



BOYLEstreet
COMMUNITY SERVICES

EMPOWER 2017-2018
ANNUAL REPORT
SERVE ADVOCATE



OUR VALUES

- We never give up even if the challenge is tough, seemingly impossible.
- We stand with our community members, side by side, patiently and for as long as they want – a constant and consistent caring force.
- Giving and receiving is a two way street at Boyle Street – our community members share many gifts with great generosity and open hearts.
- Boyle Street is a home, a family, a village – a place of safety, trust, love, welcome and also a place with all the challenges that a home, a family, and a village bring.
- We are there for our colleagues, supporting them, valuing their unique contribution to our community.
- Everything we do matters and the little things are just as important as the big ones – a small gesture can have a great impact on another’s life.
- Our work is always ongoing and that is OK.
- We share much in common and that connectedness of experience is a strength to be recognized, celebrated and drawn on.
- We are many nations, many beliefs, many walks of life coming together, seeking to understand each other, accepting each other and enjoying each other for what we are and for where we are at.
- The Creator is with us, the spirits soar within us and the culture of the First Peoples surrounds and protects us. We value our history as an agency and reflect on our past for guidance in moving forward – we value the experience and wisdom of our community Elders.
- Despite great challenges we believe unhealthy cycles can be broken, new opportunities created and, through healing, health restored.
- Each member of our community is deserving of a full measure of dignity, support, and respect.
- We honour our community’s resilience and celebrate and recognize our individual strengths and uniqueness.
- We advocate and educate creatively and innovatively at many levels for justice for all.
- We believe that life is too serious to be taken seriously and humour is a central part of our life and work at Boyle Street.



EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S UPDATE

As has been the trend for a number of years now, we have had a good year, marked by significant growth and the highest quality of services producing extraordinary outcomes with those we serve, and mixed with sadness and profound challenges.

So much has happened in the last year and there is so much that could be said about all the activities and events that have taken place, but I will focus on a few areas that seem to typify and exemplify the year we have had. Innovating in order to serve our community better is a central characteristic of Boyle Street, and this year was no exception.

There were many new initiatives this year, but a few stand out. First and foremost, the opening of Edmonton's first **supervised consumption site**, a long overdue health service that is already improving health and saving lives.

Secondly, the **Welcome Mat project**, which transformed with benches, umbrellas and deck chair the sidewalk outside the Community Centre into a reclaimed place of enjoyment and dignity for our community, and a patio like no other in Edmonton.

This was a year of continued and considerable growth. We saw an 11.4% increase in revenues taking us over annual revenues of nearly \$20 million; the highest revenue in our history. The staff group also grew, reaching 343. And our fund development work really hit its stride and increased by 19.1% from the previous year. All three areas of growth mean more services and more needs met for the community we serve and that – more than the impressive numbers – is what makes this a truly great success this year.

It was also a year in which we sought to listen better to our colleagues and act on what we heard. Boyle Street is nothing without the exceptional and extraordinary people who work in it. In my working life, I have never worked with a more remarkable group of people.

It feels like in this respect we are, right now, in a golden period of our history.

However, the work and environment remain challenging, and this inevitably generates concerns and frustrations for colleagues. We carried out an in-depth staff engagement survey in late 2017 and have spent the time since addressing – by and large successfully

– the key concerns raised by staff.

Partnerships continued to be at the heart of our work. The C5 partnership continued to deepen and our work in creating the **North East Community Hub** grew significantly and is really beginning to thrive while providing much-needed services in an area of Edmonton that has been long neglected. This year we became part of a new partnership – Recover – working with the City and other non-profits and community partners to make Edmonton's inner-city a better place for all of us to live.

There has been deep sadness and cruel disappointment as well this year. More of our community members died this year than any other year on record, and a significant proportion were long-standing members of the community. This took a heavy emotional toll on community members and staff alike.

We have learned to live with the bitter disappointment of failing to get our building redevelopment funded but, in the true spirit of Boyle Street's unwavering resilience, are already working on another plan for the Community Centre as we are in desperate need of a new or radically renovated space for our community.

Finally, I want to acknowledge the people we serve at Boyle Street Community Services and those who serve them. A more remarkable and inspiring group of people would be hard to find. And the community we have created together across our 8 sites is like no other in our city. Forged in adversity, driven by love, and somehow holding heartbreak and hope in balance, this magical community continues to move steadfastly forward. For that, I thank and honour our community members and our colleagues.

Hiy Hiy,



JULIAN DALY

*Executive Director,
Boyle Street Community Services*



Julian helping to paint a medicine wheel for the Welcome Mat Project



(L-R) Helen, client and volunteer, with Rebecca, Coordinator of Inner City Recreation and Wellness Program

OUR STRATEGIC PLAN

The Strategic Plan for 2018-2021 focuses on 15 key action items to achieve in the next three-year period. This document reflects where additional resources will go over the next three year period, over-and-above our existing services.

Implicit in this Strategic Plan is the need for continued excellence in existing, core programs and services and our commitment to key partnerships like the C5 and other community and government partners.

Also implicit in the Boyle Street Community Services strategic plan is the acknowledgment that we exist and serve on Treaty 6 lands. Our organization respects, values and honours Indigenous culture and history and as such Boyle Street Community Services is committed to being informed and guided by the best interest of those we have the honour of serving, which is a reflection of our values and the teachings of our First People.

Further, while Boyle Street Community Services serves all people equally, and all are welcome in our space, we are cognizant that the majority of people we serve are of First Nation, Metis and Inuit descent. As Boyle Street Community Services continues to grow and expand across the City of Edmonton, the needs of First Nation, Metis and Inuit clients will always be central to the heart of our work.



Indigenous mural inside Boyle Street Community Services

STRATEGIC PLAN (2018 - 2021)

- Community members and staff have access to cultural supports.
- Culture as practice is integrated into our work through formalized process and training.
- Boyle Street Training Services operates a quarterly conference focused on staff training and networking, a component of which is open to partners, the public and Ambassadors.
- A made-for-Boyle-Street leadership development program is supporting and developing a new group of leaders within the organization.
- There are no less than ten Boyle Street staff that have received specialized training in Harm Reduction, Mental Health, or Trauma-Informed Practice and are integrating these specializations into the work of their teams and programs.
- A dedicated two-person mobile mental health team, which includes a Registered Psychiatric Nurse, supports all Boyle Street programming and services.
- 150 community members are housed in a variety of housing units owned and operated by Boyle Street.
- Newly-housed community members are supported by connecting them with Boyle Street Ambassadors who can provide ongoing friendship and support.
- We have achieved greater financial sustainability by generating \$1 million in unrestricted funds annually by 2021.
- There is an Ambassador Advocacy Program, whereby Ambassadors are trained as advocates and can accompany and empower community members to access available resources.
- We use an agency-wide reflective practice tool and protocol that supports community members to regularly reflect on their progress in an intentional way while allowing Boyle Street to regularly reflect on its practice using relevant and up-to-date information.
- We lead the way in our sector as an open data organization.
- There is a non-residential managed alcohol program.
- There is a dedicated space for prayer, reflection and meditation at every Boyle Street site.
- All of our facilities are fit-for-purpose.



STORIES FROM THE CENTRE

There are countless stories of success and triumph that occur every day at Boyle Street Community Services. We have selected three leaders in our organization to showcase some examples of the exemplary work that we do.

Winter Warming Bus Manager **Jared Tkachuk** shares the story of how the citizens and businesses in Edmonton came together to make sure that a vital service remained on the road during one of the coldest winters in recent years.

Director of Development **Jordan Reiniger** explains how it is actually a

fallacy that people experiencing homelessness do not want gainful and meaningful employment, and describes how Boyle Street Ventures is building social enterprises to meet our client's employment needs.

Administrative and Operations Manager **Nas Shariff** describes the hard work that went into the Boyle Street Group Living Services, Ubuntu, and Youth Community Support Program accreditation process and sense of elation the entire team felt when Boyle Street's programs received unprecedentedly positive results.

ACCREDITATION SUCCESS

Accreditation is an ongoing process with established standards of evaluating and recognizing a program to identify what is being done well and what can be improved. Participating in accreditation demonstrates our commitment to excellent service delivery, safety, and accountability.

This process is not new to Boyle Street Community Services; historically, our **Group Living** programs have successfully maintained accredited status for over a decade. The year of 2017 is unique and often referred to as “The Year of Accreditation” at Boyle Street. On June 6th, 2016 an application was submitted to the Canadian Accreditation Council (CAC) for three of our programs. For the first time, the **Family Program, Ubuntu Children and Families and the Youth Community Support Program** embarked on the path toward accreditation.

At that point, I questioned if we were really prepared for this daunting process and the hours it was going to take. I sought advice from those who had gone through accreditation and were successful, and to hopefully get some words of encouragement.

With the little experience we had, we spent many hours around the boardroom table discussing what it takes to achieve accredited status and outlining our future steps. Early on we realized the value of working collaboratively to develop policies and processes to meet program standards and salvage our sanity.

Over the course of 10 months (June 2016-March 2017), the accreditation journey began to take on a life of its own, particularly as we spent countless hours crafting policies, refining processes and implementing them. Finally in March 2017, after hundreds of hours of preparation time, we successfully completed three program policy manuals and one Governance and Management policy manual which, housed dozens of updated Agency policies and introduced new accountability practices to Boyle Street.

As the lead on this project, there wasn't a more rewarding feeling than to submit this package to the Canadian Accreditation Council.

Shortly after this, I recall saying to our late Sandy Bergwall, who was the Program Manager for Youth Community Support Program:

“The worst that can happen is that we don’t get accredited, but we learn a lot about our programs, and we are going to be a stronger organization for trying.”

On April 21st, 2017 we had a two-hour conference call with the CAC review team assigned to our application. The phone call with the Accreditation Council is an important step in the accreditation process as it allows the review team to ask questions and seek clarification about the submitted documents. There we were the eight of us, sitting at the same boardroom table where we started this journey anxiously awaiting feedback. As the review team went over each program policy manual by sections, we listened intently. It was without question one of the most anxious moments in our journey.

To our surprise, every program received outstanding reviews and each manual we submitted was totally compliant with the standards set out by CAC.

The energy in the room was magnetic as we all attempted to contain our excitement and complete the call with our review team. After the call, the boardroom erupted with cheers, high-fives, and smiles across all of our faces – what a joy it was!

Although the call was positive we had a final hurdle to overcome – the onsite visit. The three-day onsite visit in June 2017 was an opportunity for the CAC review team to visit each program site, review files and interview the staff, clients and board members. The review team was supportive and always helpful throughout the entire process. They told us that we could expect to hear their decision no later than early September 2017.

Soon after the onsite visit, our Executive Director Julian Daly received a call from CAC; they were pleased to inform him Boyle Street Community Services had been accredited for an unprecedented 4 years! There was an overwhelming sense of accomplishment and pride not only for the eight of us that invested so much time into this journey but the staff in the Family Program, Ubuntu Children and Families and Youth Community Support Program.

We set out with a vision to successfully accredit three Boyle Street programs that meet the public standard for accountability and service delivery. This was a major milestone for our organization, receiving an unprecedented 4 years of accredited status. At the end of it all, we toasted the decision to go forward with accreditation and we toasted to ourselves for committing hours to a process that has strengthened each program and enhanced our ability to serve our community.

The lesson learned here is all you can do is persevere and never quit when the going gets tough. Whether it's your dream or goal or obsessive, burning desire – and you take action on it – the only failure is quitting. That's it.

NAS SHARIFF

*Manager,
Administrative & Operations*



Nick, 24/7 Crisis Diversion Team Lead



(L-R) Nilam, Assistant Manager of Employment Services, assisting a client

WINTER'S ESSENTIAL SERVICE

The Winter Warming Bus first hit the road in 2006 with the intention of serving vulnerable Edmontonians residing outside the downtown core. Indeed, these individuals are in many ways the most vulnerable considering the distance between them and most service providers, and the severity of our winters.

The main objective has always been straightforward: to enable survival.

Despite frigid conditions, the majority of people served by the Bus are sleeping rough. Some are marginally housed and depend on the Bus to provide food and clothing so that they can afford to pay rent. Others stay in shelters overnight but don't feel safe downtown and depart for outlying areas each morning.

The Bus operates seven days a week; its hours and route have been determined by the needs of the marginalized community it serves. It connects with people who are actively intoxicated or in psychosis, barred from accessing services at other agencies, and totally isolated

from or unaware of services in the city.

There are three main facets to the Bus' mandate. One, distribute food, warm clothes, blankets, harm reduction supplies, and other necessities. Two, provide transportation to shelters for those who would otherwise have to spend the night outdoors. Three, build rapport and trust with the clientele and help bridge them to appropriate resources. This past year we took that third tenet one step further and had a housing worker stationed directly on the Bus as often as we could. People interested in pursuing housing could complete an intake on the spot.

Despite the fact these efforts help save lives, securing funding for the Bus has been an ongoing challenge. Winter services in Edmonton begin November 1st but for the past two years, Bus operations were delayed due to a lack of finances. These delays have real consequences. Within the first week of November 2017, the city had already experienced a low temperature of -18°C and 7 centimeters of snow.

The Bus, however, only started up on December 18th. It could have been far worse.

The fact is, the Bus would not have run at all if it hadn't been for the generous support of local donors and community partners.

For the 2017/18 season, the City ultimately offered to provide half of the program's budgetary requirements if Boyle Street could raise the remainder.

Thanks to A-Squared Communications, which kickstarted a campaign amongst Edmonton businesses to contribute, CBC Edmonton, which helped spread the word, and a substantial donation from the Royal Alexandra Hospital Foundation, we were able to get underway.

JARED TKACHUK

Manager,
24/7 Outreach & Support Services



Two clients who are happy to see the Bus back on the streets



The Winter Warming Bus loading clients at Boyle Street Community Services

INNOVATING SOCIAL ENTERPRISE

One sunny Saturday afternoon, I went for a walk with my two daughters. During our walk, we came across Fred*, a long-time client of Boyle Street Community Services. I introduced him to my daughters, and after a few high-fives and some pleasantries, Fred turned to me in total seriousness while pointing to a nearby construction site and said simply:

"I wish I could work there."

Fred is not alone. In fact, contrary to an all-too-popular belief, most people who are experiencing homelessness *want* to work. The hard reality is that it's relatively simple to fall into homelessness and far too difficult to get out of it.

At Boyle Street Community Services, we do whatever it takes to support people in their journey towards healing and thriving. That's why we established our social enterprise **Boyle Street Ventures** nearly a decade ago.

A social enterprise uses a business approach to address social challenges. While not all social challenges can be solved using this approach, there are some that are uniquely suited to it.

In the last decade — and in an accelerated way in the past two years — we have been exploring and realizing the potential that social enterprises can offer in the efforts to address homelessness in Edmonton.

In September of 2017, we officially launched **Four Directions Financial** in partnership with ATB Financial. Four Directions is a full-service financial institution with an emphasis on breaking down barriers to financial inclusion for those who are un- or under-banked.

Most people take for granted the stability and security that comes with having a bank account. For those experiencing homelessness, traditional banking isn't easy to access. Four Directions broke down the barrier of required government-issued identification that prevented many from banking by implementing an innovative biometric identification system — in fact, the only biometric system operational in any bank branch in Canada.

Today, because of the hard work and innovation of everyone involved, more than 800 people who were previously

*Names of clients have been changed to protect their privacy

excluded from banking have access to financial security and stability through Four Directions Financial.

Boyle Street Ventures also launched three new businesses in the past year aimed at employing people like my friend, Fred. We have been experimenting with a variety of service offerings, such as junk removal, moving and cleaning. Capitalizing on those experiences, we have launched Boyle Street Property Maintenance, a business aimed at employing our clients, while providing exceptional service to residential property managers.

We also hear regularly that members of the public want to do something to help people experiencing homelessness, but don't know where to start. We have addressed this problem with the launch of hiregood.ca in May 2018. Hiregood.ca lets consumers do good with their to-do list by getting household tasks done in a simple, cost-effective manner while creating direct and meaningful employment opportunities for those who face barriers to the traditional job market.

This tech-driven venture is already

gaining significant traction among customers in our city and garnering international attention!

Finally, we officially launched our Food Truck on June 21 – National Indigenous Peoples' Day. Boyle Street Eats will be hitting the streets to provide excellent food and employment opportunities across Edmonton.

Our social enterprises create a spectrum of employment opportunities that are adaptable to the needs of those with barriers to the traditional job market. In total, Boyle Street Ventures created employment opportunities for 59 people, like Fred, last year.



Boyle Street Ventures crew members

These game-changing social enterprises confirm for us at Boyle Street Community Services what we experience every day in our work: barriers can be removed, unhealthy cycles can be broken, and healing and health can be restored.

It takes creativity, innovation and a willingness to take risks. It takes working together and hard work.

But most importantly, it relies on the determination, resilience, and fortitude of the incredible people experiencing homelessness, who get up every day again daring to push for a better future for themselves, their family, and their community.

We are grateful to the many businesses, families, and individuals that have supported these initiatives as customers, advisors, partners, investors, and connectors – your involvement has made a significant impact on the lives of many.

JORDAN REINIGER

Director,
Development



The Boyle Street Eats food truck serving in front of Four Directions Financial



530 PEOPLE HOUSED
and assisted to maintain housing



2,232 I.D. CARDS
registered to our community



83% of CHILDREN
supported safely with parents



1,895 CERTIFICATES
awarded for safety training



82,200 MEALS
served to our community



80,390 LITRES
of litter removed from downtown



13,100 HOURS
committed by 375 volunteers



4,835 CONTACTS
made by Street Outreach

