from the the City as promising.

*"Process has been tested and improvements made based on learnings"*

*"Prototyping - quick wins, results you can see"*

*"Information and data is being used - ethnographic and demographic"*

*"A full year of stumbles and get ups will inform the Strathcona endeavour"*

*"That mistake (limited risks) are expected and learning is desired"*

*"Edmonton continuing to work on the urban development and keeping on through this economy at the present time"*

*"COE and participating entities/people have skilled and engaged individuals contributing to RECOVER"*

*"Working around tables with new people with new ideas, perspectives, views, culture, incomes, etc."*

# REFLECTION | **WHAT'S PUZZLING?**

We also asked what was **puzzling**, and there were a number of questions, especially about the language of social innovation, how we move forward and how the broader community will be engaged.

Our work in the first year reinforced the importance of a learning mindset. We recognize that many are still processing what was shared. As new questions arise, we'll keep working through what puzzles us, together.

*"How will the second year build on first year?"*

*"How does the broader community get to move this needle?"*

*"How RECOVER fits with all the man other collaborative efforts? What's the end game?"*

*"How to build stronger (more integrated) teamwork between city employees and community members"*

*"Uncertainty about the way forward though I feel collectively we can create positive direction."*

# REFLECTION | WHAT'S MOST ALIVE FOR YOU RIGHT NOW?

We were also curious about what was **most alive** for people in the room.

The answers to this questions were mostly themed around action through prototypes, energy levels, and relationship building. There were also concerns raised about the here and now situation regarding the beginning of winter and the impact on marginalized people.

*"The level of commitment in the room to work for the greater good"*

*"The next phase of the projects"*

*"Willingness to share ideas, thoughts, feelings, etc."*

*"Colder weather = increased risk of death from freezing for homeless people"*

*"Different forms of communicating and engagement*

# WORKING TOGETHER | **WHO ELSE SHOULD BE INVOLVED?**

For this workshop we invited representatives from the community including residents, local businesses, service agencies, community, arts, and faith organizations. Many of them invited others they thought might want to get involved in RECOVER.

Having diverse participation is important, so we asked who else should we invite in the future.

**Here are your suggestions:**

- Edmonton Social Planning Council
- MAPS
- Riverdale Community League
- Stan Daniels Healing Centre
- Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues
- Viva Italia

- Children Services Social Innovation Hub
- Edmonton Southside Primary Care Network
- Edmonton Police Service - Old Strathcona Division