



Seeing people not poverty.

Courage
Compassion
Connection
Commitment



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Mission & Vision

At e4c, our core values, mission, and vision guide our daily practice and support our work.

Our vision is the elimination of poverty; a vision that requires the collaborative efforts of the community at large.

We take steps towards that vision by fulfilling our mission of changing lives and growing communities:



Treaty Acknowledgement

e4c acknowledges that we are on Treaty 6 territory, the ancestral and traditional lands of the Nehiyawak (Cree), Dene, Niisitapi (Blackfoot), Anishinaabe (Salteaux), Isga Nakoda (Stoney Nakoda) and Metis peoples. We acknowledge and celebrate the many First Nations, Inuit, and Metis people whose footsteps have marked these lands for generations, and whose histories, languages and cultures continue to influence our work and our communities.

Photos

Photos in the enclosed report were taken prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, or with the appropriate social distancing and PPE in place.

2021 in Review



840 people accessed Shelter & Housing Services.

482 people increased their housing security.

182 houseless persons secured housing in their own home.



\$7.39 million in credits & benefits returned to the community after filing taxes through Make Tax Time Pay.

427 Financial Management participants accumulated \$2.1 million in their trust bank accounts.



7040 students received over 848,300 meals from the School Nutrition Program.



14,640 Edmontonians served.



212 youth returned to school.

12 youth graduated high school.

34 youth and adults obtained employment.

Message from the Board Chair and CEO

Navigating year two of a pandemic brought on another year of uncertainty. Yet one thing continued to ring true; the tireless dedication of our staff and their commitment to keeping themselves, the people we serve, and the community at large safe. We are honoured that they continued to push forward, despite the ever-changing world of health orders, pandemic restrictions, and uncertainty in school-based environments.

Vaccination protocols added another layer of challenges for the organization, particularly in ensuring our persons served and residents could access vaccines as they became eligible. We worked alongside Alberta Health Services, the Boyle McCauley Health Services and Mint Pharmacy teams to ensure that residents could access vaccines in an informed and timely fashion. Since the beginning of the pandemic, as an organization we have always focused on our duty of care as service providers, and our dedication to protecting the health and safety of our communities while preventing the spread of the COVID-19 virus. As an organization, we implemented the requirement of full vaccination (2 doses of an approved vaccine), by the end of November.

We know that the pandemic disproportionately impacted people living with a low income, including many of the 14,640 supported through e4c programs. We have seen firsthand the significant challenges that the people we serve have experienced during the pandemic, including an ongoing opioid crisis that has touched so many of us. Our staff and community members became intimately acquainted with the use of naloxone kits and overdose prevention – particularly during the unrelenting heatwaves of June and July, where water bottles were in short supply, and dehydration levels skyrocketed.

We are grateful to the strength of our community, our donors, and our stakeholders for continuing to rise to the occasion and support our work – from donating sunscreen and summer clothing in the dog days of summer, to donating funds and toques during the depths of winter. Your generosity does not go unnoticed – you too, are resilient.

e4c management and the Board are jointly responsible for strategic planning. 2021 marked the end of e4c's 2017-2021 Strategic Plan, and our Board of Directors began the months-long process with management to develop a new Plan to guide our next four years. Throughout the process, our Board contributed their perspectives and insight into the identification of opportunities and threats facing the organization, informing and supporting the proposed Strategic Assumptions, and setting e4c's overall Strategic Direction and priorities moving forward into the next four years. We are very proud of the work that has been done, and look forward reporting on the outcomes articulated in the coming years.

As we look forward, we remain committed to meeting the needs of our community as we transition into a world shaped by the global pandemic, and we continue to be inspired by the stories, resiliency, and strength of the people we serve. Thank you for walking along side us as we change lives and grow communities.

Marian Gayed
Board Chair

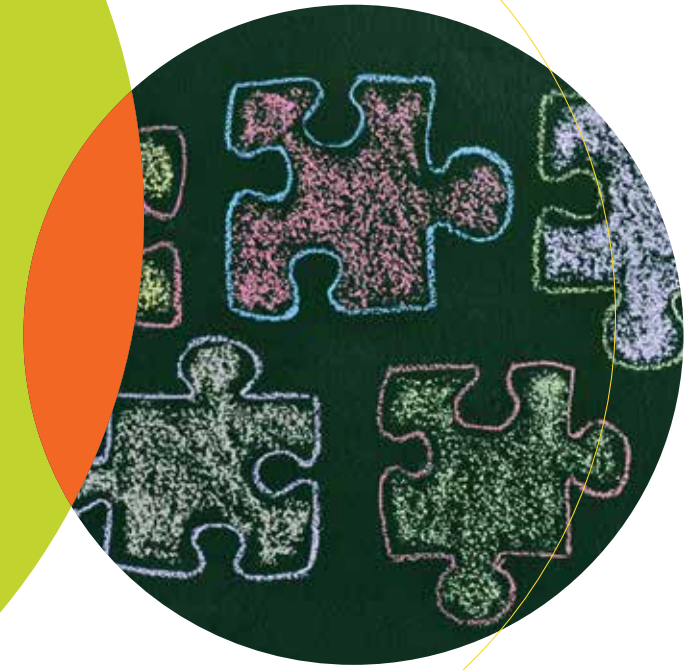
Barb Spencer
e4c CEO

Demonstrating Capacity

Resiliency does not exist without capacity. 2021 marked the final year of e4c's 2017-2021 Strategic Plan, and the process began to seek to understand, collaborate, and create a new strategic plan for the organization. The process was extensive – involving interviews with community stakeholders, persons served, and staff, allowing us to deepen our understanding of the emerging needs in our community and inform our choices when selecting a path forward.

Our board was instrumental in the strategic thinking and decision-making that formed our new strategic plan, bringing a new perspective, reviewing and approving major decisions, and ultimately approving the strategic plan and direction of e4c.

The newly-created e4c Strategy Team had their work cut out for them, as they compiled environmental scans to inform decision-making and deepen the understanding of challenges and risks facing our work and our community. These scans were focused around the topics of the poverty ecosystem, the impact of COVID-19, early childhood development, and homelessness and houselessness. Scans employed the PESTER framework, documenting the political, economic, social, technological, ecosystem and regulatory factors that would impact e4c and our work in the short, medium and long term, for we cannot understand where we are going, without first understanding the complexities of the ecosystems in which we operate.



“ I see that the work of e4c is beneficial to the people we serve, and how much there is a need for the support. Even if you are just a little corner of the puzzle, you know it makes a huge difference, [be]cause you need that corner to be complete”
– e4c Staff

The learnings from this process forms the following strategic assumptions:

- The COVID-19 pandemic presents a strategic environment of change, complexity, and uncertainty;
- The COVID-19 pandemic has caused harm to many people on an individual level;
- e4c is well-positioned to design and deliver comprehensive services to people experiencing poverty;
- Addressing poverty has become established in our cultural consciousness;
- There is a greater need and opportunity for stakeholders to collaborate on complex social issues;
- The human services sector workforce will be diminished in the short term;
- Technology will transform the way we interact with partners and the people we serve and;
- Public investment in poverty reduction will be maintained in the short-to-medium term.

e4c's Mission, Vision, and Values remained intact, as have our foundational commitments to the people and communities in which we serve. These include employing a human rights lens to our work, fostering sustainable livelihoods that focus on people's individual strengths, financial empowerment, and truth and reconciliation with Indigenous Peoples.



We are excited to share our 2022-2025 Strategic Plan and our work as we continue our journey towards eliminating poverty in our community.



Focusing on Financial Futures

The pandemic continued to reveal the widening gap of those living in poverty, and those who did not. There has never been a more visible demand for financial literacy and empowerment work, to help low income individuals and families living paycheck to paycheck increase their financial literacy as a component to building a stronger future. Together, we worked with Prosper Canada, to advance Access to Benefits and Food Security, and the Benefits Navigation Champions projects, both launching in late 2021.

As Edmontonians continued to navigate the COVID-19 pandemic, and with the end of CERB in September 2020 the need to support people who were financially struggling to access financial supports and government benefits was visibly apparent. Benefits navigation is often complex, and layered with challenges that pose problems for those who lack access to technology, digital literacy, language barriers, and other challenges.

When Make Tax Time Pay went virtual in 2020 to continue to meet the needs of Edmontonians and Albertans during the pandemic, feedback from e4c tax filers was that they spent large amounts of time working with individuals to help them apply for credits and benefits available to them.

Working with Prosper Canada, our Financial Empowerment team compiled listings of benefits, eligibility requirements, and applications to support the launch of the national Benefits Wayfinder tool in early 2022. e4c was selected as regional leader for the project, helping clients identify benefits that can increase their income and improve their quality of life – cornerstones for living a life free of poverty. This online tool simplifies the benefits navigation process by utilizing simple navigation, basic language, and compiles all benefit opportunities in a single location, centralizing opportunities for those looking to boost their income and reduce their expenses.

Empower U programming continued to operate virtually in 2021, getting creative with their program and service delivery methods; offering flexible class scheduling and make up classes for those who were not able to attend scheduled sessions. One of these attendees was Brigitte* who heard about the program in e4c's Early Learning parent group. After chatting with her Family Support Worker, Brigitte signed up for the next EmpowerU session, and completed the modules over several weeks. After taking the program, Brigitte shares that she "has a different view on money" and plans to save regularly each month. Additionally, through the program and benefits navigation expertise, she learned about the Canadian Learning Bond and the RESP program – setting her children up for their educational future.



Make Tax Time Pay offered virtual and phone tax filing supports in 27 languages, including Tagalog, Swahili, and Arabic.

1 in 5 people with low income do not file their taxes. It is estimated that at least 1.7B per year in federal benefits alone are unclaimed due to unfiled taxes. (Source: Prosper Canada)

"Financial Empowerment helped me to build a budget for my family. I am teaching my children as well and they are really liking it. My oldest [child] wants to learn more about finances."

– Empower U participant



Youth

Care and safety of persons served continued to be top of mind as we navigated through the second year of living within a pandemic-restricted environment. Isolation, and limited contact requirements contributed to a challenging environment in which we had to operate.



97%
of youth felt safe while living at YHP.
"Staff are always there to listen... they check in on me and make sure I am safe."

For youth – both in our housing programs and the Hallway Café, these challenges were met head-on with courage, commitment and resiliency. Experiencing their first outbreak, Youth Housing teams shared that youth were nothing short of transparent with staff, communicating that isolation periods would be challenging for their mental health. Staff provided support, activities and suggestions to reduce stressors and anxiety fueled by the isolation requirements. However, the youth continued to demonstrate resiliency, remaining in contact with their school, friends, and family via technology, and encouraged by planning for his transition to independent living once they turned 18.

Fostering relationships between youth and adults is embedded in the program philosophies, particularly in the operation of the Hallway Café. As we headed into a second year of reduced capacity in restaurants, and pivoting to take away options and outdoor dining, this limited the most critical component of the Hallway Café program – the customer-facing interactions and experiences. However, this didn't limit our youth. Despite the decrease in the number of customers accessing the café, the youth continued to learn and develop their skills. Additional workshops were created by the Hallway Café staff, like nutrition education, which provided youth with an opportunity to learn about healthy eating habits, the importance of nutrition, and ways to incorporate nutrition into their daily lives.

The Hallway Café also offered takeaway holiday meals that customers could pre-order and pickup, calling them "Hall-iday Meal Kits". These creative solutions allowed us to continue to navigate the restrictions on social gatherings, while supporting the continued skill development of the youth in the program.

The Youth Housing program also received 3-year CARF accreditation for the third time. This is a complex accreditation requiring significant investment from all of our teams, particularly as the process, including home tours, were completed virtually. We continue to strive for and adapt to leading practices, and look forward to renewing the accreditation again in 2024



We are pleased to share that **51** youth completed employment readiness training this year.



A Space to Flourish & Grow Community

The pandemic revealed heightened challenges around income, housing, and food insecurity.

We also began to see a desire for people to continue to connect – with themselves, with their community, and with the earth and the soil. While the 2020 pandemic guidelines hindered opportunities for connection in our Community Garden space at Alex Taylor School, the desire for community gardens as spaces for an escape from the digital world we found ourselves in, continued to grow.

Our Community Development team submitted a funding application to the United Way Engineering Day of Caring in spring of 2021, and were excited to find out in June that the application had been accepted by the engineering team! The plan would upgrade the existing garden beds at the south side of Alex Taylor School, as well as create an intentional space for reconnection.

Over the course of the summer, the Engineers worked with our Community Development Manager, to re-envision the community garden space, based on feedback from gardeners, and thoughts from staff at e4c. The final plan included a paved walkway, a gazebo, a pergola, compost station, and string lighting to increase the vibrancy of the space after hours.

On windy, cold, and often rainy September evenings and weekends, the United Way Engineering Day of Caring team – volunteers from engineering firms like PCL and Associated Engineering deconstructed and removed the old beds, dug deep into the soil and levelled out the ground, and redesigned the garden space for maximum sunlight and accessibility. On the Engineering Day of Caring, over 75 volunteers participated in the project that became a labour of love.

Volunteers built five new picnic tables, creating a space for programming within the garden, as well as a space for people to enjoy outdoor meetings as restrictions lifted. The engineers also procured eight large, live-edge benches that could be configured into a variety of seating arrangements, allowing the space to become multipurpose, and home to activities like Indigenous Fire Teachings and sharing circles.

Large in-ground plots were dug and planted with perennials, raspberries, and other native plants to the Edmonton river valley area. A gazebo was constructed at the back of the garden, creating a shady space for gardeners to rest, take in their surroundings, or meet a friend for a picnic lunch.

The engineers built series of cubbies around the back stairs of Alex Taylor School, creating a secure storage space for gardeners to store their belongings while working in the garden, or small tools and seeds for the spring. These cubbies are painted with a vibrant mural by Illustrious Interiors, depicting Edmonton's seasons, bringing beautiful local art into the sun-filled space.

In time, it is our hope that an Indigenous medicine garden will be placed within the space for ceremonial and teaching purposes. We are currently working with Indigenous partners to identify an elder who is willing to share their teachings and knowledge on the cultivation and design of a medicinal space.

We look forward to welcoming gardeners, staff, and community members alike to foster connections and nourish their mind, body and soul at Alex Taylor School.

“It’s projects like these where you see the power of community. We’re honoured to be a part of the Engineering Day of Caring team and look forward to visiting this project and space in the spring to see the efforts of our work!”

– Volunteer



Taking a Bite Out of Food Security

We cannot speak about gardening without sharing the challenges in our current food security landscape.

In fall of 2021, we began to see inflation slowly creep into our daily landscape, and people second-guessing those toilet-paper panic purchases. Projections and forecasting done by partners and other community stakeholders indicated that the rising costs would continue into 2022. Food in particular – and nutritious food even more so – has considerable impact on the wallets and spending power of Albertans.

In 2021, e4c’s School Nutrition Program served 848,300 meals to students in the Edmonton area, serving an average of 7,040 children every day, despite ongoing COVID-related closures and pandemic measures continuing to impact the traditional delivery of our program.

“We are seeing more students accessing the School Nutrition Program this year, particularly towards the end of the month when money gets tight at home,” shares the Manager of Community and School Based Programs. “What’s important is that the program is here for them when they need it.”

Program menu offerings experienced an overhaul in 2021 with the support and expertise of e4c’s Culinary Director. Nutrition Support Workers shared their expertise in working within each unique school environment, and co-developed the menus to diversify offerings and create inclusive foods to meet the dietary requirement trends they were experiencing firsthand in their school environments.

The menu diversification also allowed standardization to occur, with Nutrition Coordinators supplying each school kitchen with recipe binders and instructions for each meal. These binders proved to be invaluable during peak COVID waves, where casual staff supported the program’s continuity despite being unfamiliar with the students themselves.

As in 2020, meals continued to be served in individual packaging, in bins delivered to each classroom, rather than the previous continental-style method that promoted engagement and relationships between Nutrition Support Workers and students. Despite the barriers and challenges that come with navigating the ever-changing pandemic environment in which we operated, the program continued to demonstrate its impacts.

“ I tried falafel for the first time at the school lunch program! I wasn’t sure if I was going to like it at first but it is pretty good!”

– Jenna, student

“ When I’m hungry I’ll eat anything! Even celery!”

– Max, student

Two teachers shared with us just what School Nutrition meant to their Grade 3 classroom this year:

“ The impact on my class has been huge. Because of the e4c School Nutrition Program, my kids actually want to come to school. Their attendance has increased because they know they are going to get fed here, and they know they’re going to get fed a variety of nutritious foods that they might not otherwise have access to at home. They’re here. They’re focused – they’re a lot calmer just because of the program.”

“ It’s my first experience with a program like e4c’s School Nutrition Program. As a new teacher, I see just how big an impact this program has. A lot of these kids come to school without breakfast, without a lunch, so we see the need every day. When they come back into class after recess, after they’ve had something to eat – they’re a lot ore engaged. They’re ready to learn. This program really supports their education, their attendance... you name it.”



Financials

e4c STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

Year Ended December 31, 2021

	2021	2020
Assets		
Current	16,333,328	14,648,847
Long Term Investment	1,274,753	1,216,200
Inner City Youth Housing Project	140,701	139,289
Capital Assets	8,775,395	9,201,487
	26,524,177	25,205,823
Liabilities		
Current	5,937,855	5,772,957
Long Term Debts	1,394,986	1,602,011
Deferred Conditional Grants	–	8,000
	7,332,841	7,374,968
Net Assets	19,191,336	17,830,855
Total	26,524,177	25,205,823

e4c STATEMENT OF OPERATIONS

Year Ended December 31, 2021

	Unrestricted	Restricted	Invested in Capital Assets	Total 2021	Total 2020
Revenues	747,043	24,406,998	155,388	25,309,429	28,727,426
Expenditures	9,788	23,251,563	573,480	23,834,831	22,292,741
Excess (deficiency) of Revenues over Expenditures before other items	737,255	1,155,435	(418,092)	1,474,598	6,434,685
Other items:					
(Loss) Gain on disposal of capital assets	–	–	–	–	(240,377)
Inner City Youth Housing Project	–	1,412	–	1,412	2,844
Excess (deficiency) of Revenues over Expenditures	737,255	1,156,847	(418,092)	1,476,010	6,197,152

Thank You

We would like to thank our tireless community of supporters, donors, funders and board members. Despite continuing restrictions on social gatherings that dampened the holiday spirit, and prevented us all from joining together at events like the annual WEAC Tea, you have continued to offer support, words of encouragement, and gifts that brighten up the summer months and the holidays.

This year was one of extreme heat and extreme cold, and thanks to you, we were never concerned if the people we support had to do without. You continued to donate disposable masks, sanitizer sunscreen, water, sunhats, toques, mittens, and winter parkas to ensure that each and every person was protected from the elements, and the virus.

It is because of all of you that we are in a position of strength as we navigate out of the COVID-19 pandemic and into a state of new normalcy. Thank you for walking with us on our journey towards the elimination of poverty within Edmonton.

1700+

gifts made online



\$144

Average gift from
a new donor



\$766

Average gift size



\$1,094,654

donations received



72

new online donors



\$11,093

raised during
Giving Tuesday



174

holiday packages
supplied to the
women at WEAC

“ Because of these people, these people who keep showing up for me, every day, even when I’m tough to deal with, I know that I can keep moving forward.”

– Joan*, WEAC

e4c Board of Directors 2021-2022:

Marian Gayed

Board Chair

Gord Johnston

Vice-Chair & Treasurer

Michael Ferber

Secretary

Amanda Bueley

Anne Jarman

Charles Wong

David Anderson

Diego Flores

Gillian Brown

Marilyn Cox

Vik Khullar

Nicole Whitaker

Lindsay Graham

Rabena Bacchus

Kim Simmonds

May Han

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the Stollery
charitable foundation

United Way

homeward trust
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Seeing people not poverty.



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