

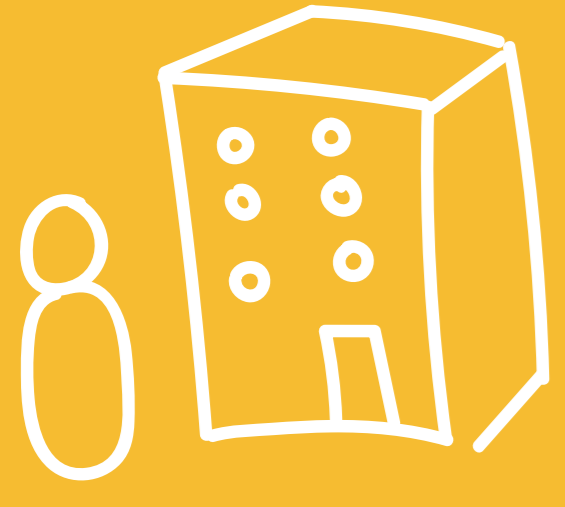
Journey to “YIMBY”



We propose gathering lessons from failed and successful affordable housing projects in Edmonton and creating a comprehensive guide for nonprofits who want to develop and sustain successful affordable housing for racialized people throughout the city of Edmonton. This guide will demonstrate how to create ideal conditions for an affordable housing project from before the plans are drawn to years after the housing is complete. We will use data, empathy building, and transparency to enable nonprofits to succeed in building and sustaining affordable housing.



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WHO is it for?

This guide is for nonprofits who want to develop successful affordable housing for racialized people throughout the city of Edmonton. It would be a tool for organizations to consider the important aspects of developing affordable housing projects, with special consideration for addressing racism and stigma associated with some of these housing projects.



WHY this group?

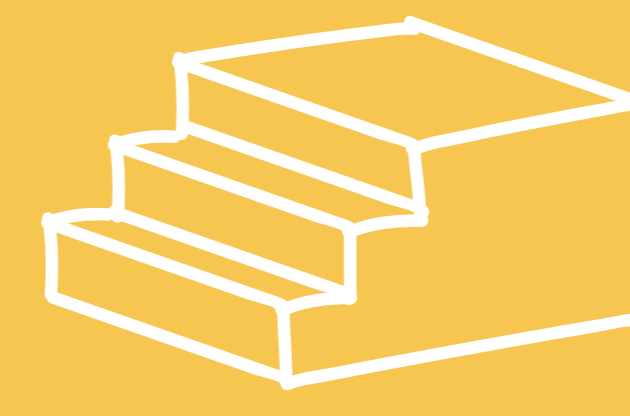
Nonprofits are one of a small handful of players responsible for developing and managing affordable housing in Edmonton. Based on the fact that over 4,500 families in Edmonton were on the affordable housing wait-list as of 2016, commercial developers are clearly not providing enough affordable housing. The Municipal Governing Act of Alberta does not allow cities to mandate the construction of affordable housing like in other provinces or countries. Nonprofits are often put in the position of managing community expectations of these projects and the expectations of federal, provincial, municipal, and private funders.



HOW to do it?

The guide will walk nonprofits through each step of the process of establishing a successful affordable housing project, from different lenses to use when determining a site to how to ensure your tenants feel connected to their community.

Distribution and impact: The City has said that they would consider sharing the guide with prospective nonprofits looking to provide affordable housing in Edmonton. Various nonprofits already providing affordable housing have expressed interest in sharing the guide as well. The guide could also have a web presence which would allow sections of it to be used nationally or internationally. This project should be framed as a living document and should include the changing experiences of nonprofits across the city in their initiatives and approaches.



WHAT next?

The framework and foundation for the guide has already been determined based on our ethnographic research and literature reviews, however, the six sections would need to be further validated with potential users of the guide to ensure it would satisfy their needs. Then, the guide's content would need to be fleshed out and written. Nonprofits and others would need to be engaged to continue to gather additional best practices. The results would need to be laid out and designed for both a physical document and a website mirroring the content. A press release and media event would be needed to promote awareness of this resource, and various partners would need to be engaged to ensure they share the materials with those who need them. The guide would need to be updated at least every couple of years to ensure the data is reasonably up to date.



CONSIDER this?

This guide could be used by many different stakeholders. Citizen advocates can use the maps to identify mismatches between communities with people in need and the amount of affordable housing. Citizens could also reference the engagement best practices if a developer is proposing or managing a development and not following best practice.

This guide could leverage components of other Shift Lab projects including encouraging nonprofits to get certified in embracing diversity or ensuring the mobile tenants' rights bus makes regular stops at the affordable housing facilities under their management.

Key Elements of the Guide...

Choosing Where to Build

A series of maps and statistics will help nonprofits find where affordable housing already exists in each neighborhood, along with the percentage of people living in poverty or spending more than 30% of their income on housing.



Tell the Story of your Neighbors

This part of the guide will humanize those using affordable housing by collecting stories of people in Edmonton who use or need affordable housing and demonstrate that their needs and hopes are the same as other residents of Edmonton.

Buying In!

Based on our ethnographic research and reviewing Edmonton-based case studies, there are best practices which provide a successful foundation for building community support for affordable housing projects. These include a commitment to transparency, engaging the community before development permits or building designs are complete, and finding community partners.



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Project Sustainability

We propose guidelines to ensure affordable housing projects are supported for the future by the community and provide adequate professional supports which are culturally sensitive to the need of tenants.

Community Integration

This section collects best practices in Edmonton on how to build connections between affordable housing projects and their community that is diverse and inclusive.

