

From Surviving to Thriving - Edmonton becomes newest Trail Builder

The residents of the City of Edmonton are in the midst of good economic times thanks in part to a robust oil and gas sector. Unemployment is low, salaries are on the rise, and the city continues to grow.



Yet not everyone is sharing in the prosperity. Edmonton's rate of poverty is higher than the Canadian average.

Vibrant Edmonton - a local multisectoral collaboration and partner in the Vibrant Communities initiative - intends to help change this situation by assisting struggling, though resilient, low-income residents in their efforts to build a better life.

The group has adopted a framework for family economic success developed by the Annie E. Casey Foundation that focuses on workforce development, family economic support and community investment.

Vibrant Edmonton is exploring initiatives such as:

- A Social Purchasing Portal to connect unemployed or underemployed residents working with employment agencies to employers who are interested in filling vacancies with those who simply need a chance to prove their ability to contribute.
- An Individual Development Accounts initiative for working poor families.
- Scaling up existing local initiatives that have proven effective in assisting low-income residents work towards home ownership.
- Increasing public awareness of and expand access to public benefits and subsidies for working poor families.

There is a clear excitement among the leadership group at Vibrant Edmonton. As one member notes, "We believe in Vibrant Edmonton's potential to help residents move from 'surviving to thriving.'"

Related Links:

- [A summary of Edmonton's plan](#)
- [Annie E. Casey Foundation's Framework for Family Economic Success](#)

By: Mark Cabaj