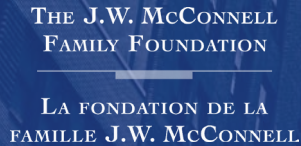


10

A GUIDE FOR CITIES REDUCING POVERTY

Brock Carlton and Paul Born

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This guide was conceived and developed through conversations between Brock Carlton and Paul Born. We are grateful to Mark Holmgren and Kirsti Battista for their leadership in turning these ideas into reality. Research and development by Larry Gemmel, with assistance and input from Megan Wanless, Natasha Pei, Liz Weaver, Mark Cabaj, Sherri Torjman, and Cities Reducing Poverty members.

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10 - A GUIDE FOR CITIES REDUCING POVERTY

Table of Contents

Introduction by Paul Born and Brock Carlton	4
Section 1 – Assess Your City’s Commitment to Poverty Reduction	6
Section 2 – 10 Really Good Ideas for Cities Reducing Poverty	9
Section 3 – 10 Stories that Inspire	21
Section 4 – 10 Really Useful Resources	35
Section 5 – 10 Ways to Get Started	40
Moving Forward by Mark Holmgren	43
Vibrant Communities – Cities Reducing Poverty	44

INTRODUCTION

10 - A Guide for Cities Reducing Poverty

Paul Born

President, Tamarack Institute

Cities and communities are where people live. It is here where we see the effects of public policy and it is here where the public will address the issues that matter most to Canadians. If we are ever going to significantly reduce poverty in Canada it will happen through one city or one community at a time.

If you are a community leader, such as a mayor, an elected official, a business leader, a community activist, or a concerned citizen, this book was written for you.

We have divided this book into five easy to read sections:

Section one includes an assessment you can complete to determine how well your city is working to reduce poverty. We recommend you start here, as it will serve as a guidepost for the ideas explored in this book.

Section two provides 10 really good ideas about reducing poverty at a city or community-wide level. This list is certainly not comprehensive as there are now literally hundreds of ideas currently being implemented by the more than 50 city-wide coalitions in existence in Canada. However, these 10 ideas are the most popular and most universally applied.

Section three provides you with 10 easy to read stories that highlight examples of cities with comprehensive poverty reduction strategies led by

multi-sector roundtables. These feature cities that have implemented many of the ideas we have listed in our really good ideas section.

Section four includes a list of 10 organizations that have developed or provide exceptional resources for cities interested in reducing poverty.

Section five includes 10 great tips for getting started if you are just beginning to organize a city-wide initiative.

10 - A Guide for Cities Reducing Poverty was an idea hatched by myself and Brock Carlton of the Federation of Canadian Municipalities. Together, we have spent many hours considering why and how cities and communities have become such a force in reducing poverty. This guide attempts to capture this momentum and to do so in a very practical and useful way. We hope that you find it helpful.

Brock Carlton

CEO, Federation of Canadian Municipalities

I am pleased to join the Tamarack Institute and Vibrant Communities Canada in supporting their ground-breaking work with cities and communities that are implementing poverty reduction strategies in municipalities across Canada. The municipal role in the fight against poverty is not well understood and this document aims to help strengthen that understanding.

Too many of our cities and communities are experiencing the devastating impact of poverty. In fact, one in seven Canadians suffer the financial and social burdens of income insecurity. While many of the solutions to income security rest with other orders of government, municipalities are stepping up—developing solutions to support our citizens and to help end poverty. As municipal leaders across Canada know, our communities cannot truly prosper if we let poverty persist.

Our 2010 research report, *Mending Canada's Frayed Social Safety Net: The role of municipal governments*, clearly showed how social infrastructure, which includes a wide array of municipal facilities, programs, and services, forms an important part of our social safety net. Social infrastructure is a key component affecting quality of life and well-being in Canadian cities, for both vulnerable groups and the general population. Investments in social infrastructure and associated programs have an important role in providing services such as housing, public transit, affordable childcare, recreation, and libraries. Equally important is the assumption that these municipal facilities, programs, and services will help to remove obstacles to employment and bring diverse populations together. As a result, such community investments have been found to contribute to inclu-

sion, trust, cohesion, and enhanced levels of social engagement.

While existing municipal services often help level the playing field, municipal governments of all sizes are also taking direct aim at poverty reduction itself. The City of Edmonton and the City of Toronto, for example, have come out with ambitious new anti-poverty strategies. St. Thomas, Ontario is working on poverty and health issues. Child poverty is a focus in Saint John, New Brunswick, while New Westminster, British Columbia, was the first municipality in Canada to introduce a local living wage. These and other stories, along with high impact ideas that can help you address poverty in your community, are featured in this guide.

In November 2015, the newly elected federal government committed to developing a national poverty reduction strategy that aligns with existing provincial and municipal plans. The Federation of Canadian Municipalities will be working with the government and our partners in support of this initiative. It is an opportunity we cannot afford to miss.

As part of our collective commitment to poverty reduction, I hope that you will find this guide to be both inspiring and helpful.

SECTION 1

Assess Your City's Commitment to Poverty Reduction

In this section we are posing ten key questions that you should think about to better understand your city's commitment to poverty reduction. Use this quick self-assessment to indicate what you and your city are currently doing, and then use these results to guide you through the rest of this booklet to learn more about the best ideas and practices for reducing poverty. Use the following scale to score your responses:

1 = Not yet **2** = Just getting started **3** = We are part way there **4** = We are doing this **5** = We are there!

10 Key Questions to Think About	Rank
1. Does your city/community have a poverty reduction strategy? Notes:	1 2 3 4 5
2. Does your city/community have a neighbourhood based community development plan that addresses poverty? Notes:	1 2 3 4 5
3. Does your city council or local leadership support or lead a citizen-led coalition for poverty reduction? Notes:	1 2 3 4 5
4. Has your city adopted a living wage policy? Notes:	1 2 3 4 5
5. Does your city/community offer affordable and accessible transportation? Notes:	1 2 3 4 5

10 Key Questions to Think About	Rank
6. Do citizens in your city/community have affordable access to municipal services, regardless of income? Notes:	1 2 3 4 5
7. Is your city/community implementing or developing a plan to create affordable housing? Notes:	1 2 3 4 5
8. Is your local Public Health Agency/Authority addressing poverty as a health issue? Notes:	1 2 3 4 5
9. Are business leaders in your city/community actively working to end poverty? Notes:	1 2 3 4 5
10. On a scale of 1-5 how committed is your city/community to ending local poverty? Notes:	1 2 3 4 5

Add up your score to assess how well you are doing: _____

10-25 points – Give us a call, we can help! **25-40 points** – You are doing well! **40-50 points** – We want to learn from you!

What have you learned by taking this assessment?

Read on to consider your next steps...

SECTION 2

10 Really Good Ideas for Cities Reducing Poverty

Here are 10 high impact ideas from Vibrant Communities members across Canada that are highly effective for reducing poverty. While this is not an exhaustive list of ideas, these are all elements to be considered when creating a comprehensive community-wide strategy.

- 1 Create your strategy as a city-wide multi-sectoral initiative.
- 2 Focus on poverty reduction vs. alleviation.
- 3 Support good jobs and a living wage.
- 4 Strengthen neighbourhoods.
- 5 Include affordable and accessible transportation in your strategy.
- 6 Ensure finances are not a barrier to accessing community services.
- 7 Address affordable housing and homelessness in your strategy.
- 8 Engage public health agencies and link your strategy to health outcomes.
- 9 Embrace a social justice and human rights-based approach.
- 10 Work toward Collective Impact and build a movement for change.



1 CITY-WIDE INITIATIVES

Municipal leadership and multi-sectoral engagement are keys to success

Poverty is a pressing issue across Canada, and a growing number of municipalities are leading poverty reduction strategies because the economic and social costs are too great to ignore.

Vibrant Communities Canada learned early on the importance of creating “Comprehensive Community Initiatives” that are multi-sectoral, inclusive, and concerned with both process and outcomes. Most poverty reduction initiatives are now city-wide or regional in scope and inclusive of the business and social sectors and members of the community with lived experience of poverty. They feature extensive public engagement through personal and electronic means at all critical junctures.

Municipalities play a significant role in providing critical services such as affordable housing, public transit, recreation, and library services. Thus, the support and leadership of mayors and municipal councils can be pivotal in creating comprehensive poverty reduction initiatives across Canada.

A city that looks out for its most vulnerable is a city that succeeds.

Mayor Don Iveson
City of Edmonton

www.vibrantcanada.ca

2 POVERTY REDUCTION

We want fewer poor not better poor

A focus on poverty reduction and/or elimination has provided an important lens for many communities seeking to reduce the effect of poverty on the lives of citizens.

This approach can effectively help cities focus on priorities that truly seek to end poverty rather than just alleviate it. By asking a series of simple questions like - Does this strategy reduce poverty by either increasing the income of the family or reducing expenses? Will this initiative make people more independent? Is this a strategy that places families on a path out of poverty? - we can shift our focus from short-term remedies to long-term thinking and actions that address the root causes of poverty.

At the same time, interim measures are still important. When people need food, we must feed them. If they are homeless, we must house them. When they are sick we must help them to become healthy. However, these are not long-term solutions and many initiatives still run poverty reduction programs primarily to make the lives of those living in poverty more manageable or to provide them with support in times of crisis.

Poverty reduction strategies that are being developed in local communities across Canada today must aspire for more than just the management or alleviation of poverty. They must focus on long-term, sustainable solutions that significantly reduce poverty and ultimately reduce people’s dependencies on social services to help them meet their basic needs.



3 GOOD JOBS

Living wage helps create adequate incomes

Too many Canadians lack job security, and live pay cheque to pay cheque, often without access to health and dental benefits.

There is a growing movement across the country which advocates that workers should earn a sufficient income to pay for their basic necessities so that they can fully participate in civic life and in their communities.

While there are many challenges to creating well paying jobs, the development of a living wage strategy can be a catalyst for community change. In 2011, New Westminster, British Columbia became the first city in Canada to adopt a living wage. On November 17, 2015, the City of Cambridge also made history by becoming the first municipality in Ontario to pay a living wage. Across Ontario - in Windsor, Guelph, Waterloo, and Hamilton - 85 employers have now signed on to champion a living wage.

Living wage is an exemplary way to address income inequality at the community level. More and more, companies that pay a living wage, provide benefits and train their staff, see these as factors that contribute to their competitive advantage. Many cities looking to reduce poverty recognize the importance of good jobs, whether public or private, and are building coalitions to support a living wage.

www.livingwagecanada.ca

4 NEIGHBOURHOODS

Neighbourhood-based community development is a vital strategy

To address rising inequality, many Canadian municipalities have implemented neighbourhood-level interventions to address poverty and other place-based challenges.

Behind this approach is an understanding that the lives of children and families improve when they reside in a safe and supportive neighbourhood that offers affordable housing, adequate services, and access to public transportation and public spaces, as well as opportunities for social and economic participation in the community.

The City of Hamilton's ***Neighbourhood Action Strategy*** focuses on helping make neighbourhoods great places to live, work, play, and learn. Hamilton is working with community partners, residents, and neighbourhood groups to develop action plans to build healthier communities by:

- Enhancing community development work;
- Developing resident-led neighbourhood plans;
- Increasing investments in neighbourhoods; and,
- Building new partnerships to support healthy neighbourhoods.

When building a strategy to reduce poverty, always consider the low-income neighbourhoods in your community and ways to strengthen them.

www.neighbourhoodchange.ca



5 TRANSPORTATION

Affordable transportation enables people to fully participate in community

Public transit is the primary means of transportation for many low-income residents, enabling them to get to and from jobs and to go to school.

Affordable and accessible transportation also allows people to attend health appointments, shop for food and clothing, go to school, and participate in recreational activities. Many cities provide subsidized bus passes or tickets, and some even provide them for free through social agencies.

The City of Calgary was one of the first cities in Canada to provide a Low Income Monthly Transit Pass as the result of a collaborative initiative called **Fair Fares**, and this set a precedent for transportation reform across the country. The low-income pass is 50% less than the cost of a regular pass, which is an important saving for low-income workers.

The City also supports nearly 15,000 Calgarians who cannot use regular transit services, due to a disability, through the **Calgary Transit Access** program.

We all benefit when everyone can participate fully in community life. Employers benefit when workers can easily get to and from work, and people are mentally and physically healthier if they have affordable and accessible transportation.

6 ACCESS TO SERVICES

Citizens deserve access to all municipal services regardless of income

Community investments in social infrastructure and associated programs play a vital role in providing affordable housing, public education, public transit, childcare, recreation, and library services. In turn, these services contribute significantly to early childhood development, social development, and healthy active lifestyles for youth, adults, and seniors. However, in an age of increasing costs and user fees, many people living on low-incomes need help to access these essential services.

The City of Calgary's **Fair Entry** program offers a single application process to qualify residents for subsidized city services and programs such as Recreation, Seniors Home Maintenance, Property Tax Assistance, Waste and Recycling, and the Low Income Transit Pass. More than 35,000 applications were approved in the first eight months of the program's introduction in 2015!

Edmonton has a **Leisure Access Program** that gives individuals living on low-incomes free unlimited admission to city facilities. Municipalities like Toronto, Peel Region, and Thunder Bay are creating food security strategies to improve access to healthy, affordable food in local neighbourhoods.

These types of municipal programs are critical in fostering participation, increasing access to social supports, and creating vibrant, healthy communities.



7 AFFORDABLE HOUSING

A top priority for every city

Most Canadians understand that safe and affordable housing is fundamental to raising a family and living a decent life, and providing affordable and accessible housing is a top priority for almost every city in Canada.

The Federation of Canadian Municipalities promotes “Livable Communities” which ensure that housing is affordable for young people, newcomers, members of the middle class, and seniors alike.

In its poverty reduction strategy, *TO Prosperity*, the City of Toronto proposes 14 measures to lower the cost of “stable housing,” rather than funding the high cost of homelessness. In *Edmonton’s 10 Year Plan to End Homelessness*, the City includes a strategy to prevent the loss of family housing through interventions that stop evictions and help people avoid the upheaval of being forced to relocate, or worse, end up on the street.

Housing First is an example of a specific approach used in many communities to provide affordable and supportive housing to the chronically homeless. By placing priority on getting people into housing that works for them, Housing First sits at the heart of many successful *10 Year Plans to End Homelessness*, which is a community-based approach that shifts the focus from managing homelessness to ending it.

Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness
www.caeh.ca

8 PUBLIC HEALTH

Poverty is a health issue

Social determinants of health are major drivers of poverty reduction as is the engagement of Public Health Agencies and Authorities across Canada.

The Wellesley Institute has provided extensive research to show that people who have lower incomes and education levels, who are unemployed or in precarious or low-paid work, have poorer health than those who are better off: “Moreover, there is a well-established gradient of health in which people who are in the lowest income group have worse health than people who are even just one step further up the income ladder.”

In 2009, the Saskatoon Health Region and the United Way of Saskatoon and Area joined forces to help create the Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership, with a clear understanding that poverty was a critical public health issue.

We are now seeing across Canada that Public Health professionals are actively engaging in poverty reduction efforts in order to improve population level health outcomes.

Canadian Council on Social Determinants of Health
www.ccsdh.ca



9 SOCIAL JUSTICE

Living free of poverty is a human right

There are many different ways to make a case for poverty reduction, but support is growing behind the idea that poverty is a violation of our fundamental human rights. Everyone, by virtue of being a person, is entitled to an adequate standard of living as defined by the United Nations.

Accepting the fact that living poverty-free is actually a right changes the conversation about poverty being the fault of the individual, to one about the underlying and entrenched discriminatory attitudes and prejudices that contribute to keeping poor people poor.

The City of Edmonton has adopted a human rights lens in its definition of poverty and has committed to true reconciliation with Aboriginal people.

Everyone has the right to a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being of himself and of his family, including food, clothing, housing and medical care and necessary social service, and the right to security in the event of unemployment, sickness, disability, widowhood, old age or other lack of livelihood in circumstances beyond his control.

Article 25

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

10 COLLECTIVE IMPACT

Think and act like a movement

Ending poverty is not something that any government, institution, or group of agencies can accomplish on their own. Ultimately, poverty reduction is the whole community's responsibility.

There is no doubt that reducing poverty is a complex problem. Solutions are not necessarily known in advance, rather, they are created through intentional, multi-sectoral collaborations where the efforts of many converge and align with a shared vision.

To this end, many poverty reduction efforts have adopted the Collective Impact approach in which five conditions describe successful collaboration: determine a common agenda, develop shared measurement, employ mutually reinforcing activities, provide continuous communication, and provide a backbone support.

Many cities undertaking large-scale poverty reduction strategies are employing a Collective Impact approach in which they spend up to a year or more engaging their community members to develop a widely accepted plan. In a successful Collective Impact initiative all sectors are engaged including the business sector and people living in poverty, who then work side by side to devise and implement strategies.

Thinking and acting like a movement!
It takes an entire community to end poverty.

Canada Without Poverty
www.cwp-csp.ca



SECTION 3

10 Stories that Inspire

Here are 10 stories from Vibrant Communities across Canada that highlight successful poverty reduction work. These stories will give you a taste of the exciting innovations that are being pursued in communities across the country and examples of strategies that have inspired real community change.

- 1 Surrey BC Affordable Housing is a Pillar in Surrey's Poverty Reduction Strategy
- 2 Edmonton AB Toward True Reconciliation – Embracing a Social Justice Approach
- 3 Calgary AB Fair Fares – Affordable Transportation is a Necessity to Participate
- 4 Saskatoon SK Public Health Led the Charge in Saskatoon to Reduce Poverty
- 5 Winnipeg MB A City Where Everyone Belongs
- 6 Hamilton ON Leading the Fight Against Predatory Payday Loans
- 7 Toronto ON Municipal Leadership and Multi-Sectoral Engagement are Keys to Success
- 8 Montreal QC The Value of Neighbourhood-based Approaches to Reducing Poverty
- 9 Charlotte County NB Bridging the Gap by Building a Movement
- 10 Saint John NB Using Collective Impact to Break the Cycle and End Lifelong Poverty

1 SURREY BC

Affordable Housing is one of four pillars in Surrey's Poverty Reduction Strategy

Access to safe, affordable housing plays an essential role in supporting the economic and social well-being of families and individuals. While housing in Surrey is more affordable when compared to other parts of the Metro Vancouver region, there are still too many families and individuals living in Surrey who are unable to find housing that is affordable with the resources that they have available.

Surrey Poverty Reduction Plan

People typically spend the largest portion of their income on housing. For many Canadians on a low income, the cost of housing can be a major factor in why families are unable to fully participate in community or build a strong future for their children.

In 2006, 10,000 renters in Surrey were spending more than 30% of their household income on housing, with 3,500 renters paying upwards of 50%.

Not only does Surrey's **Social Plan** identify housing affordability and homelessness as a priority for the city, the city has taken an active role in working to identify strategies and partnerships that can help to provide an expanded range of housing options for those who need it most.

THIS is How We End Poverty in Surrey (2012) presents a multi-pronged strategy to address housing through the following priorities:

- Advocate for a national housing strategy;
- Address homelessness;
- Maintain and increase the supply of non-market and social housing;
- Ensure that market rental housing is accessible and affordable for low-income households; and,
- Support the provision of affordable and appropriate housing.

Other policy areas for action in the plan include ***Transportation, Income, and Support***.

THIS is How We End Poverty in Surrey could not have happened without the contributions of more than 100 concerned community members who came together in 2012 to develop a practical strategy to end poverty in Surrey. A broad coalition continues to lead this work through research, community engagement, and learning, fostering and supporting collaborative initiatives involving business, government, and community agencies.

WWW.SURREYPRC.CA

2 EDMONTON AB

Toward True Reconciliation – Edmonton is embracing a Social Justice Approach

Poverty is defined as when people lack, or are denied, economic, social and cultural resources to have a quality of life that sustains and facilitates full and meaningful participation in the community.

End Poverty Edmonton

Toward True Reconciliation with Aboriginal people is the theme of the first five priorities of **End Poverty in a Generation** – Edmonton’s bold strategy to end poverty by changing people’s attitudes and mobilizing community-wide and cross-sectoral action.

Approximately 110,000 Edmontonians live in poverty, but children and youth, Aboriginal people, newcomers, and single parent families are disproportionately affected. Located on Treaty 6 territory, Edmonton has one of the largest First Nations, Metis, and Inuit populations in Canada. Though Edmonton is deeply rooted in Aboriginal history and culture, its Aboriginal citizens are nearly twice as likely to be unemployed and 44% of Aboriginal children under the age of five live in poverty.

Through the Aboriginal Roundtable, First Nations and Metis peoples were invited to bring their valued perspectives and solutions to the table and make **Honour the Treaty Spirit** a defining feature of the End Poverty Edmonton initiative. The first “Game Changer” identified by the strategy is to **Eliminate Racism**. Other priorities include establishing an Aboriginal culture and wellness centre and initiating people-first and trauma-informed policy and practice.



Mayor Don Iveson’s Task Force on the Elimination of Poverty worked hard to paint an accurate picture of poverty in Edmonton. There was a deep understanding that to change attitudes, people need to become more aware of what poverty looks like and how it impacts everyone. Members on the Task Force took inspiration from Aboriginal culture and the Cree language, which make a distinction between worldly goods and spiritual well-being. A key concept in the City’s definition of poverty is that people may lack resources, but they may also be denied them through discrimination, criminalization, and other systemic barriers.

To live free from poverty is a human right defined by the United Nations Declaration and Edmonton’s strategy is firmly grounded in the principle of **Justice for All**.

WWW.ENDPOVERTYEDMONTON.CA

3 CALGARY AB

Fair Fares - Affordable transportation is a necessity to participate in community life

As part of our work to transform government, one of our goals is to put the citizen at the centre of our activities. The Fair Entry project is a great example of that. It not only preserves people's dignity but it allows more people to access more city services.

Mayor Naheed Nenshi

For many years **Fair Fares** worked alongside community advocates to highlight the need for improved access to city services and, by extension, increased participation of Calgarians in their community. These advocacy efforts, along with strong collaboration with city administration, have resulted in several initiatives that have improved access for Calgarians.

Currently, low-income residents can purchase a monthly transit pass for \$44, less than half the \$99 cost of a standard adult monthly pass. The pass can also be used for Calgary Transit's para-transit service, **Calgary Transit Access**, which provides over one million trips every year to nearly 15,000 Calgarians with reduced mobility.

This landmark achievement helped drive transportation policy reform in communities across Canada and inspired the next step of streamlining access to all city services for people living in poverty as part of the **Enough for All** poverty reduction strategy.

Launched in May 2015, **Fair Entry** features a single application process for low-income Calgarians applying for subsidized city programming.

Prior to **Fair Entry**, Calgarians had to apply separately and prove their eligibility each time. Now, through a single application process, which is based on any one of eight accepted proofs of income, customers will be assessed just once for access to reduced fees for programs like Recreation, Seniors Home Maintenance, Property Tax Assistance, no-cost spay/neutering for cats and dogs, Waste and Recycling, and the monthly Transit Pass. More than 35,000 applications were approved in the first eight months!

Enough for All calls for improved accessibility to programs and services. It will seek opportunities to connect this work in a variety of ways including Community Hubs, which are welcoming and inclusive spaces that facilitate authentic connections among residents for community building and for programs and services that increase resiliency.

WWW.VIBRANTCALGARY.COM

4 SASKATOON SK

Public Health led the charge in Saskatoon to reduce poverty on a regional scale

The vast differences in health between residents of the city's poorest and richest neighbourhoods galvanized community attention and put the social determinants of health that underpin health inequities and the specific issue of poverty squarely on the agenda of community leaders.

Canadian Public Health Association

In 2006, the **Saskatoon Health Region (SHR)** released a study that found startling health disparities correlated to neighbourhood income levels in the city.

This health-disparity-by-neighbourhood study compared the health status of residents within Saskatoon's six low income neighbourhoods to the rest of the city and found substantial disparities in suicide attempts, mental disorders, injuries and poisonings, diabetes, chronic obstructive pulmonary disorder, coronary heart disease, chlamydia, gonorrhoea, hepatitis C, teen births, low birth weights, infant mortality and all cause mortality:

Although disparity in health outcomes by socio-economic status is well known, the magnitude of the disparity in health outcomes is shocking for a city in the western world. For example, the infant mortality rate in Saskatoon's low-income neighbourhoods was 448% higher than the rest of the city; which is worse than developing nations.

In 2008, the SHR published a landmark research summary, ***Saskatoon Health Disparities: Analysis to***

Intervention (2008), which identified 46 interventions that were shown to be effective at reducing health inequities. SHR used these findings to implement practice and policy changes within the health sector, such as the ***Building Health Equity Program***, which was launched to meet the unique cultural and socio-economic needs of residents in low-income neighbourhoods in Saskatoon.

SHR's Health Promotion Department then reoriented its focus from promoting healthy lifestyles to the ***Social Determinants of Health*** and upstream causes of health issues. As a result, health equity became both a tool to build programs and a means to measure program outcomes.

Building on this work, a community consultation was held involving over 100 community members, representing a diverse mix of sectors, who recommended 19 policy options. One of these was to enhance the understanding of the general public about social determinants of health and the economic costs and health risks of not proactively addressing poverty.

In 2009, the Saskatoon Regional Intersectoral Committee joined forces with the SHR, United Way of Saskatoon and Area, and others to create the **Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership**, with a clear understanding that poverty is a critical public health issue.

WWW.SASKATOONRIC.CA

5 WINNIPEG MB

A City Where Everyone Belongs

To be a vibrant and healthy city which places its highest priority on quality of life for all its citizens.

City of Winnipeg's Vision

Recognizing that many of Winnipeg's most challenging social issues are rooted in poverty, a group of community leaders from across the city formed the **Winnipeg Poverty Reduction Council** in 2007.

Early in its existence, the Council created an aspirational statement that clearly defines its objective – **A City Where Everyone Belongs**.

It determined that tackling issues related to the stigmatization of people living in poverty is as important as tackling the root causes of poverty.

Based on its commitment to fostering cross-sectoral efforts to reduce poverty, the Council identified three roles for itself: to have and share knowledge about complicated issues, to use its influence to engage all sectors and communities, and to foster collaboration that breaks down silos, creates collective impact, and reduces poverty in Winnipeg.

In 2015, the Council shifted its emphasis from developing a plan to end homelessness, which is now in place, to a new **Framework for Action** that sets out 10 aspirational goals. Of these, an extensive consultation determined that **achieving independence through income** would have the most impact and would "move the needle" on the other nine aspirations as well.

With the largest urban Aboriginal population in Canada, there is a particular interest in supporting indigenous children and youth in Winnipeg. **The Winnipeg Boldness Project** is working alongside the North End community to improve outcomes for young children in the Point Douglas neighbourhood.

Over the years, the Council has supported and participated in the work of the Recreation Subsidies Committee, which is working collaboratively towards a common vision of sport and recreation in Winnipeg: one that is accessible, welcoming, and socially inclusive for citizens of all ages, all abilities, and all socio-economic backgrounds... a sports and recreation system where **Everyone Can Play**.

WWW.WPRC.CA



6 HAMILTON ON

Leading the fight against predatory payday loans that target vulnerable people

We call them predatory because that's what they are ... the proliferation of payday loans in our city preys on the working poor and those on fixed incomes.

Tom Cooper, Director
Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction

The **Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction** has determined that a \$300 payday loan can accumulate up to \$1,638 in interest annually, equivalent to a 546% interest rate. For those experiencing poverty who face a financial emergency, payday loans are often the only option available to buy groceries, pay the rent, or cover other essentials.

Slick marketing campaigns often hide the risks of borrowing. As a result, payday loan customers often find themselves falling quickly and deeply into debt. Seeking to educate the community and limit the payday loan industry's exploitation of vulnerable consumers, the Roundtable and City Councillor Matthew Green led an effort that required lenders to post the annual costs of borrowing and provide credit counselling information to all of their customers.

Hamilton has a history of pulling together. The Hamilton Roundtable for Poverty Reduction was formed in 2005 to tackle the city's unacceptable levels of poverty and members include leaders from the business and non-profit sectors, government, education and faith communities, as well as individuals who have experienced or currently experience poverty.

CHCH-TV News
February 16, 2016

An important first step was made today as Hamilton City Hall passed a motion that licences all 33 Payday loan outlets across the city - it's a first in Ontario. Many of the businesses are located within some of Hamilton's lowest-earning neighbourhoods, where people in already precarious situations can spiral even deeper into debt.

The motion has three parts. Each lender must pay \$750 every year to have an inspector check in on their operations, they have to provide credit counselling information for anyone who comes into one of their outlets, and they have to ensure what the actual interest rate they're charging on the short term loans are displayed.

The leadership of the Roundtable has paid off. Following this news story, the Ontario government announced new powers to credit unions, allowing them to give out small, short-term loans, which will give those in need much better options and reasonable rates.

WWW.HAMILTONPOVERTY.CA



7 TORONTO ON

Municipal leadership and multi-sectoral engagement are keys to success

A snapshot has emerged in recent years of a city unfairly and unjustly divided by income, class and geography. In Toronto, there are 150,000 kids growing up in poverty – and 15 neighbourhoods with poverty rates 40% or higher. This cannot be allowed to continue. As a city, we must work to address these disparities.

Mayor John Tory

On December 3, 2014, Mayor John Tory highlighted poverty reduction as a key priority in his inaugural address and designated Deputy Mayor Pam McConnell as its champion.

Toronto is one of the most livable, prosperous, and competitive cities in the world, but sustaining that success is threatened by growing economic inequity. Many Torontonians live in poverty, with 25% of children 14 and under and 1 in 5 adults (or 374,530 Torontonians) living below the poverty line.

Unanimously approved by City Council in November 2015, Toronto's poverty reduction plan, ***TO Prosperity***, draws on the experiences and ideas of hundreds of Toronto residents from all parts of the city, and sets an inspiring vision to build a city that offers opportunity for all.

A multi-sector Implementation Accountability Structure will ensure that the City's efforts are responsive to community needs. City staff are currently working with community groups to build a Lived Experience

Working Group to ensure that people with lived experience continue to have voice in the strategic direction and oversight of the Strategy, alongside stakeholders from community agencies, academia, and the private and public sector.

TO Prosperity identifies three complementary, overarching objectives that inform efforts to build a prosperous and inclusive city:

- **Address immediate needs:** Ensure that essential services are well funded, coordinated, and meet the immediate needs of those living in poverty.
- **Create pathways to prosperity:** Improve the quality of jobs in the city, attract investments to low-income areas, and ensure that city programs and services are integrated, client-centered, and focused on early intervention.
- **Drive systemic change:** The city and its partners can do things differently by creating an accountable and participatory government wherein reducing poverty and inequality is an integral part of day-to-day business.

WWW.TORONTO.CA/TOPROSPERITY



8 MONTREAL QC

The value of neighbourhood-based approaches to reducing poverty

Vivre Saint-Michel en santé (living healthy in Saint-Michel) was one of the first pilot projects that emerged from the poverty roundtable process that evolved in Montreal in the 1990s and set a pattern for creating similar groups throughout Quebec.

The community demonstrated its ability to undertake collective action in the 1980s when citizens joined forces to fight a local environmental issue. This strengthened the solidarity of organizations and citizens and in 1991 they created a consultation structure in the form of a **neighbourhood roundtable** that was a model of citizen leadership at the municipal level.

In the 1990s, when analysis showed increasing concentrations of poverty in several Montreal neighbourhoods, more of these “table de quartier” were formed by organizations from the health, education, municipal, and community sectors, along with representatives from the community and the private sector.

The Saint-Michel neighbourhood represented the new face of poverty in Montreal, with a large proportion of its population living under the low-income cut-off, and it faced significant challenges related to social integration and cohesion. Its once homogeneous population of 55,000 was now home to newly arrived members of several different cultural communities and visible minorities. With the support of Vibrant Communities and Centraide of Greater Montreal, Vivre Saint-Michel en santé took on a leadership role in creating and supporting a variety

of projects to counter poverty and social exclusion in the neighbourhood and it continues to thrive to this day.

This history of place-based poverty reduction and social integration projects in Montreal was very successful in improving conditions and led to similar efforts in other communities, establishing the value of neighbourhood-based approaches.

There are currently 29 neighbourhood roundtables in the City of Montreal alone. In support of these initiatives, Centraide of Greater Montreal has just launched the Collective Impact Project (CIP), an accelerator of change that aims to increase the impact of collective action and achieve measurable and significant outcomes in the reduction of poverty in 15 Montreal neighbourhoods over the next five years.

WWW.VIVRE-SAINT-MICHEL.ORG

Adapted from Learning to Tango on a Tightrope: Implementing a Collective Impact Approach

Lyse Brunet, The Philanthropist Vol 26, 1 (2014)

9 CHARLOTTE COUNTY NB

Bridging the Gap by building a movement

Vibrant Communities Charlotte County (VCCC) has an active membership of nearly 250 people – impressive for a region with a population of less than 30,000.

Located in south western New Brunswick, Charlotte County is a rural community characterized by its coastal nature and dispersed population which relies largely on fishing, aquaculture, tourism, and manufacturing, all of which are industries experiencing declines in employment. *Bridging the Gap* (2012), Charlotte County’s poverty reduction plan, identifies poverty rates higher than the provincial average and limited opportunities for young people.

As a result, the community faces a difficult future, with certainty that poverty will continue to rise unless an innovative solution can be found. In response, VCCC is taking an unconventional approach by asking residents to look 20 years into the future to envision four very different scenarios that could hold the key to reducing poverty. In contrast to the

status quo, where current trends point to a steady decline, three alternative futures have been imagined that are based on the geographic and demographic characteristics of the area: an Education Destination, a Retirement Community, or a Tourist Haven. Each of these proposed options brings to life exciting ideas that demonstrate that there is hope and real opportunity to reduce poverty in the County.

VCCC also acts as a regional **Community Inclusion Network** to provide an inclusive forum to co-ordinate poverty reduction efforts at the local level by supporting the vision and goals of New Brunswick’s **Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation (ESIC)**, established in 2010.

From 2010 to 2014, VCCC helped secure over \$400,000 in ESIC grants to support 39 poverty reduction initiatives in Charlotte County. The community matched this amount with \$1.5 million in cash or in-kind contributions. In addition, VCCC has helped incubate projects from the idea stage to execution and serves as an information and networking hub to provide organizations with relevant funding information and community contacts.

By reaching out at every opportunity, VCCC is trying to unravel the negative myths of poverty to engage people from all walks of life in a common cause: Reducing Poverty in Charlotte County.

WWW.VIBRANTCC.CA



10 SAINT JOHN NB

Living SJ is using Collective Impact to break the cycle and end lifelong poverty

After working on poverty reduction for 10 years, Saint John leaders agreed in 2014 that the root cause of the city's social malaise was generational poverty and that they must collectively invest in systems change – the making of policies and practices that strengthen social foundations in ways that improve the economic future.

Living SJ is a learning network of partners (representing business, three levels of government, educational institutions, philanthropic, non-profit and community organizations, and neighbourhoods) that have come together to pursue a **Social Renewal Strategy** (2014) to break the cycle of poverty.

Four game changing priorities that include systems change targets have been identified and agreed upon by the community:

1. Transform low-income neighbourhoods into mixed income communities;
2. Close the education achievement gap;
3. Improve the health of residents through neighbourhood-based models of care; and
4. Education and training opportunities lead to employment for low-income residents.

Collective Impact Teams involving over 80 participants provide leadership towards the development and implementation of specific strategies and partnerships to achieve the desired results for each of Living SJ's four social priorities. A 32-member **Leadership Team** of senior influencers then meets

quarterly to provide strategic and collaborative guidance on overall implementation of the strategy.

Hosted by **Enterprise Saint John**, Living SJ is well connected to the business community, which has its own **Business Community Anti-Poverty Initiative** (www.bcapi.ca) founded in 1997. Living SJ also serves as a **Community Inclusion Network** for the region, connecting the community to the New Brunswick **Economic and Social Inclusion Corporation** and the provincial poverty reduction strategy, **Overcoming Poverty Together**.

The many and complex barriers facing individuals and families in Saint John point to the fact that something profoundly different needs to be done to achieve social change. Collective Impact is the framework that is driving this strategy, offering a structured and collaborative approach that is achieving substantial impact on social priorities.

WWW.LIVINGSJ.CA



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SECTION 4

10 Really Useful Resources

Here are 10 organizations that provide useful resources to assist in your poverty reduction efforts. These include learning networks, coaching, professional development opportunities, research and publications, and funding supports. Use the web links to follow up for more details.

- 1 Vibrant Communities Canada
- 2 Tamarack Institute
- 3 Federation of Canadian Municipalities
- 4 Maytree
- 5 Caledon Institute of Social Policy
- 6 National Campaigns
- 7 Foundations
- 8 SmartSAVER.org
- 9 Food Secure Canada
- 10 Creating Shared Prosperity – Cities that Lead, Succeed

1 VIBRANT COMMUNITIES CANADA

Cities Reducing Poverty

Vibrant Communities Canada - Cities Reducing Poverty is a Collective Impact movement of more than 100 cities aimed at reducing poverty for one million Canadians through aligned poverty reduction strategies at the municipal, provincial, and federal levels. In addition to hosting an annual poverty reduction summit, opportunities for online learning and networking are offered throughout the year: webinars, communities of practice, access to research and best practices, blogs by thought leaders from around the country, and access to a monthly e-newsletter on the latest news and developments from across Canada.

www.vibrantcanada.ca

2 TAMARACK INSTITUTE

Building a Connected Force for Community Change

Founded in 2001, the **Tamarack Institute** develops and supports learning communities to help people collaborate and to co-generate knowledge to solve complex community challenges. Tamarack offers the latest thinking, resources, and interactive online practices to help leaders and practitioners grow their knowledge, expand their networks, and inspire innovation and collaboration. In addition to Vibrant Communities, Tamarack sponsors two other Learning Communities that host extensive resources and publications:

Communities Collaborating for Impact is a learning community for collaborative leaders and innovators

utilizing a multi-sector approach to solve complex community challenges. www.tamarackcci.ca

Deepening Community is a learning community focused on becoming a national space for ongoing dialogue and networking about fostering people's engagement within their local neighbourhoods and working together with institutions and policy-makers to address common aspirations that improve community life. www.deepeningcommunity.ca

www.tamarackcommunity.ca

3 FEDERATION OF CANADIAN MUNICIPALITIES

Canada's National Voice for Local Governments

The solutions to many, if not most, of Canada's biggest challenges can be found in local communities - urban, rural, northern, and remote areas. That is why the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) works on behalf of its members with the federal government to address national issues and deliver results that matter to Canadians: supporting local jobs and growth, livable and affordable communities, and a healthy environment. The FCM website features policy positions on issues, program descriptions, and research publications.

www.fcm.ca

4 MAYTREE

For Leaders. For Change.

Maytree is a private Canadian charitable foundation established in 1982, committed to reducing poverty and inequality in Canada and to building strong civic communities. Maytree seeks to accomplish its objectives by identifying, supporting, and funding ideas, leaders, and leading organizations that have the capacity to make change and advance the common good. Investments are made in leaders to build a Canada that can benefit from the skills, experience, and energy of all its people. The Maytree website includes links to training, networking and grant opportunities, policies and insights, and partner organizations.

www.maytree.com

5 CALEDON INSTITUTE OF SOCIAL POLICY

The **Caledon Institute of Social Policy** does rigorous, high-quality research and analysis; seeks to inform and influence public opinion and to foster public discussion on poverty and social policy; and develops and promotes concrete, practical proposals for the reform of social programs at all levels of government. The Canada Social Report www.canadasocialreport.ca, hosted by the Caledon Institute, acts as a major hub for social information. Caledon's extensive research reports and commentaries are available as free, downloadable content on the website.

www.caledoninst.org

6 NATIONAL CAMPAIGNS

These are campaigns that work to reduce poverty in Canada through a variety of approaches and perspectives. They all provide useful research and resources that add value to poverty reduction work.

Campaign 2000
www.campaign2000.ca

Canada Without Poverty
www.cwp-csp.ca

Make Poverty History
www.makepovertyhistory.ca

Citizens for Public Justice
www.cpj.ca

Dignity for All
www.dignityforall.ca

Living Wage Canada
www.livingwagecanada.ca

The Canadian Alliance to End Homelessness
www.caeh.ca

7 FOUNDATIONS

United Way Centraide

Over 100 **United Way Centraide** offices across Canada work in local communities to meet immediate needs and create lasting change by investing in long-term solutions to our country's most pressing social issues. By strategically investing over \$500 million each year in three key areas – moving people from poverty to possibility, helping kids be all they can be, and building strong and healthy communities – United Way Centraide creates opportunities for a better life for all Canadians. The website includes links to local members and the 211.ca community information service that is available to 60% of Canadians.

www.unitedway.ca

Community Foundations of Canada

Community Foundations of Canada is a Canadian movement for community vitality with 191 local member foundations across the country. Together, they form a national network to help Canadians invest in building strong and resilient places to live, work and play. **Vital Signs** is a national initiative that leverages local knowledge to measure the vitality of communities and support action towards improving the collective quality of life. It emphasizes a local approach to poverty prevention and reduction that encourages the alignment of donor engagement and grantmaking with community needs and priorities. Community foundations play a number of roles to support poverty prevention and reduction in their communities including convening poverty roundtables.

www.communityfoundations.ca

Philanthropic Foundations Canada

Philanthropic Foundations Canada (PFC) is a national association of more than 130 grantmaking foundations, charitable organizations, and corporate giving programs which seeks to promote the growth and development of effective and responsible private philanthropy in Canada through the provision of membership services, resources, and advocacy. The PFC website includes links to members and research on Canadian foundations and giving trends.

www.pfc.ca

The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation

The J.W. McConnell Family Foundation is a leading supporter of poverty reduction and a catalyst for innovation that strengthens communities and improves lives. The Foundation's current focus areas include: Social Finance and Impact Investing, Sustainable Food Systems, Indigenous-focused Philanthropy, Cities for People, and RECODE (catalyzing social innovation and entrepreneurship in higher education). The Foundation's **Inno weave** program offers training and coaching in new approaches to help charities and non-profits to increase their effectiveness. The website includes links to research and current and previous initiatives, including a searchable grants database and application criteria for grants.

www.mcconnellfoundation.ca

8 SMARTSAVER.ORG

Canada Learning Bond

The **Canada Learning Bond** is a federal program that provides up to \$2,000 to RESP accounts for children of low-income parents, improving opportunities for post-secondary education. The SmartSAVER.org website provides interactive learning resources for both parents and community organizers to promote and encourage access to the Canada Learning Bond, a Registered Education Saving Plan (RESP) and other education funding opportunities.

www.smartsaver.org

9 FOOD SECURE CANADA

Healthy. Just. Sustainable.

Food Secure Canada is a pan-Canadian alliance of organizations and individuals working together to advance food security and food sovereignty through the following guiding principles:

- **Zero Hunger.** All people at all times must be able to acquire, in a dignified manner, an adequate supply of culturally and personally acceptable food.
- **A Sustainable Food System.** The production and consumption of food must maintain and enhance the quality of land, air and water for future generations, and provide for adequate livelihoods of people working in it.
- **Healthy and Safe Food.** Safe and nourishing foods that are free of pathogens and industrial chemicals must be available.

The website includes links to policy and advocacy, members and networks, and research.

www.foodsecurecanada.org

10 CREATING SHARED PROSPERITY

Cities that Lead, Succeed

Creating Shared Prosperity: Cities That Lead, Succeed is a report from Vibrant Communities Canada that uses input and examples from a pan-Canadian network of municipalities striving to improve quality of life as inspiration for municipalities and citizens to consider how they too can build a prosperity agenda.

www.vibrantcanada.ca/content/creating-shared-prosperity-cities-lead-succeed

SECTION 5

10 Ways to Get Started

Here are 10 ways you can get started on the path to effective poverty reduction.

1 Build on existing initiatives – Ask us for help

There is great work going on already in your community and across the country and we urge you to build on it. We need Collective Impact, not competitive approaches. The entire Vibrant Communities network of cities is actively learning from each other and are eager to share their experiences and learn with you.

2 Your community is amazing - Engage broadly

We encourage you to get very curious about poverty reduction. We have a saying at Vibrant Communities that goes like this: “If we knew exactly what to do we would already be doing it.” You need to reach out to many different stakeholders, the private, public, and non-profit sectors, and citizens. Each community is different; you each have different assets and challenges and will thus need to develop your own unique solutions.

3 Involve people with lived experience of poverty

In particular, we have learned that when you involve people who are or have been living in poverty, they bring not only real wisdom, but they ensure that the process is authentic and accountable.

4 Convene a multi-sector poverty reduction roundtable

Many years of experience have confirmed the importance and value of the roundtable structure and process. The key of course is to get the right people at the table. We have found that an equal mix of business, all levels of government, non-profit organizations, and citizens from all walks of life gives real strength and ensures diversity of opinion.

5 Seek active leadership from the Mayor and Council

Municipal and regional governments are ready to engage in poverty reduction and mayors can play a powerful role in championing issues and change. Many of the stories in this guide provide great examples. As a starting point, Council can set policies to increase access to city services by approving subsidies for low-income people.

6 Consider a Collective Impact approach

The Collective Impact framework provides valuable insight into embracing complexity and emergent solutions, and fits well with the nature of anti-poverty work. Learn more at www.tamarackcci.ca and www.collectiveimpactforum.org

7 Take Time

Do not rush your plan. As you develop your ideas, strategies, and plans, engage broadly and frequently with the community. Remember that you are building engagement at the same time you are gathering ideas.

8 Establish an aspirational goal and specific strategies with measurable impact

Big audacious goals inspire people, and specific strategies with measurable impacts will guide your implementation plans and foster inspired synergy. Don't forget to include a shared measurement and monitoring system and share regular progress reports with the larger community.

9 Communicate your plan and start learning

Successful poverty reduction requires engaging every citizen in the conversation to build a movement for change. The more you engage, the more you will learn about how people think and what moves them to action. We need to constantly adjust to changing conditions, and continue to build on what is working.

10 Join Vibrant Communities – Cities Reducing Poverty

Our learning community supports more than 100 communities to work together through sharing ideas, resources, strategies, tactics, and data. Join now to benefit from this collaborative network. Learn more at: www.vibrantcanada.ca



MOVING FORWARD

Mark Holmgren

Director, Vibrant Communities Canada

People care about one another. Sure, sometimes we could be better at it or choose a more caring way to engage one another, but overall I see a goodness in people that includes a desire to work together to build and sustain healthy, vibrant communities.

This human caring that I speak of is what drives us to join together to do good things and I suggest that our collective need to care is at the root of all the work that is going on across Canada in our cities, towns, and regions to turn the tide on poverty.

Underneath all of our programs, collaborations, systems work, and Collective Impact ventures is our humanity, our shared compassion for those who struggle, who live their lives on the margins of mainstream society. That compassion is not contingent on race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or culture. It permeates our thinking and our work.

That is what is happening in our local communities and, in particular, in the stories told in this book. The growing network of local communities that are a part of Vibrant Communities Canada is another expression of compassion-at-work. We may not do things the same way, local communities may have different priorities, and of course each community has to grapple with its own limited resources, its own politics, and the influence of varied demographics and business climates. Regardless, that fundamental

drive to change our communities and overcome poverty in all of its many forms is a constant.

Tamarack Institute's vision is to build a connected force for community change. No one at Tamarack ever thought we could do that by ourselves. In fact, quite the contrary. Vibrant Communities Canada – Cities Reducing Poverty is a testimony to that vision. The shared vision of the Vibrant Communities Canada network is to reduce poverty in our respective communities and, by doing so, create opportunities for people to not only survive but move forward on their aspirations for their children and for themselves as well.

Working together as a network adds to our understanding of what works, and what needs more thought and adaptation. We learn from one another and we teach and mentor one another. Our role at Tamarack is to be that place that serves as a learning hub, a catalyst for new thinking and action, as well as a forum that is open to everyone to contribute.

I am grateful to everyone who is a part of Vibrant Communities Canada for the work they are doing in their local communities. I am hopeful about our work and hopeful our network will grow, get better, and be an inspiration for other communities to join so that we can help one another overcome poverty and build the better communities we all wish to live in and sustain.

THE VIBRANT COMMUNITIES STORY

The Tamarack Institute leads Vibrant Communities Canada, which has been building a network of cities across the country that are focused on place-based poverty reduction. In our first decade, we built the technology and ideas around Vibrant Communities and place-based poverty reduction. We worked with leaders from business, government, the voluntary sector, and citizens living in poverty and, in turn, have effectively reduced poverty for more than 200,000 Canadians.

These local community efforts have been bolstered by the leadership of provincial and territorial governments as they adopt or renew their own poverty reduction strategies. Several books have been written to document this period of learning, including *Opportunities 2000, Creating Vibrant Communities, Cities Reducing Poverty and Evaluating Vibrant Communities*. All of these can be previewed or downloaded at: www.vibrantcommunities.ca

Today, we are well on our way to a membership of 100 cities, towns, and regions that are partnering to advance the work of Cities Reducing Poverty.

For a complete look at our current members, visit www.vibrantcommunities.ca

The connections and support that I have received from VC over the past two years have been invaluable, including access to professional development that is second to none, and resources and relationships that are rooted in reciprocity. It is a membership and connection that I look forward to building into the future.

Colleen Christopherson-Cote
Saskatoon Poverty Reduction Partnership
Saskatoon, SK

Belonging to a national network positions us with one voice and reinforces the urgency to work differently and improve the quality of life for individuals and families dealing with poverty. It adds credibility to our work at the local level and connects us to many innovative and inspiring poverty reduction efforts.

Cathy Wright, Living SJ
Saint John, NB

HOW WE WORK AND THE BENEFITS OF JOINING VIBRANT COMMUNITIES CANADA – CITIES REDUCING POVERTY

Vibrant Communities helps deepen the connections between municipalities, provinces, territories, and citizen-led coalitions that are actively working to reduce poverty in Canada. Our aim is to promote the co-generation of knowledge and shared learning across the network and in the learning community. We support the work of our city members through providing them with:

- A Common Evaluation Framework;
- An online learning community at www.vibrantcommunities.ca;
- Web and in person seminars, including an annual national gathering;
- Communities of practice, practical tools, and resources;
- Cities Connect - a monthly e-newsletter;
- Peer-to-peer and expert coaching and fundraising support;
- \$1,000 credit to support coaching from Tamarack approved coaches; and,
- Two free registrations for members, plus another free seat for a person with lived experience with poverty, at Vibrant Communities Canada – Cities Reducing Poverty’s annual poverty summit.

ARE YOU A CITY REDUCING POVERTY?

All of us at Tamarack invite you to join Vibrant Communities Canada – Cities Reducing Poverty, not only to be a part of a learning community and our collective efforts to reduce poverty, but also to provide your city with the opportunity to share and teach others about the work you are doing.

Vibrant Communities is a network of people engaged in organized caring for one another.

Please join. Together, we are better.

www.vibrantcommunities.ca

Cities and communities are where people live. It is here that we see the effects of public policy and it is here where the public will address the issues that matter most to Canadians. This is why we believe that if we are ever going to significantly reduce poverty in Canada it will happen one city, one community at a time.

If you are a community leader such as a mayor, an elected official, a business leader, a community activist, or a concerned citizen this booklet was written for you. We have divided the booklet into five easy to read sections. Each section has 10 ideas or stories that you will find helpful and inspiring.

I am pleased to join the Tamarack Institute and Vibrant Communities Canada in supporting their ground-breaking work implementing poverty reduction strategies in municipalities across Canada. The municipal role in the fight against poverty is not well understood and this document aims to help strengthen that understanding.

Brock Carlton

The leadership across the country for cities reducing poverty is growing exponentially. This book captures what we are learning and turns it into practice. A quick yet highly informative read.

Paul Born

Tamarack Institute

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Waterloo, Ontario, N2L 5K1

www.tamarackcommunity.ca

