Calgary

FCSS Funding Framework

Investing in social inclusion

fcss

family & community
support services

1. Family & Community Support Services

Background

Family & Community Support Services (FCSS) is a joint municipal/provincial funding program designed to establish, administer and operate preventive social services.

The *FCSS Act* mandates an emphasis on **prevention** and **volunteerism**, with a cost sharing arrangement between the province and municipalities/Métis settlements and a focus on enhanced **local autonomy**. As stated in the *FCSS Regulation* (Province of Alberta, n.d., Section 3 AR 218/94: 2-3), FCSS programs must do one or more of the following:

i. Help people to develop independence, strengthen coping skills and become more resistant to crisis.

ii. Help people to develop an awareness of social needs.

iii. Help people to develop interpersonal and group skills which enhance constructive relationships among people.

iv. Help people and communities to assume responsibility for decisions and actions which affect them.

v. Provide supports that help sustain people as active participants in the community.

The City of Calgary has partnered with the Government of Alberta to deliver FCSS since 1966. *City Council's FCSS Policy* (CPS2016-05) provides guidance for the administration of FCSS at the local level. Preventive social programs are supported through FCSS Calgary to collectively reach tens of thousands of Calgarians and leverage millions of dollars through volunteers' contributions and fundraised dollars.

2. FCSS Funding Framework: Investing in social inclusion

An extensive evaluation of the Social Sustainability Framework – which guided the FCSS Calgary funding allocations and practices from 2009 to 2018 – confirmed that FCSS-funded programs are collectively having a large, positive effect on social inclusion among program participants. The evaluation also highlighted the importance of place-based neighbourhood strengthening initiatives for increasing residents' wellbeing. The evaluation results, as well as the feedback and recommendations from key stakeholders informed the ***FCSS Funding Framework: Investing in social inclusion*** (the Framework).
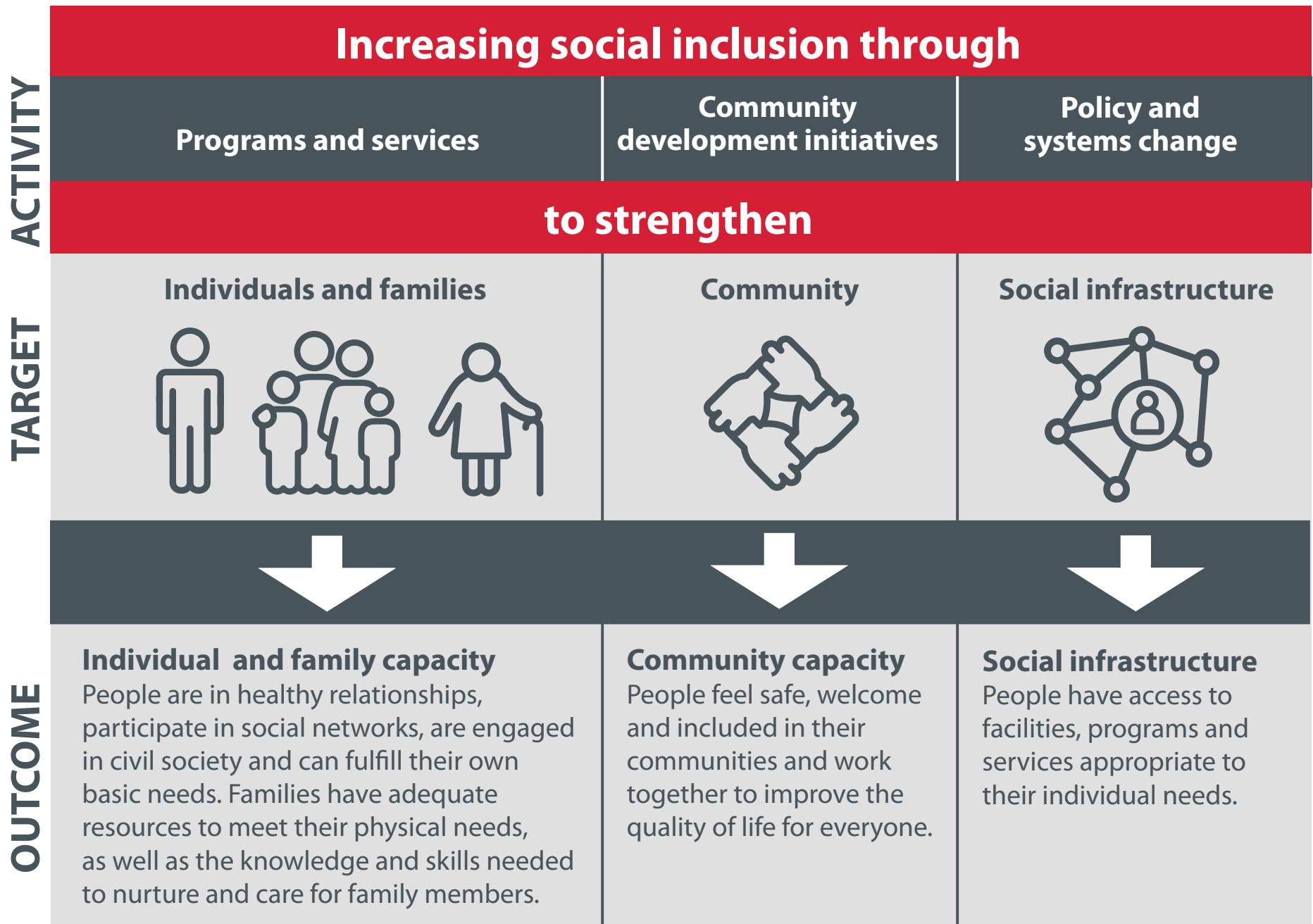
The Framework provides a strategic direction to guide FCSS funding in a way that's responsive to emerging trends in the community, while also being flexible to incorporate new knowledge in the area of prevention.

Inequities among Calgarians and neighbourhoods continue to contribute to social isolation, especially for those who experience vulnerabilities, which in turn can lead to negative economic and social outcomes. Investment in prevention enhances social inclusion and removes barriers to equity.

Guided by this Framework, The City of Calgary provides funding for programs and initiatives that consider **intersectionality** and support Calgarians whose multiple identities — such as ability, age, ethnicity, gender, immigration status, Indigeneity, race, sexual orientation and socio-economic status — may lead to multiple vulnerabilities. Funding is directed to the following five **priority population groups**: children/youth, families, Indigenous people, newcomers to Canada and seniors.

The City of Calgary also directs funding to increase social inclusion in select neighbourhoods where a high proportion of residents experience risk factors. Funding to strengthen social infrastructure is directed to policies and systems that affect service delivery. The three-pronged approach, i.e., investing in programs/services, community and policy/systems change, provides a holistic, multi-dimensional funding framework (see diagram on the next page).

FCSS Funding Framework

	Increasing social inclusion through		
ACTIVITY	**Programs and services**	**Community development initiatives**	**Policy and systems change**
	to strengthen		
TARGET	**Individuals and families**	**Community**	**Social infrastructure**
OUTCOME	**Individual and family capacity** People are in healthy relationships, participate in social networks, are engaged in civil society and can fulfill their own basic needs. Families have adequate resources to meet their physical needs, as well as the knowledge and skills needed to nurture and care for family members.	**Community capacity** People feel safe, welcome and included in their communities and work together to improve the quality of life for everyone.	**Social infrastructure** People have access to facilities, programs and services appropriate to their individual needs.

2.1 Vision

A great place to make a living, a great place to make a life.

2.2 Mission

Making life better every day.

2.3 Long-term outcome – Increased social inclusion

The City of Calgary allocates FCSS Calgary funding to programs and initiatives that contribute to its long-term outcome of **increased social inclusion** of Calgarians experiencing vulnerabilities. Social isolation leads to a wide range of issues, such as family instability, child maltreatment, unemployment and crime. Social isolation is also linked to negative physical and mental health outcomes. Investing in programs and initiatives that increase social inclusion advances The City of Calgary's vision of making Calgary a great place to make a living, a great place to make a life.

Increased social inclusion is achieved through three main approaches:

- Preventive programs and services for individuals and families.
- Community development initiatives.
- Policy and systems change initiatives.

The diagram on page 3 shows how these three approaches contribute to increased social inclusion.

Research demonstrates that these approaches, when used from an **evidence-informed** perspective, **increase protective factors and decrease risk factors** in individuals, families and communities, while strengthening Calgary's social infrastructure.

Mid-term outcomes have been identified for each of these approaches to assess progress towards the long-term outcome of increased social inclusion.

2.4 Mid-term outcomes

Programs and services mid-term outcomes

Evidence-informed programs and services contribute to the following five mid-term outcomes (for more information, see the FCSS Research Briefs at calgary.ca/fcss).

Mid-term outcome 1: Increased positive child and youth development

Positive child and youth development focuses on developmental outcomes achieved in childhood, adolescence and early adulthood that are instrumental to success, health and happiness in adulthood.

Some examples of positive child and youth developmental outcomes are:
• Improved ability to make friends.
• Enhanced ability to cope with challenges.
• Gains in positive self-worth and sense of identity.
• Growth in pro-social attitudes.
• Enhanced sense of belonging.

Mid-term outcome 2: Enhanced economic self-sufficiency

Adult personal capacity, the ability to make positive, sustainable and long-term decisions, is closely tied to economic self-sufficiency, having enough income to consistently meet basic needs.

Some examples of adult personal capacity and economic self-sufficiency outcomes are:
• Increased income through earnings and/or social benefits/transfer.
• Improved quality of employment (e.g. permanency, benefits, opportunities for advancement).
• Improvement in financial literacy.
• Increased savings.

Mid-term outcome 3: Growth in social capital/social participation

Social capital focuses on positive social ties that can provide social support, enhanced feelings of inclusion, positive role models and information to enhance participation in all aspects of society. Positive social ties are connections among people that are used for sharing information, knowledge, feelings and experiences.

Some examples of social capital/social participation outcomes are:
• Increased number of individuals who provide support.
• Improved quality of relationships with people who provide support.
• Increased participation in social groups and activities.

Mid-term outcome 4: Improved family functioning and positive parenting

Family functioning considers how well families meet family members' needs and includes factors such as relationships between family members, communication, sharing of tasks and outlook, among others. Positive parenting is a key component of family functioning and includes factors like showing love and affection, effectively managing household tasks, setting and enforcing rules consistently and other factors.

Some examples of improved family functioning and positive parenting outcomes are:
• Family members are more encouraging and appreciative of one another.
• Family members share emotion more openly.
• Parents are more involved in children's activities.
• Parents set age-appropriate rules and expectations.

Mid-term outcome 5: Enhanced Indigenous healing and wellbeing

Indigenous healing and wellbeing is a lifelong journey of finding balance on an individual level, within relationships and through connection with the natural and spiritual world. Wellbeing has been defined as "living a good life." In this context, healing refers to the holistic pathways that an individual or community takes towards wellbeing.

Some examples of enhanced Indigenous healing and wellbeing outcomes are:
• Increased sense of cultural belonging and feeling supported.
• Increased understanding and practice of Natural Law.
• Increased exposure to cultural practices such as ceremonies and Elder/Knowledge Keepers teachings.
• Increased understanding and use of traditional and community-based parenting practices.

Community development mid-term outcomes

Evidence-informed community development initiatives contribute to the following three mid-term outcomes (for more information, see the FCSS Research Briefs at calgary.ca/fcss).

Mid-term outcome 1: Increased leadership capacity

Residents lead with capacity and confidence.

- Residents gain experience in leadership roles.
- Residents lead opportunities to increase their leadership skills.
- Residents lead opportunities to increase their leadership knowledge.
- Residents participate in opportunities to increase their leadership knowledge.
- Residents participate in opportunities to increase their leadership skills.

Mid-term outcome 2: Increased sense of belonging

Residents connect to each other and their community and have supportive relationships.

- Residents increase their connection to others through community development initiatives.
- Residents lead community development initiatives.
- Residents increase their participation in community development initiatives.

Mid-term outcome 3: Improved economic participation

Residents participate and lead economic opportunities with capacity and confidence.

- Residents lead economic opportunities.
- Residents participate in economic opportunities.
- Residents develop skills that increase their economic participation.
- Residents access services that increase their economic participation.

Policy and systems change mid-term outcomes

Evidence-informed policy and systems change initiatives contribute to the following three mid-term outcomes.

Mid-term outcome 1: An equity-based social policy agenda

Policy and system change is most effective when organizations work together to advance, and act with/for, populations experiencing vulnerabilities.

- Increased subject matter expertise through research and collaboration with other experts who are already engaged in advancing an issue.
- Increased subject matter expertise by convening members of the affected priority population groups to share their lived experience.
- Increased coordination by convening and leading a cross-sector, multi-partner collaborative to develop and advance a specific social policy agenda where none exists but where there is a clear and pressing need for, and broad interest in, advocating for such change.
- Reduction of inequities in the specific population by developing and implementing an action plan to be undertaken by the collaborative.

Mid-term outcome 2: Integrated service coordination

Service coordination requires policy and system change to take place across multiple institutions and/or governments.

- Issue identification by convening a collective of organizations serving a specific population group experiencing vulnerabilities to identify issues and opportunities to improve the overall coordination of services.
- Improved outcomes for the specific population by developing and implementing an integrated service coordination plan across multiple partners.

Mid-term outcome 3: Evidence-informed policy and systems change

Service providers have information and expertise in the issues facing their clients and can share this information.

- Increased awareness of local context for emerging and best practices on specific issues among policy stakeholders. Increased response to government requests for expert comment on policy issues within an organizational leader's area of expertise.
- Increased outcome for specific population groups through policies and systems that will have lasting, positive effects.

2.5 Short-term outcomes

Short-term outcomes are defined and tracked at the program level, in relation to specific mid-term outcomes described in the previous section. In addition, programs track and report outputs such as the number of participants, volunteers and volunteer hours.

2.6 Guiding principles

The revised FCSS Funding Framework aligns with the City Council-approved Social Wellbeing Principles. These are:

Equity – The City will strive to provide equitable services. This includes removing barriers to access and inclusion.

Truth and reconciliation – The City will advance the activated and shared process of truth and reconciliation in collaboration with the community.

Culture – The City will seek opportunities to grow culture.

Prevention – The City will aim to stop problems before they start, using a prevention approach.

3. Monitoring, evaluation and reporting

Progress towards increasing social inclusion through FCSS funding are tracked using the **FCSS Social Inclusion Indicators** or other measurement tools for neighbourhood strengthening and policy/systems change. Results from these outcome monitoring and evaluation tools are reported to all stakeholders annually. Emerging best and promising practices in prevention are incorporated in the Framework periodically as they become available and innovative funding practices will be part of ongoing quality improvement.

4. Conclusion

Enhancing social inclusion and wellbeing remains the primary focus for The City of Calgary FCSS prevention funding. This Framework is a living document that evolves over time. It incorporates well-documented best and promising practices and responds to emerging trends and drivers of change in the public, private and non-profit sectors. Readers are encouraged to visit **calgary.ca/fcss** for the most up-to-date copy.

References

i. FCSS Calgary. 2019. Annual Report. Calgary: City of Calgary, Calgary Neighbourhoods.

ii. Province of Alberta. n.d. "*Family and Community Support Services Act*. Alberta Regulation 218/1994. With amendments up to and including Alberta Regulation 104/2017." *Family and Community Support Services Act*. Edmonton: Alberta Queen's Printer. http://www.qp.alberta.ca/1266. cfm?page=F03.cfm&leg_type=Acts&isbncln=0779701542

iii. Province of Alberta. n.d. "*Family and Community Support Services Regulation*. Alberta Regulation 218/1994. With amendments up to and including Alberta Regulation 104/2017." *Family and Community Support Services Act*. Edmonton: Alberta Queen's Printer. http://www.qp.alberta.ca/documents/ Regs/1994_218.pdf

iv. The City of Calgary commissions research briefs to provide guidance from the research, where it exists, to funders and organizations that contribute to FCSS Calgary's long term outcome of increasing social inclusion. Information for the research briefs was gathered through a search of large academic search engines, a review of published research, a search of best and promising practice websites and databases, and a review of articles and websites submitted by FCSS funded organizations. The research briefs are not intended to serve as program development toolkits. Available at calgary.ca/fcss.

Appendices

Appendix A

Glossary

Evidence-informed – Practices that are person-centered, meaning the preferences and experiences of individual clients are considered alongside best practices, as defined by quantitative evidence.

FCSS Social Inclusion Indicators – Social inclusion indicators are used to measure the impact of FCSS funded-programs. Most of these surveys have been drawn from standardized surveys that have been successfully used in other contexts and jurisdictions. The complete survey package can be found at calgary.ca/fcss.

Intersectionality – A framework for conceptualizing a person, group of people, or social problem as affected by several discriminations and disadvantages. An intersectional approach considers the historical, social and political context and recognizes the unique experience of the individual based on the intersection of all relevant grounds. It considers people's overlapping identities and experiences to understand the complexity of prejudices they face.

Local autonomy – Within the *FCSS Act* and *Regulation* is the concept of local autonomy. The notion is that municipalities that participate in FCSS will have the ability to use FCSS funds to respond to unique local needs and priorities, while still abiding by the *Act* and *Regulation*.

Prevention – The conditions or personal attributes that strengthen the healthy development, wellbeing and safety of individuals across the lifespan and/or communities. Prevention programs deter the onset of a problem, intervene at a very early stage in its development or mitigate risk factors/ strengthen protective factors.

Priority Population Groups – For the purpose of FCSS Funding Framework, priority population that are most at risk of social exclusion are:

Children/youth who live alone or are homeless, live in families experiencing chronic low-income, live in dysfunctional families, experience or have experienced or witness or have witnessed abuse and/or trauma, lack interpersonal and social skills, have cognitive deficits and/or emotional or mental health issues, are not engaged in or succeeding at school, experience low sense of belonging in school or community.

Families that experience chronic low-income, teen parents, lone parent with low income, few social supports, high household mobility, homelessness, parents with low personal capacity, family dysfunction, experience/have experienced or witness/have witnessed abuse.

Indigenous – Individuals and communities that have been affected by the multigenerational impacts of colonialism, such as the effects of residential schools. These effects may include systemic racism and discrimination, resulting in chronic low income, high mobility, loss of culture and other negative social indicators. Indigenous peoples include First Nations (status, non-status and Bill C-31 individuals), Métis and Inuit people.

Newcomers to Canada who have arrived in the last five years, are refugees, face language/cultural barriers, have low income/unable to obtain employment commensurate with credentials, are stay-at-home parents or seniors, belong to ethnocultural communities with few members in Calgary.

Seniors who are 65+, live alone (key risk factor for social isolation, along with 75+), have low income, are single and/or bereaved, are in poor health, experience language/cultural barriers, have transportation difficulties.

Risk and protective factors – A risk factor can be defined as a characteristic at the biological, psychological, family, community or cultural level that precedes and is associated with a higher likelihood of problem outcomes. Conversely, a protective factor can be defined as a characteristic at the biological, psychological, family, community or cultural level that is associated with a lower likelihood of problem outcomes or that reduces the negative impact of a risk factor.

Social inclusion – The ability to fully participate in, contribute to and benefit from all aspects of society.

Volunteerism – An unpaid contribution of time, energy and/or talents to charitable or non-profit organizations, causes, community development activities or help through personal initiative to individuals.

Appendix B
FCSS funding framework at a glance

Vision	A great place to make a living, a great place to make a life.
Mission	Making life better every day.
Long-term outcome	Increase the social inclusion of Calgarians experiencing vulnerabilities.
Mid-term outcome	**For programs and services** 1. Increased positive child and youth development 2. Enhanced economic self-sufficiency 3. Growth in social capital/social participation 4. Improved family functioning and positive parenting 5. Enhanced Indigenous healing and wellbeing **For community development** 1. Increased leadership capacity 2. Increased sense of belonging 3. Improved economic participation **For policy/systems change** 1. An equity-based social policy agenda 2. Integrated service coordination 3. Evidence informed policy and systems change
Short-term outcome	Short-term outcomes will be defined and tracked at the program level, in relation to specific mid-term outcomes.
Guiding principles	• Equity • Truth and reconciliation • Culture • Prevention
Priority populations	• Children/youth • Families • Indigenous people • Newcomers to Canada • Seniors