



DOVERCOURT COMMUNITY VISION

2019 - 2021

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MESSAGE FROM THE EDMONTON FEDERATION OF COMMUNITY LEAGUES

As part of our ongoing mission to increase the civic capacity of community leagues, the Federation was pleased to support the Dovercourt Community League in their Community Visioning project. Working together, the community created a desired vision, a strategy to achieve that vision, and abundant community involvement to make it happen. Because of the diligent work undertaken by the Dovercourt Steering Committee and the countless community members who participated, the Community League is well positioned to champion the Vision and to facilitate the efforts of the community to continue to work towards the Vision. We have no doubts that through the tireless work of all the participants on this project, the community of Dovercourt will become an even greater neighbourhood with an even stronger sense of community.

MESSAGE FROM THE DOVERCOURT STEERING COMMITTEE

We are pleased and proud to be part of the Dovercourt Visioning initiative. When we started the initiative in April 2018, we hoped to build a foundation for setting some priorities within the community. As we conclude, those goals have been met and exceeded by far. Together, we have developed 5 community strategies, and have identified actions that we can begin right away, along with some longer term goals. Also, members of our community have stepped forward to champion some key activities. It has been an exciting opportunity for established residents and volunteers to reach out and work alongside newer residents who have come into our community with fresh eyes and ideas. Together, we are optimistic that we can continue to build our community.

We would like to extend our thanks to the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) for supporting this initiative and for choosing Dovercourt as the pilot community for building a toolkit for other Edmonton community leagues to use. Communities need and appreciate the support that EFCL provides. Visioning helped us look at our community both in a 'big picture' and proactive way, as well as in a practical way that led to actions and next steps.

Through the pilot process, we were able to accomplish more than we thought possible. Kudos to everyone who worked together to make it happen. Over nine months, we are proud that 180 people participated in this initiative--through the visioning exercise in June of 2018, in the sixteen conversations that took place between July and September, and in the final survey in October. Next, we will present this report at our January 2019 Annual General meeting, and see this document as a starting point for a new board to develop a strategic plan for the community. We already have a vibrant community, and this project helped us better coordinate our efforts and find more opportunities to build on the strong foundation we have built in our 60 year history. As well, residents from the community have agreed to work together as 'community champions' to make sure that some of our priorities are actioned: Building policies, Health and Wellness, Strategic Financial Planning, Community Engagement, Indigenous Inclusion, Food Security and Civics.

By getting to know the people around us, and by working together, we are creating an antidote for many social ills. A little effort from many people creates social cohesion, increased safety, fun--and gives our children a chance to experience how community is created. We hope that our experience will help other communities to build their own vision and way forward.

Again, thanks to everyone who made this possible.

Dovercourt Visioning Committee

- Maggie Harris, Geoff Galbraith, Jo-Anne Frere-Wilson

ABOUT DOVERCOURT

Developed in the 1950s, Dovercourt is a mature neighbourhood in northwest Edmonton located just south of the Yellowhead Highway and bounded by 118 Avenue to the south, 142 St. NW to the west and St. Albert Trail to the east. The neighbourhood is well served by a variety of community amenities, including parks, a school, a church, a new community centre, and the community league hall. Much of the neighbourhood consists of single detached residences, which are home to a diverse mix of people--including original residents, children and family of original residents, and new families. See [Appendix II: Dovercourt Community Snapshot](#) for further information.

THE VISION PROJECT

In early 2018 the Edmonton Federation of Community Leagues (EFCL) launched Community Visioning: A Pilot Project to Empower Communities. The purpose of the project was to support one neighbourhood in Edmonton to create their own Community Vision, in order to help express what makes the neighbourhood unique, articulate the community's common goals, enhance community spirit, ensure good use of community resources, and assist with volunteer attraction and retention.

Through a competitive application process, Dovercourt was selected as the EFCL's pilot community for the Community Vision project.

THE VISION PROCESS

The Dovercourt Community Vision steering committee consisted of three community members supported by a consultant hired by the EFCL (see [Appendix I: Visioning Project Steering Committee and Resources](#)). The steering committee oversaw a Community Vision workshop on June 10, 2018, in which over two dozen workshop participants were led through a facilitated process to articulate a community vision, values, goals, and actions. See [Appendix III: Adult Workshop Summary](#) and [Appendix IV: Youth Workshop Summary](#).

Over the summer and into the fall, community members were invited to participate in follow up Community Conversations to review the draft vision, values, and goals, and to add to the actions. A total of sixteen Community Conversations were held, hosted by community volunteers, and involving 164 people (see [Appendix V: Community Conversation Summary](#)).

In November, the steering committee summarized the actions in an online survey to provide a final opportunity to offer feedback. Fifteen people participated in the survey, with two new people stepping forward to lead initiatives. See [Appendix VI: Online Survey Results](#).

This document summarizes the Community Vision process and presents the community's vision, values, goals and actions.

NEXT STEPS & VISION CHAMPIONS

This document is a living document. The community's vision and values should be revisited every 5-10 years to ensure they continue to be an accurate reflection of the community. The goals and actions should be revisited every 1-2 years to ensure they stay relevant and up-to-date as actions are completed and goals are achieved.

It is anticipated that the goals and actions contained in this first iteration of the Dovercourt Community Vision will inform the 2019 Dovercourt Community League budget and business plan.

In late November 2018 the Dovercourt Steering Committee and community leaders who had led a Community Conversation met to wrap up the visioning project, celebrate, and determine next steps. This team decided to move forward with forming an *ad hoc* committee of the Community League Board, called the Vision Champions. The new committee will be comprised of the old steering committee members as well as engaged community leaders, and will meet every two months to track progress and ensure that the vision, values, goals and strategies created by the community flourish.

It's an exciting time for Dovercourt!

DOVERCOURT VISION

Dovercourt is a beautiful and welcoming neighbourhood for all people--where our friends, family, and neighbours work together and support one another.

DOVERCOURT VALUES

We value...

...Our mature trees and parks and the sense of beauty, calm, and quiet they provide

...Strong bonds among neighbours, friends, and family

...A warm and safe environment for raising children

...Caring for, and looking out for, each other

...The convenient access to City services and amenities

...Taking pride in our community

GOALS

Goal 1: Ensuring everyone feels they are part of our community. Suggested actions:

In progress:

- DCL to lend out equipment to neighbourhood kids
- Open rink earlier to accommodate young children (pending volunteers to open rink)
- Continue play group
- Walk the talk: Invite people from throughout the community to participate in the Harvest Festival and Winter Carnival - resulted in many more displays, participation, events by community members and DCL programs
- Include an Indigenous component to existing events (such as winter carnival)
- Continue monthly seniors tea

For Consideration in 2019/20:

- Range of actions for basketball hoops, soccer, rink, park, skateboard, indoor facilities, baseball
- Make community league more inviting for families: create DCL budget for updated toys (One time), create DCL budget for crafts (annual)
- Recognize our Indigenous history, present and future in the community: IPlant native plants and/or medicinal plants in Dovercourt, write a monthly newsletter article on Indigenous topics, include a 'pre-Dovercourt' chapter in the Dovercourt history compilation

Goal 2: Meeting more of our social, recreational, and everyday needs within the neighbourhood.

In progress:

- Include updates of 2 schools, churches, DCL in newsletter
- DCL willing to share rink at no charge to schools
- Increase joint collaboration among our schools and churches:

- Hold a joint community event (winter carnival)
- Dovercourt School will invite all parents to their monthly evening info session
- Meet twice a year to keep in touch on ways to collaborate
- Coralwood is planning a few community events and will invite the community
- Continue garden group activities and efforts
 - publish updates in the newsletter
 - Invite other community gardens to meet to increase our knowledge and effectiveness
- Health and Wellness:
 - continue/increase promotion of free sand
 - support a group walking program
 - monthly health talks at hall
 - monthly health & wellness column in newsletter, monthly group meeting around health issues.
- Increase Safety:
 - continue Neighbourhood Watch program in community
 - walking group has been established which will increase residents' presence in the community.

For Consideration in 2019/20:

- Potential for dance or music classes
- Kirk would hold monthly activity night, pending interest
- Garden group would like volunteers for occasional tasks
- Increase food security:
 - develop a 'food bank' type program in Dovercourt
 - use economies of scale such as bulk ordering
 - food preparation in groups (community kitchens)
 - food forests in green spaces
- Rent gym (Coralwood, Dovercourt School or Kirk) monthly for sports activities
- Share our history:
 - check the provincial archives to see how we can store our information
 - include Indigenous history as part of the Dovercourt story
 - sort through office files with a history perspective as well as a policy perspective
 - develop rotating history displays in entrance of community hall
 - continue conversations with residents
 - share stories through newsletter and website
 - use all information collected to develop a book on Dovercourt
- Continue supporting social and inclusion programs

Goal 3: Actively communicating within and among our community members.

In progress:

- Get someone with expertise to revamp website
- Look at how other leagues communicate

- Provide 'teaser's and links to website in newsletter
- Include other organizations in newsletter

For Consideration in 2019/20:

- Give residents an option to 'opt-out' of hard copy newsletters
- Develop a communications plan for Dovercourt
- Look at other ways to increase 2-way communication

Goal 4: Making volunteering in the community accessible and easy.

In progress:

- Board approved costs for thank you cards for all volunteers
- Job Jar: residents and board indicate items with varied complexity and time commitments - extended to residents to complete - costs for thank you cards

For Consideration in 2019/20:

- Connect Ross Shephard Leadership students with hours available in Dovercourt
- Event Sponsorship - Board provides 'mini grants' of \$50 - \$100 for residents to lead initiatives / community events

Goal 5: Bringing more openness and clarity to community structures and processes.

In progress:

- Update policies, bylaws, roles & responsibilities.
- Create a civics committee in Dovercourt to ensure we can influence development in our community.

For Consideration in 2019/20:

- Form a grants sub-committee, to assist board as required.
- Develop a financial policy for the League, including sections to clarify fundraising and grants.
- Set up a finance committee, 2-3 people to support the Treasurer to set strategic financial policy, forecasting, priorities etc.
- Set up financial review committee, using the existing financial policy review document as a model / starting point.

NEXT STEPS

A group of residents, both current board members and non-board members, will work together over the next year to implement some of ideas developed through this visioning process. The group will meet about every 2 months, and support the transition of the vision into a strategic plan for the community.

At this point, this is an ad-hoc committee. The group is willing to draft a terms of reference, or develop a set of committee policies that can be used as a template for the community league, and support Goal 5 - bringing more openness and clarity to community structures and processes.