

Council Report: Measuring Social Well-Being to Improve the Lives of Airdrie Residents –

Survey Background Report

Introduction

Background information regarding Social Planning's process that narrows our focus on measuring social well-being. The attached report is to inform Council of the steps Social Planning is taking towards strengthening social well-being, starting with the value and benefits of collecting and analyzing social data through a Social Well-Being Survey.

Timelines and History:

April 2020: Adoption of the Social Policy

- The City of Airdrie's Social Planning department aims to strengthen resident's social well-being through research and evidence-informed action. On April 6, 2020, Social Planning presented Council with a Social Policy and outlined the work to follow which includes the development of a Social Policy Framework (SPF) including a Social Well-Being Survey.

June 2021: Social Planning Expands Scope from Social Well-Being to Measure Well-Being More Broadly Via an Airdrie Well-Being Index

- As we were conducting our research on how to measure social well-being (with the ultimate goal of strengthening it), we realized that there was an opportunity to look more broadly and focus on overall well-being versus just the social element. Therefore, we proposed to expand the survey that captured a number of additional elements of well-being (mental, financial, physical, community, and social well-being).
- By expanding the scope to include elements beyond social well-being, the idea was to provide avenues for other areas of the organization to see how this information could benefit their work, so the Social Well-Being Index (SWBI) became the Airdrie Well-Being Index (AWBI).
- During the June 21, 2021 Council meeting, Social Planning presented Council with an overview of the Airdrie Well-Being Index (AWBI) as an approach that could help the municipality and community understand how Airdrie residents are faring in their daily lives.
- Following the presentation of the AWBI to Council, we recognized this was a new and ambitious approach which caused some levels of concern amongst Council members and the project and discussion was put on hold.

Path Forward: Returning to Social Well-Being - Social Planning will Return to CSAB and Council in April/May 2022

- Based on the complexity of the AWBI project and concerns raised by Council, Social Planning is returning to CSAB and Council with an outline of the original scope of the Social Well-Being Survey and Index that follows from the adoption of the Social Policy. First, we want to start by sharing the value and benefits of collecting social data through a Social Well-Being Survey, and how this data can support the municipality's advocacy efforts, and better equip Council to address broader community social issues in the most appropriate way.

STRENGTHENING SOCIAL WELL-BEING IN AIRDRIE

- There are a number of benefits to this approach, first and foremost amongst them is that Social Planning has an expertise in social well-being and the City has a clear mandate to enhance it (through the Social Policy), and the plan to measure it was supported in the adoption of the policy and endorsement of the work to follow.
- As mentioned in the report, one way that can help us understand our community better is by measuring how Airdrie residents are faring in their social lives, via the Social Well-Being Survey.

Having a more complete understanding of the social landscape can help the municipality prioritize those social issues that are most widespread and most pressing and better equip the municipality and Council when making decisions and setting priorities on behalf of the community.