

# Community Economic Development Neighbourhood Framework

Community economic development (CED) is an intervention used by community social workers (CSWs) at The City of Calgary to support the strengthening of economic and social inclusion in neighbourhoods. The “Community Economic Development Neighbourhood Framework” guides The City’s CSW program. There are specific factors that are taken into account in community economic development they are outlined here below:



**Employability** – CSWs support residents to increase their employability by providing meaningful volunteer experiences, workshops, developing skills, and training and education opportunities in neighbourhoods.

**Policy & Systems** – Creating opportunities for people to come together to talk about issues impacting their lives, to learn about social issues and how policy change happens, to develop community action plans and by connecting residents with groups advocating for changes.

**Economic Capacity of Neighbourhoods** – This is the extent to which people, families, community groups and institutions, and businesses work together to meet the needs of those who make the neighbourhood their home. CSWs support projects and initiatives that facilitate connections among the different community members to benefit the economic wellbeing of the neighbourhood as a whole.

**Financial Inclusion** – CSWs build relationships with residents who are often excluded from mainstream financial institutions and support them in exploring skill-sharing and cost-saving workshops. They build partnerships with community organizations to embed financial empowerment in the neighbourhood through programs like matched savings, free tax and benefit clinics and financial literacy education.

**Vibrant Local Business and Social Enterprise** – In a strong neighbourhood, residents support local business and local business supports community. This contributes to complete communities where residents can meet their needs locally. CSWs build relationships with local businesses, help to facilitate learning opportunities about community economic development and support marginalized residents to develop and incubate small businesses and other opportunities for supplementary income generation.

# COMMUNITY ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT IN ACTION

## Night Markets in Falconridge

Through 'This is my neighbourhood' engagement, residents identified safe community as one of their priority aspirations. They were especially concerned about going out at night time. At the same time, residents had identified a need for increased opportunities to earn extra money to supplement their income. A night market seemed like the perfect fit to address both needs!

The CSW approached community partners North East Family Connections Society, Focus on Seniors, and the Arusha Centre about extending one of their current spring markets to the summer with the added twist of hosting the market outdoors. They enthusiastically agreed! With the expansion of the market, and with a view for sustainability, the CSW worked with the neighbourhood partnership coordinator (NPC) for Falconridge/Castleridge to approach the board of directors for the community association to have them come on board as an organizing partner and host of the event. Board involvement also meant that residents from the community had an active voice in creating the vision for the Falconridge Night Market.

The first Night Market was held on June 2, 2018 and was a great success! Over 20 vendors had tables, with many coming from the community and surrounding areas. Music and DJ services were provided by local residents and children's activities were offered by The City of Calgary and with support from local volunteers. The Night Market was a collaborative event with each partner playing an integral role in its success. The CSW was heavily involved with coordinating the event, connecting partners and funders and encouraging community involvement. With future markets it is envisioned that the CSW will play a more supportive role to local residents who are interested in being a part of the planning committee, to ensure sustainability and local ownership of the event.



## Women's Sewing Collective

In one neighbourhood the community has been exploring a place-based approach to financial empowerment. A group of women, called the Women's Sewing Collective, have been meeting to learn how to sew together. While the women receive instruction in sewing, their children enjoy an enriching program offered by City of Calgary Recreation.

In community development, intentionality is key and the community social workers and other partners



Photo by Amanda Ducheminsky

work together to reduce barriers to participation. After their persistence and dedication in learning the craft of sewing, many of the women are exploring next steps for selling their products. They have been working with the CSWs to prepare to sell at community markets as well as learning how to organize their own. Simultaneously the women have been participating in a monthly group to help them further develop their entrepreneurial skills.

The CSWs have also been developing partnerships and inviting different financial empowerment opportunities into the neighbourhood. In partnership with Momentum and others, programs like tax and benefit clinics, matched savings, Registered Education Savings Plan information sessions and financial literacy programs were all made accessible to the local community. Many of the women from the sewing collective were involved. Women from the Sewing Collective participated in the matched savings program as a way to build the start-up capital required for their micro businesses.

A place-based approach to financial empowerment is holistic and embedded in the neighbourhood facilitating meaningful relationships and increasing economic participation.



## Community Mobile Market

Many Calgarians struggle to access and afford fresh, healthy produce for themselves and their families. To address this resident-identified issue, CSWs partnered with The Leftovers Foundation and The Foundations for Home Community Development Program (the “Home Program”), a component of The City of Calgary’s Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy. With their help, the CSW secured funding and co-created the Community Mobile Market — a truck bringing fresh produce, eggs, and bread directly to communities



The truck provides a dignified way for residents to access fresh, healthy and culturally appropriate food at below market prices. The truck is open and welcoming to the whole community, and is particularly beneficial for those with income and mobility related barriers.

The Community Mobile Market is about more than just food, it is also about building community. Community events and activities occur while the truck is parked in neighbourhoods. These concurrent events are planned, advertised and executed through Community Ambassadors. Ambassadors are low-income residents who are paid to build networks, capacity, and a sense of belonging for themselves and their neighbours. CSWs’ relationships in neighbourhoods supports the success of the Community Mobile Market through ensuring high attendance, engagement, and that the market meets the needs and interests of community members.

