



**WHERE NEIGHBOURS MEET  
and GREAT THINGS HAPPEN**  
EDMONTON FEDERATION of COMMUNITY LEAGUES



EDMONTON FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LEAGUES

**2020-2025**

**Five Year Strategic Plan**

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## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

President Ryan Barber - District H

Vice President External Rocky Feroe - District F

Vice President Internal Martin Narsing - District C

Treasurer Anita Lunden - District J

Director Norman Yee - District A

Director Giselle General - District D

Director Liz John-West - District G

Director Dallas Bartel - District I

Director Pat Whaley - District L

Executive Director Laura Cunningham-Shpeley



## MESSAGE FROM PRESIDENT

For over 100 years, Community Leagues have played an essential role in the development of our neighbourhoods, and the City of Edmonton. At 160 leagues and growing, our Community League movement continues to meet the diverse needs of our citizens. From building and maintaining community league infrastructure to supporting sport, recreation, and social endeavours, the EFCL and our membership work together to connect and engage Edmontonians of all backgrounds.

At the heart of the community league movement is our dedicated volunteers, who work tirelessly and selflessly to serve their neighbours and build a more welcoming, better tomorrow. The development of this strategic plan is a result of their efforts, and represents a vision of our shared future.

Together, through this plan, we will work to strengthen the community league movement. I hope that you share in my pride and optimism for the EFCL and Community Leagues. Our newly developed vision points to our transformative power to influence the communities and city we live in - Vibrant Community Leagues, Vibrant City!

On behalf of the board, I am pleased to present our five-year strategic plan.

Ryan E. Barber

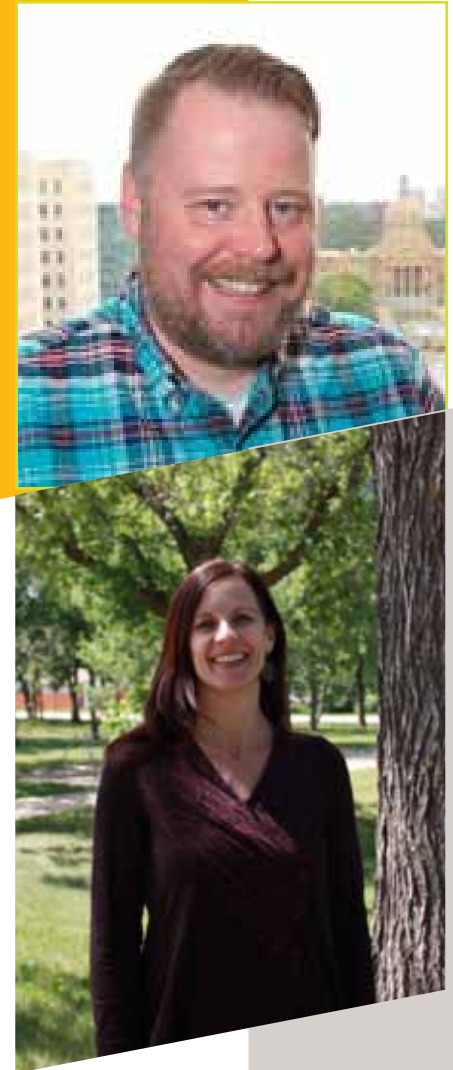
## MESSAGE FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The year 2020 marks a significant year for the EFCL. We will have completed building our 100th Anniversary Plaza project in Hawrelak park, recognizing the work and contributions of many thousands of Edmontonians who have helped to shape our City over the last century.

Our organization continues to grow, with 3 new Leagues joining us in 2019. This growth identifies that Edmontonians continue to see the Community League model as the base neighbourhood association- where neighbours come together and build the community they want to live in. Leagues have had to adapt and respond in unprecedented ways in 2020, and have in many ways flourished and engaged their neighbours in new ways.

The EFCL continues to respond to these changing needs of Leagues- and we are energized by the direction of the Board to raise the profile and work of Leagues in everything we do. With our City's growth in the coming years, the EFCL is committed to supporting Leagues to engage with more and more Edmontonians in new and creative ways- creating a Connected Edmonton, one that starts in the neighbourhood with the League.

Laura Cunningham-Shpeley



# INTRODUCTION

The Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) is the advisory, coordinating, and supporting body for Edmonton's 160 (and growing!) Community Leagues. In February 2020, the EFCL Board of Directors and the Executive Director participated in a full day retreat, facilitated by AndersonDraper Consulting Inc., to update their 2014 strategic plan, revisit and revise their vision and mission and update priorities. The agenda from the day and the results from the icebreaker "what difference does EFCL make" can be found in [Appendix A](#). Overall there was general agreement that much of what was contained in the 2014 strategic plan remained relevant. Prior to the planning day, an online survey was sent to City Councillors, city administration who work closely with EFCL, current and past League Board members and other stakeholders. Findings from the survey were shared with the Board and Executive Director to inform the revised strategic plan. The findings from the survey can be found in [Appendix B](#).

Participants had a rich discussion about what has changed since 2014. Most notably, the population of Edmonton has increased, the city itself continues to grow and now has the Anthony Henday ring road. Edmonton has a fairly young population, with an average age of 35 as well as an aging population. There has been an increase in newcomers migrating from within Canada and around the world as well as a commitment to Truth and Reconciliation with Indigenous peoples. It was agreed the use of technology in how we work, live and play has increased.

The Board identified a revised vision and mission. The next section presents the updated strategic plan to guide the Board from 2020-2025. Future work includes developing a work plan, considering data requirements and identifying ways to regularly report back to members on this strategic plan.



## VISION

Vibrant community leagues, vibrant city

## MISSION

Engage, develop and connect Edmonton Community Leagues in building healthy neighbourhoods.

# STRATEGIC PRIORITIES

## CHAMPIONING COMMUNITY LEAGUES

ADVOCACY &  
ENGAGEMENT

BUILDING EFFECTIVE  
OPERATIONS

BROADENING REACH  
& DIVERSITY

SUPPORTING LEAGUE  
LEADERSHIP &  
CAPACITY



# 1.0 CHAMPIONING COMMUNITY LEAGUES

EFCL actively and intentionally raises the profile of Community Leagues and acknowledges their contributions and accomplishments. The Board believes Community Leagues, as pillars of the organization, should be championed in everything EFCL does.

## KEY STRATEGIES:

### 1.1

Support individual Leagues to flourish and increase their membership through promotion, training and resources.

### 1.2

Recognize and use the 100th year anniversary project as a way to preserve history, inspiring a new vision of Community Leagues.

### 1.3

Promote League partnerships and reciprocity with the City of Edmonton.



## 2.0 ADVOCACY AND ENGAGEMENT

EFCL advocates for itself and on behalf of all Leagues on city-wide issues and is committed to positive change by engaging Leagues and equipping them with ways to engage their communities. The Board believes that training and supporting Leagues in using an asset-based community development approach would foster and sustain strong connections. Through collaboration with the City, EFCL will create resources, training and information to help the Leagues advocate for their neighbourhood.

### KEY STRATEGIES:

#### 2.1

Facilitate discussions with Leagues, using a community development approach, about what makes up a healthy and great neighbourhood and identify issues of advocacy.

#### 2.2

Design and conduct training for League members and executives to develop skills and understand policies, effective engagement and presentation strategies.

#### 2.4

Seek and maintain partnerships and foster relationships with community and other 'city-builders' to coordinate activities.

#### 2.3

Demonstrate the value of engagement and community development through modelling and sharing of resources.





## 3.0 BROADENING REACH AND DIVERSITY

EFCL works with Leagues to create opportunities for broader representation of Edmontonians in League membership through diverse programs and recreation opportunities. EFCL will strive to build relationships with Indigenous and newcomer organizations in order to better understand and support greater engagement of the populations they serve.

### KEY STRATEGIES:

#### 3.1

Develop, pilot and help Leagues to see the importance of broadening reach and diversity, particularly with Indigenous peoples and newcomers.

#### 3.2

Examine barriers to involvement with Leagues and activities and implement changes to address identified issues.

#### 3.3

Implement a broader range of services for different cultural, socio-economic and demographic groups within the same neighbourhood.

#### 3.4

Develop and implement new and innovative strategies to increase membership.





## 4.0 BUILDING EFFECTIVE OPERATIONS

EFCL provides effective, efficient and innovative support to all Leagues and regularly assesses its effectiveness and benefits. The Board strives to be evidence-based and values continuous improvement. EFCL will regularly assess and evaluate their own work and serve as a model for Leagues.

### KEY STRATEGIES:

#### 4.1

Develop a transparent way to identify resources/supports to benefit the maximum number of Leagues.

#### 4.2

Offer supports for Leagues in areas of need, such as governance and capacity building, board development, standards, recognition, facility development, program training, communication, project management, conflict resolution, membership and business processes.

#### 4.3

Evaluate the usefulness of supports provided to Leagues and incorporate learnings to revise resources.



## 5.0 SUPPORTING LEAGUE LEADERSHIP AND CAPACITY

EFCL focuses on building community leadership and capacity in Leagues and their executives. Leagues are a citizen-driven network across the City of Edmonton. The Board strives to ensure that Leagues have the opportunity to connect and work together to be a strong voice for their community.

### KEY STRATEGIES:

#### 5.1

Use a community development approach to create a space to discuss issues and engage Leagues around priority civic issues, planning and development.

#### 5.2

Explore new ways of communication to increase awareness of EFCL's support and services.

#### 5.3

Assist Leagues in networking with and learning from each other.

#### 5.4

Provide support for Leagues to have a voice in issues that matter to them through developing leadership opportunities and skills

#### 5.5

Assess the effectiveness of existing forms of communication and ways of sharing information to support Leagues in their efforts.






# APPENDIX A

The planning day began with Board members identifying what difference EFCL makes. The Wordle on page 13 shows the result from the activity.

## AGENDA



START TIME  
9:00 AM

1


**Introduction:**  
**Icebreaker:** "What difference does the work that EFCL does make?"

2

**Context & Survey Results**  
What's changed since 2014? What do your stakeholders say about EFCL?

3

**Re-visit Vision and Mission**  
**Vision:** Edmonton is a place where community is understood and valued and where Leagues are seen as the mechanism for citizens to build great neighbourhoods and advocate for the city they want  
**Mission:** We connect, represent and enable Leagues to preserve and promote the Community league way of life

Break 


4

**Personal/Self Reflection & Full Group Discussion**  
Successes, challenges and considerations with 2014 strategic plan

5


**Populating the Strategic Plan: Graffiti Exercise**

12:00 Lunch



6

**Re-Visit Vision, Mission, Priorities**  
Considering discussion throughout the day, tasks, discussion on areas that need more work (outcomes & measures)  
Tasks for Board Members, task for Executive (President, Vice-President)

Break 

7

**Conclusions & Next Steps**  
Questions, comments, concerns and impressions of the day

END TIME  
4:00 PM

# BOARD STRATEGIC PLANNING

February 1st, 2020

**Purpose of the Day:**

To update EFCL's 2014 strategic plan

ANDERSON DRAPER

# APPENDIX B - SURVEY RESULTS

The Board of Directors of EFCL undertook strategic planning to update its current five-year plan. For the most part, the current pillars and strategic direction as outlined in the 2014 Strategic Plan remain relevant and useful to guide EFCL's work. However key stakeholders were invited to share feedback to help inform the next iteration of the Strategic Plan.

EFCL Executive Director sent out an invitation to potential survey respondents. Participating in the online survey took less than 10 minutes. The survey was open for two weeks in January 2020.



*Leagues are seen as a mechanism to great neighbourhoods but not the only one. (x5)*

*As a goal, laudable. As inspiration, pretty inspid language. (x2)*

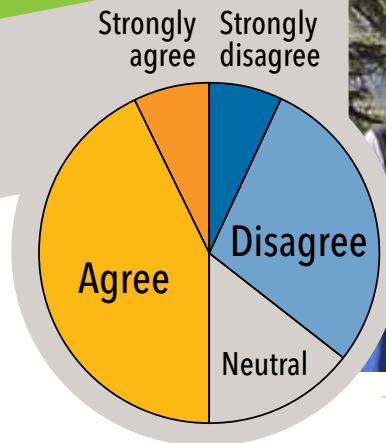
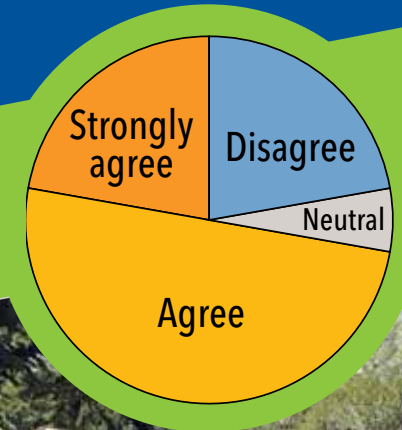
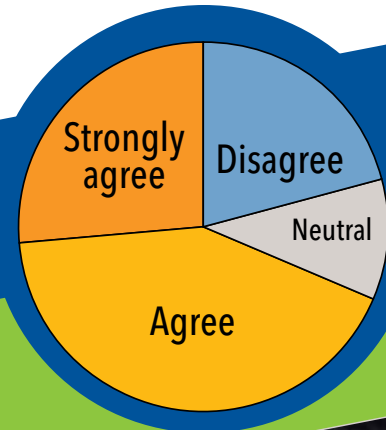
*The leagues and EFCL not only advocate for great neighbourhoods; leagues individually and together create great neighbourhood communities.*

## VISION

EFCL'S PAST VISION PAINTS A **REALISTIC** FUTURE FOR THE ORGANIZATION.

EFCL'S PAST VISION PAINTS AN **INSPIRING** FUTURE FOR THE ORGANIZATION.

EFCL'S PAST VISION IS **ACHIEVABLE**.



*Needs to be shorter and more precise. Start with, then fix, "build great neighbourhoods". Replace "great" with something that has a meaning. "Advocate for the city they want" is good. Means something - advocate with City Hall, province, etc.*

**EFCL's previous vision: Edmonton is a place where community is understood and valued, and where Leagues are seen as the mechanism for citizens to build great neighbourhoods and advocate for the city they want.**



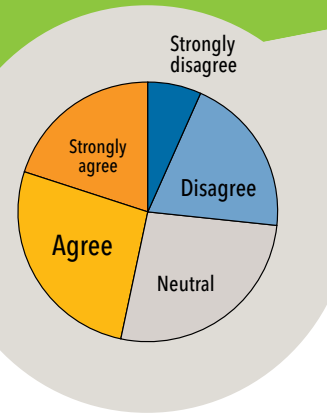
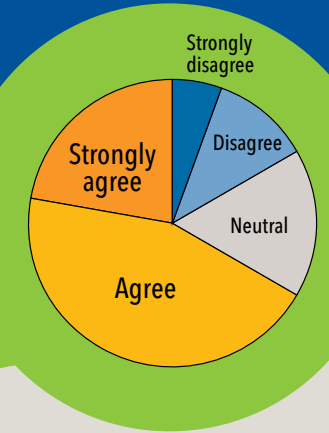
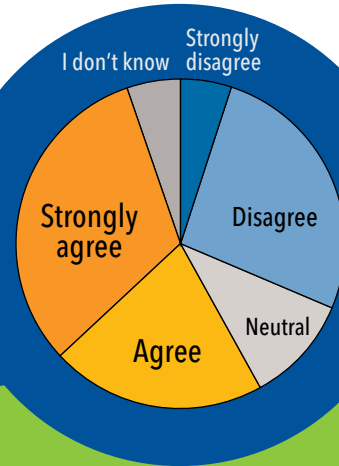
EFCL's previous mission: We connect, represent and enable Leagues to preserve and promote the Community League way of life.

# MISSION

EFCL'S PAST MISSION DESCRIBES "HOW TO" ACHIEVE THE VISION.

EFCL'S PAST MISSION PAINTS AN INSPIRING FUTURE FOR THE ORGANIZATION.

EFCL'S PAST MISSION IS REALISTIC.



EFCL needs to support Leagues, more than it needs to connect. I am not sure that the Community League way of life is currently understood. It may be outdated and outmoded. (x7)

There's nothing that says "how to" in this language.

Many CL have less than 100 members. That is not a representation of the community. The Mission is also very vague.



What difference does EFCL make?

## Are there any other strategic priorities that need to be considered?

Need to consider prioritizing the priorities. Perhaps there are also too many. A clear, decisive focus on supporting leagues would be helpful.

The EFCL cannot further broaden its reach or diversity because it is already at its maximum state in that it encompasses ALL community leagues. However, the EFCL can encourage and assist Leagues to broaden and diversify THEIR reach.

This is already more than a little organization can do.

Partnerships. The survival of leagues will depend on the partnerships they're able to form with schools, organizations and service providers in their communities. Promoting and enabling this should be a stated priority, [in my opinion].

Community building and inclusive city building

## What have been some challenges for EFCL?

Having and communicating a clear focus, avoiding duplication, enhancing trust

Volunteer burnout. Cultural evolution with numerous competing personal priorities (of Members) and other service providers.

It is under-resourced by any reasonable measure. Its benefits to Leagues, community and the City are often invisible. It is under-appreciated. It is taken for granted. It is used as a punching bag whenever politically convenient. Our story isn't told often enough in enough corners of the City, even among our Leagues and our volunteers.

Representing the diversity of the leagues to the city administration

Aging infrastructure, changing communities, lowered effectiveness

## What are some strengths of EFCL?

Leagues in almost every neighbourhood, history and promoting leagues through CL day. Movement towards offering workshops (these are useful and of high quality).

Providing governance support to leagues, providing a unified voice for leagues, collaborate in and support positive approaches to addressing arising issues (e.g., people living in league halls).

Well established communication networks with leagues. Long history. Ability of EFCL to bring league leaders together to learn from each other. Formation of Committees with league reps from a number of Districts who advocate for the 'community voice' in City decision-making.

Providing training for league and board members, a central clearing house for information, a conduit for Edmontonians to the City of Edmonton and vice versa, and a voice to advocate on behalf of leagues with the City.

History, it's a known entity. (x5)

A good partnership with the City of Edmonton. (x2)

## What are some opportunities for EFCL over the next five years?

Help City plan public transit. Ensure quality of life for residents in face of densification (crowding).

Advance inclusiveness at the board and program level to reflect community demographics, reporting results of EFCL and Leagues publicly, participate in identifying ways to make infrastructure more sustainable (preserve and maintain assets)

There's a new Tripartite Agreement to be negotiated, and a new City Manager coming on board. Both can be challenges and opportunities. Working with the Provincial government when it looks to cut funding and change the Alberta Lottery model is also a two-edged sword.

Position itself clearly as the essential protector of Leagues and the League Movement. Build city-wide citizen support for Leagues. Increase community support (financial and political) of Leagues. Demonstrate the value of Leagues as the backstop against social decay in austere economic times.

Growing their membership and reaching a more diverse age group of their community. A lot of community members do not see them as representative of their views.





## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The EFCL would like to gratefully acknowledge AndersonDraper Consulting for their support in working with the EFCL on this strategic plan. A big thank you to all of the Board volunteers who came together to create this plan, and who come together every month with their energy and enthusiasm for guiding the Community League movement into the next 5 years. It is this kind of dedication and commitment that is seen all across the City, and inspires each of us to volunteer our time to build a more connected City through the Community League movement.

