CIVIC PARTNER 2020 ANNUAL REPORT SNAPSHOT- VCC INITIATIVES LTD (VIBRANT COMMUNITIES CALGARY)

VCC INITIATIVES LTD. (VIBRANT COMMUNITIES CALGARY)
Mandate: VCC works to achieve a substantial and sustained reduction in the number of Calgarians living in poverty.

2020 City Investment
Operating Grant: $484,000

2020 Results

A detailed accounting of organizational outcomes will be provided in the annual Enough for All evaluation which will be released in June 2021 that is compiling data from the City of Calgary, United Way, Momentum (our MOA Partners) and other sources. The City of Calgary is a member of the Enough for All Evaluation Committee.

The story behind the numbers

- Tax return figures represent part of the impact that the Financial Empowerment Collaborative programs (led by Momentum) have on the financial wellbeing of Calgarians.
- The Financial Empowerment Lever in the strategy prioritizes increases in income and financial assets while reducing debt. Six sample opportunities and three TRC calls to action are included. The Aspire brand and website launched in mid-2019 to better establish the Financial Empowerment Collaborative.
- 325 tax clinics filing 8,270 returns resulted in over $43 million in benefits, and the ability for new or previously lapsed filers to access ongoing benefits accessed through filing.

Current state 2021: COVID-19 impact

- Pivoted strategies and resource allocations to respond to the pandemic, and participated in numerous response and recovery task forces, planning groups and research efforts.
- Moved operations online including community engagement and knowledge dissemination.
- COVID-related priorities include food security, health, affordable housing, and income supports. Dedicated resources to Seven Brothers Circle (formerly the COVID-19 Task Force) in the areas of technology, housing and basic needs.

Service Impact: Minor
Current demand for service: Demand has increased notably

VCC INITIATIVES LTD. (VIBRANT COMMUNITIES CALGARY)
Civic Partner 2020 Annual Report

Organizational Structure: Independent External Organization
Fiscal Year: Ended December 31, 2020
Delivers Council Approved Strategy: Enough for All Poverty Reduction Strategy

STRUCTURE

1. Vision, Mission and Mandate:

VCC works to achieve a substantial and sustained reduction in the number of Calgarians living in poverty. VCC works to grow the social, economic and political engagement of Calgarians in their community, and believe that everyone has a right to fully participate in their communities. There are important systemic factors that contribute to poverty, and VCC believes that the whole community has a vital role to play in changing these conditions. Change occurs through engagement, inspiration, and action. VCC values leadership, collaboration, social justice, and pragmatism As of January 1, 2015 VCC, became the stewards of Calgary's community-driven poverty reduction strategy: *Enough for All*, which was refreshed into Enough for All 2.0 in 2019.

2020 RESULTS

2. What key results did your organization achieve in 2020 that contributed to one or more of the One Calgary Citizen Priorities? *(A Prosperous City, A City of Safe & Inspiring Neighbourhoods, A Healthy and Green City, A Well Run City)*

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3. **Briefly describe how your key results in 2020 contributed to Council approved strategies (Select up to three that that are most applicable.)** For example: Calgary in the new economy: An economic strategy for Calgary; Calgary Heritage Strategy; Climate Resiliency Strategy; Resilient Calgary; Enough for All poverty reduction strategy; Cultural Plan for Calgary; Downtown Strategy; Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy; Open Spaces Plan; Recreation Master Plan; Sport for Life Policy.

Calgary in the New Economy: An economic strategy for Calgary: Enough for All is a key component of Calgary's Economic Strategy and supports the strategy's focus on being inclusive across its four pillars, particularly under Talent and Place. VCC was involved in the updating of the economic strategy, and a representative of Calgary Economic Development participated on the Enough for All Refresh Steering Committee to enhance and support alignment. The goals of Enough for All align and deliver on the economic strategy: *All Calgarians live in a strong, supportive, and inclusive community*; *All Calgarians have sufficient income and assets to thrive*; and *All indigenous people are equal participants in Calgary's future*. In 2020, VCC contributed to an update of KPIs for the Calgary in the New Economy strategy including Living Wage as a metric in the new indicators.

Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing Strategy: Calgary's Corporate Affordable Housing

Strategy: "Housing" is identified in Enough for All as a Lever of Change and outlines that access to affordable and appropriate housing decreases the likelihood that families and individuals will fall into or remain in poverty. In 2020, VCC contributed significant resources to CHAC, ASCHA as well as to advocacy related to provincial planning and funding allocation to affordable housing. Additionally, housing was featured across a number of VCC's research and policy documents that were developed in 2020, including but not limited to: response to Budget 2019, a pre-budget submission at the end of 2020 and in the Poverty Snapshot in Calgary 2020 .

Recreation Master Plan: Enough for All 2.0 identified "physical and mental health" as a Lever of Change. When an individual's physical, mental, and social health are compromised, their chances of falling into poverty are increased.

Resilient Calgary: In 2020, VCC significantly increased its advocacy related to Basic Income, both by providing backbone support to Basic Income Calgary, as well as co-chairing and founding Basic Income Alberta (BIA) in conjunction with End Poverty Edmonton. BIA has created widespread public awareness and policy traction over 2020 to leverage this unique policy window. Basic Income is included in Resilient Calgary's strategy.

Community Action on Mental Health and Addiction: VCC convened two focus groups of people who live in poverty in Calgary to inform the Community Action on Mental Health and Addiction strategy in 2020.

Other: Truth and Reconciliation, White Goose Flying: One of three goals of Enough for All is that *All Indigenous People are equal participants in Calgary's future*, which is aligned with The City of Calgary's approach in the Indigenous Policy (i.e., that The City will strive to learn from and work with Indigenous communities, grounded in the spirit and intent of reconciliation). As part of Enough for All, an Indigenous Poverty Reduction Strategy was developed and it is being implemented, including work focused on establishing an Indigenous Gathering Place. Our shared commitment to ensuring that all Indigenous People are equal participants in Calgary's future was at the forefront of VCC's work in 2020 (and continues to be) and VCC is guided in this work by the Enough for All Indigenous Advisory Committee. At the beginning of 2020, VCC published the Indigenous Knowledge Circle for Champions and stakeholders. Post-Pandemic, VCC immediately joined the COVID19 Indigenous Task Force (now called Is kitsii gome (Seven Brothers Circle), a community driven collective of 25 different groups, to support the Indigenous community during the pandemic and forge a deeper journey to Reconciliation. VCC leads the facilitation on the Tech Circle of Is kitsii gome which worked to get technological access (computers and support) into the hands of Elders and other Indigenous groups as soon as possible and sits on the Basic Needs and Housing Circles. Additionally, VCC continued to work with Champions in 2020 to accompany them on their learning journeys to incorporate Indigenous knowledge into their work and were pleased to see this come to life in many of our Champion organizations. VCC continues to be on the Board of the Indigenous Gathering Place, which made great strides in 2020 towards creating a place intended for Indigenous Peoples to gather on Mokintsis.

4. **Using the chart below, please report your 2020 performance measures that demonstrate: how much you did, how well you did it, and how Calgarians are better off. *Please identify through BOLD font, 1-2 measures that are most significant and could be presented in a chart.***

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5. **Briefly describe the key impacts of COVID-19 on your operations in 2020.**
   As VCC is not a service provider, impacts have been manageable. The key operational impacts include continuing VCC's work to contribute to response and recovery conversations, and talent/resource impact to the team as we participated in numerous COVID19 response and recovery task forces, planning groups, and research efforts. Additionally, VCC has dedicated significant resources to the Seven Brothers Circle (formerly the Indigenous COVID19 Task Force) in the areas of Technology, Housing, and Basic Needs.

6. **Are there any program or service changes made in response to COVID-19 that you plan to integrate into longer term operations? For example, shifting some programing online, or modifications to your delivery model or operations.**
   VCC shifted to an online convening methodology at the start of the pandemic, which has had the positive outcome of allowing a greater number of Calgarians to participate in important conversations where there may have been barriers to doing so pre-pandemic (including ability to take public transportation, time/schedules etc.).

7. **Briefly describe any quality improvement changes or operational efficiencies your organization was able to achieve in 2020.**
   VCC realized some operational efficiencies in 2020 through meeting online rather than in-person as well as a reduction in time spent planning in-person events, which allowed more focus on other areas of the organizations' work.

8. **Briefly describe some success stories in 2020 that demonstrates how your organization worked in partnership with other community, private or public organizations to achieve shared results for Calgary and Calgarians.**

   Example One: Doing Business Differently
   Engaging the business sector in policy and systemic change is critical to realizing the goal of Enough for All. In 2020, VCC took the opportunity to increase our engagement in this area. In addition to co-hosting the 2020 Soul of the Next Economy forum, VCC also partnered with Momentum to lead an 8-week capacity building workshop series for Be Local members to support business in how they can implement Enough for All and also participated as facilitators on Be Local's anti-racism task force. We were also delighted to partner with the Business Council of Alberta and End Poverty Edmonton to discuss business, poverty and recovery in this podcast and this op-ed. Active participation in the Alberta Living Wage Network was also a focal point of VCC's work last year in order to produce the Living Wage and supportive documents in 2021.

   Example Two: Racism & Diversity
   Racism is a root cause of poverty, and 2020 accelerated critical and long overdue conversations about racism in Calgary. VCC came into this conversation from both a place of seeking to be better allies, and by contributing 'racism related to poverty' explicit information into the conversation. For VCC, this meant co-convening and facilitating conversations with partner organizations, speaking to media about the link between racism and poverty in our city, joining action groups committed to

tackling this issue at a systems level, contributing subject matter expertise where appropriate, and by changing our practice with Champions and stakeholders as an organization to ensure that we are the change we are seeking in this work.

Example Three: Amplifying the Voice of Lived Experience

Ensuring the promotion of the voice of lived experience is a cornerstone of VCC's approach. *Poverty Talks!* had amazing impact in 2020 in articulating how people living in poverty were experiencing the pandemic. This information was used to inform decision makers about response and recovery strategies and priorities. *Poverty Talks!* held weekly "What we are Hearing" Community Conversations (one for each lever of change) and held the most attended International Day for the Eradication of Poverty event in our history. VCC also had the privilege of hosting some Community Conversations to gather the experience of people living in poverty to inform Calgary's Community Action on Mental Health and Addiction strategy. From a policy perspective, *Poverty Talks!* contributed insight thorough pre-budget submission to the province that focused on a just recovery for all and continued to engage with people living in poverty through its social media networks.

RESOURCES

9. **Please estimate how The City's operating funding was allocated in 2020. Mark all areas that apply by approximate percentage.** *For example, 45% allocated to staffing costs, 10% to evaluation or research, etc.*

2.1%	Advertising and promotion
4.8%	Programs or services
2.2%	Office supplies and expenses
22.8%	Professional and consulting fees
36.9%	Staff compensation, development and training
0%	Fund development
0.4%	Purchased supplies and assets
3.0%	Facility maintenance
11%	Evaluation or Research
16.8%	*Other, please name: Charitable Agency Agreement*

10. Did volunteers support your operations in 2020? If yes:

How many volunteers?	3
Estimated total hours provided by volunteers:	Approx. 250 hours

11. What resources or funding sources did your organization leverage to support operations in 2020?

N/A

12. Did your organization receive any awards or recognition in 2020 that you want to highlight?

VCC is a foundational member of Is kitsii gome (Seven Brothers Circle) which received a Northern Lights award in 2020 for supporting the indigenous Community on Treaty 7 during the pandemic (https://www.alberta.ca/alberta-northern-lights-recipient-is-kitsii-gome-7-brothers-circle.aspx)

13. CAPITAL AND ASSET MANAGEMENT (for Civic Partners managing City-owned assets)

Asset: *Insert Name of City owned asset managed or operated*

a) Provide a summary of your organization's 2020 capital work, including specific lifecycle/maintenance projects or capital projects.
N/A

b) What funding did your organization leverage to support capital activities in 2020?
N/A

14. CURRENT STATE: COVID-19 MARCH 2021 UPDATE

The section focuses on the impact of COVID-19 in the month of March 2021, to provide a snapshot of your organization's current state.

Impact

Please choose the one option below that best describes the impact of COVID-19 on your programs or service in March 2021.

☐	**Negligible**	Minimal to no impact on service. Service is currently operating close to normal.
☐	**Minor**	Continuing to provide programs and services but some coping strategies required – able to be addressed with existing strategies and resources.
☒	**Moderate**	Some challenges on ability to achieve objectives. Some delay. Some aspects of the programs or service are only being met in part.
☐	**Significant**	Difficulties to achieve objectives. Delays or notable aspects of objectives not completed. Falling well-short of normal operations.
☐	**Severe**	Unable to meet normal objectives due to serious extended disruption. (e.g. full facility closure, major decrease in users)

Impact Description:

While VCC experienced relatively minimal operational impacts due to the pandemic, there is a high-level impact related to the implementation of the poverty reduction strategy that was developed in a pre-pandemic context. For example, pre-pandemic, there were approximately 189 000 Calgarians that lived in poverty (using MBM measurement). That number has significantly increased (by approximately 80 000 Calgarians) due largely to pandemic related factors. Secondly, implementation of the Enough for All strategy relies heavily on partners (Champions). Due to the pandemic, several partners are experiencing their own resource and capacity constraints that in some cases limit their ability to participate in strategic implementation in a way that was not anticipated. Thirdly, there are some fiscal challenges in realizing

municipal-focused plans (for example: affordable housing - RHI) due to funding not being realized at the provincial or federal level which places further constraints on realizing select key objectives of Enough for All. Lastly, there are some lags in data collection and dissemination used to guide the work of Enough for All due to pandemic-related stressors on data systems.

Current Demand for Service:

What is the current demand for your service compared to typical demand?

☐	Demand is steady, largely business as usual.
☒	Demand has increased notably.
☐	Demand has decreased notably.