

Introduction:

Using local investment, the National Housing Strategy and CMHC opportunities, an initial facility will produce sustainability revenues, support a community collective impact strategy, and will be used to leverage financing for other strategic builds and re-purposing to provide needed affordable and social housing with spaces and facilities to benefit the communities they are built in and compliment existing housing stock. Our strategy will be to work with City and Provincial development bodies, architects, designers and greening technologists to ensure safety but find creative ways to make the best use of funds. We will develop mixed market and multi-use spaces that can flex with the needs and provide more revenues when opportunities allow, but will also support the infrastructure needed to help people move out of risk and into stability.

One specific targeted opportunity is the now empty and unused Michener North Site, that has long been a contentious topic of conversation and consideration. We believe a community collaboration will be the best way to leverage the value of this property, financially as well as to the human bottom line.



Intentional and considered action for new builds as well as revitalizing and re-envisioning existing buildings and spaces will increase housing stock, opportunities and sustainability. We will engage local community members, businesses, trades and developers as well as the end-users of our facilities to enhance a sense of connection to and, ownership for these spaces, as well as aligning community systems to care for community. This is a model of action that can be used in other communities as well, where there are existing facilities that just need some love and TLC to be able to serve a meaningful purpose and could unite community systems under a banner of collaboration to make good things happen.

Michener North Site Revitalization and Development Potential

Imagine.... Regenerate, renovate and repurpose any existing buildings that are salvageable (even if they are just the shells) to become a Centre for Community Care and Empowerment. It becomes a catalyst for community collective action, as well as systems and policy assessment and change. We need the recommendation of Seniors and Housing, Community and Social Services, and Health, to halt the current mandate of decommission and sale and open up the dialogue on this site for some creative consideration. With a sustainable and innovative plan, demonstrating the added value and a self-sustainability, we should be able to garner Federal support and funding as well. This has happened in other communities in the country, why should it not happen in Alberta? With government support and input, there would be support from the private and social sectors as well as the community at large. An assessment of the facilities, a collective look at the costs versus benefits and opportunities, ways to defray costs, and creative solutions to challenges needs to be undertaken.

With a combination of property gifting and capital dollars, with the assistance of the community to help keep costs down, there will be enough capital to restore the decommissioned utilities, do any abatement and risk mitigation that is needed, demolish any buildings that are beyond saving, and refurbish in a beautiful way, the ones that are salvageable. This is the start of the residential and social enterprise activities that will generate sustainability revenues to pay for operations and leveraging to continue the development process both on the grounds and in the community. Economies of scale come into play here, where even flexible rent rates contribute, spaces for services can be shared and efficiencies increased.

Safe sites and situations for AHS workers (as required in their policies) A headquarters for social agencies, able to be rented more cheaply, and utilizing combined administration would free up more of their dollars to provide community outreach in neighbourhoods. This opens the way to building bridges and widening pathways into inclusion and independence for those that can do it, with a permanently operating and flexing home-base for those that need it generating and providing the outreach that strengthens resilience and capacity for those that fly the nest. Professional medical and mental health and addictions services can be facilitated on location. Employment programs can be enacted on location. This decreases the amount of traffic in the downtown core, removes barriers due health and wellness challenges, including mental health concerns. More easily managed harm reduction, separate spaces for specialized supports, efficiencies in case management, safety and security. For those who are chronically difficult to house and continually at risk in their housing, it creates an incubator space that can move them from crisis through to integration. A natural buffer zone decreases the NIMBY effect, and value added amenities actually mean benefits for the surrounding neighbourhoods including employment opportunities, retail and culture. A traditional space can be set up to showcase Aboriginal healing and community building philosophies.

Picture a housing and integrated supports project that evolves outward from a "village" designed for social, supported housing and "incubation" to more inclusive mixed market residential, engagement and employment opportunities and then blending into the community at large. Picture a "campus" that becomes a jewel of the community, a learning and growing center for the whole community while helping vulnerable populations change their lives and pursue their dreams.

Michener North Site Revitalization and Development Potential Continued

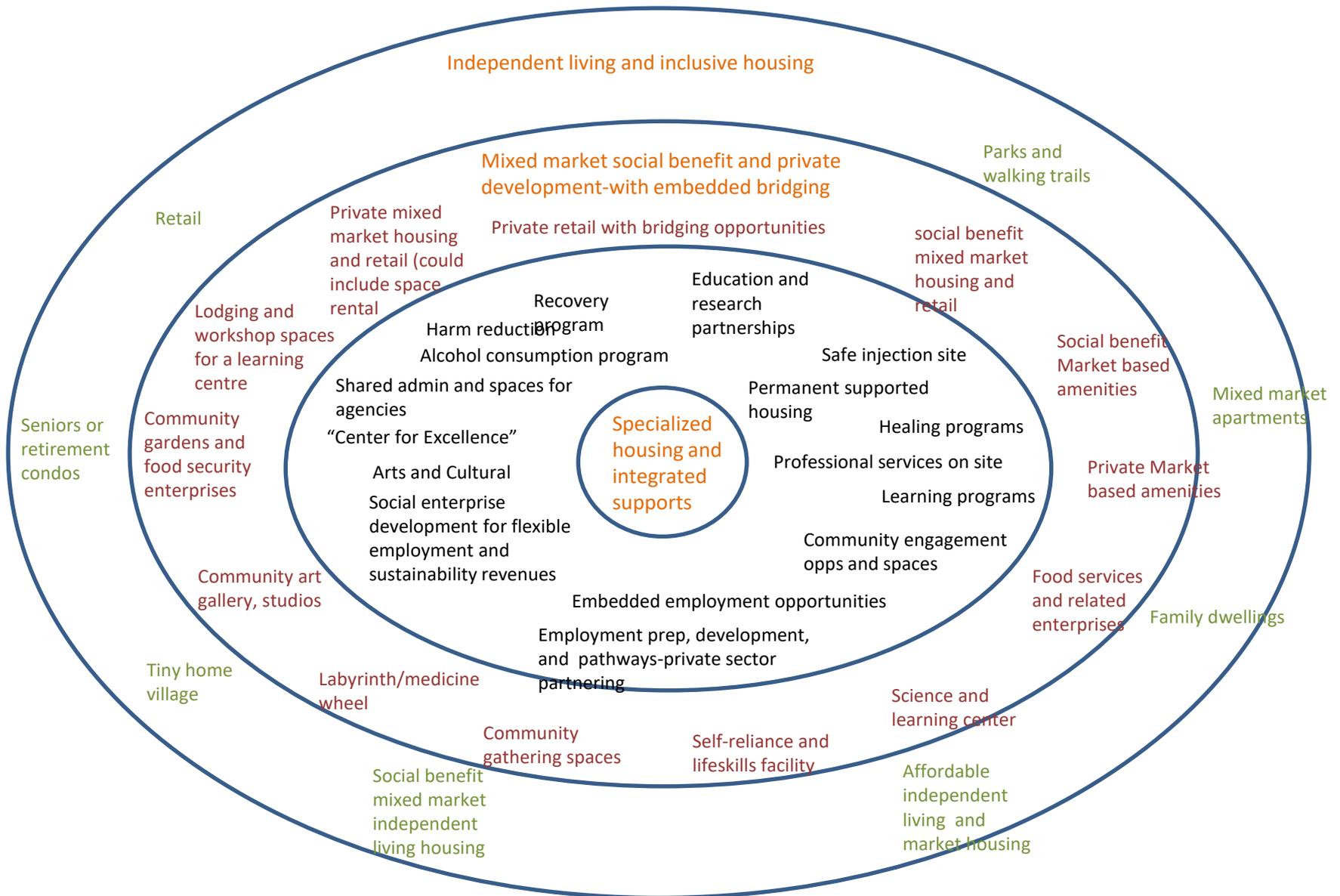
In a combination of social and market development, selling portions of the land to private developers would help generate more revenues for sustainability and the social benefit development. Shops, café, science center, arts facility, conference facility, social enterprise, social agency offices, employment development, health and wellness facilities and learning centers, a social and community center of excellence that teaches people and their community how to overcome barriers and foster inclusion. This activity generates revenues for the project to support itself and create greater opportunities .

There are people in this community that do not fit into any current program, affordable residences that are human rights violations, a lack of accessible units, and the need for family sized spaces for transition, social and supported housing that are just not available but could be answered with creative use of this facility. And more than housing, the opportunity is there for integrated services which build capacity for service users and the community toward sustainable self-reliance.

The community literally wraps its arms around the most vulnerable, creating a process whereby those who need it are given what they need to thrive, which benefits the entire community in a number of ways and decreases costs to government ministries, while sustaining the system of care and producing revenues.

Potential revenues from even 140 viable units being renovated rather than built new, averaging \$ 500 per unit is \$ 70,000 per month. This allows for individual social housing rates, couples, and family spaces. It does not account for supported housing staffing dollars, potential PDD high acuity complex needs contracts. This does not take into account additional rents for office spaces, potential oil field rentals (for family guys who want a clean and safe situation) as well as social enterprise revenues. Just this conservatively estimated base rent is enough to pay the operational costs of the facility, with room to expand, improve, and help fund other parts of the care continuum. With more buildings and enterprises, especially mixed market, will come more revenues. Green energy technologies such as solar panels, small wind turbines, and water reclamation will save operational dollars and can contribute to savings to others in the community. Food can be produced on site as well for greater health of participants, cost savings and enterprise, or contribution to the community continuum of care.

Rather than being run as an institution, it is run as a village, a community with supports that can flex for need, that provides opportunities to learn, grow and thrive for its residents and the rest of the community. Complex needs care for seniors with addiction and mental health challenges could be offered here. This site could also accommodate a shelter and hostel option. Due to the shared space and shared services, it would extend the available shelter support to day time hours. The engagement opportunities and care continuum access as well as proximity to supports will increase transition efficiency and shorten shelter stays as well as mitigate risk to the surrounding community. The ability to concentrate support staff, resources and programs in the vicinity increases efficient use of resources and still allows for outreach. Programs can be developed in community neighbourhoods and surrounding communities to help decrease the influx of vulnerable individuals into Red Deer by helping to build supports and resources in peoples' home communities.



A quick visual of the outwardly evolving development potential from crisis to full community integration. This links into other community activities and enterprises. A development and business plan needs to be created, once an assessment of the facilities is undertaken

Benefits and Outcomes

- Favourable reviews and enthusiasm so far for this concept from front line agencies, RCMP and community members tell us we are on the right track and that if this bid is successful, there will be much support to collaborate
- Initial projects will almost immediately provide housing and inroads to a coordinated continuum for next steps for a majority of chronically homeless or at risk of homeless individuals
- Will create options that are flexible for use, adaptable to need, and conducive to personal dignity and human rights
- Produces revenues to finance this project and future builds, support other aspects of the community continuum and create contingency funding for future deficits
- Will galvanize and connect multiple sectors of community for ongoing support in various ways- providing opportunities for all to contribute
- Will assist in building bridges of inclusion through multi-sector collaboration, coordination and partnerships and by bringing added value to community, paid for with rents from currently discriminated and ostracized groups
- Connects and catalyzes community efforts
- Will flex with needs and opportunities, building reserves dedicated to preserving affordable and social housing in perpetuity

