

The Abundant Community Initiative

“Abundant Community is based on the belief that every individual in a neighbourhood has a contribution to make, and uncovering, sharing and the harnessing of those contributions creates neighbourliness, and also addresses issues as diverse as social isolation, crime, and physical and mental health. The notion is at the same time ridiculously commonsensical and ridiculously powerful.”

~Mary Sturgeon, Project Manager, Make Something Edmonton

“The work of the Abundant Community Initiative is vital to the well-being of our cities. Every city is concerned about our health, children, safety, the land, the local economy and those on the margins. Government policies and social services are at their limits. The next wave of impact will come from citizens connected to their neighbors engaged in bringing their gifts and humanity to each other.

The Abundant Community Initiative is making this happen.”

~Peter Block, Abundant Community

“The international leader in creating new methods for organizing local neighbours for productive work is the Abundant Community Initiative in Edmonton Canada. They have envisioned and implemented an amazing process of local community revitalization.”

~John McKnight, Asset Based Community Development Institute, Northwestern University

At the heart of the Initiative... is a neighbour or two on each block who will initiate a casual conversation with each household on their block/cul-de-sac/building floor, about their neighbours’:

- Vision for their neighbourhood,
- Activities and interests that they want to join in with neighbours, and the
- Skills, gifts or abilities they are willing to share with their neighbours or the whole neighbourhood.

The process...

- Work with neighbourhood leadership to hire a *Connector Coordinator* who will:
 - Identify, enlist and organize approximately 50 *Block Connectors*,
 - Facilitate and encourage the Block Connector’s conversation process, and
 - Collate the information from the conversations into interest and activity groups.

The benefits...

- Initiates a momentum of household connection within each block/cul-de-sac/building floor and the neighbourhood.
- Shapes neighbourhood life according to residents’ vision of their neighbourhood.
- Facilitates relationships through the formation of new groups/associations of shared interests within the neighbourhood.
- Links the skills, gifts and abilities of neighbours to other neighbours and the neighbourhood.
- Connects neighbour on a block/cul-de-sac/building floor together.

Anne Harvey at anne.harvey@edmonton.ca
Howard Lawrence at howardlawrence@shaw.ca

