



# EDMONTON- OLD STRATHCONA LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

## Planning for Development

### Summary Report

Hospitality Roundtable  
Safety Roundtable  
Development Roundtable  
Community Roundtable  
**June 5-6, 2006**  
**Leadership Summit**  
**July 11, 2006**



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**Edmonton – Old Strathcona  
Summary Report**

**Table of Contents**

*This report is a summary of four Roundtable discussions held on June 5th and 6th, 2006 and Leadership Summit on July 11. Our aim is to present the opinions and perspectives of those who participated and also to consolidate the key concepts that arose from our discussions. However, not all of the information has been verified, and furthermore, one person's opinions may not represent those of other participants.*

**Executive Summary ..... 1**

**Planning for Development..... 2**

    1. Formalize a Network that Plans for Development ..... 2

    2. Recognize Hospitality, Dining and Entertainment as an Integrated Economic Engine..... 3

    3. A Coordinated Approach to Licensing, Education and Enforcement ..... 3

    4. Management of Street as a Venue ..... 5

    5. Patron Responsibility Campaign..... 6

**Conclusion..... 7**

**Summary of Roundtables..... 8**

    Trends Based on Personal Observations ..... 8

    Issues..... 8

    Gaps..... 9

    Resources..... 11

**Perceptions ..... 12**

**Appendix: Participant and Expectations ..... 14**

    Community Roundtable..... 14

    Development Roundtable ..... 14

    Safety Roundtable ..... 14

    Hospitality Roundtable ..... 15

**Appendix: Roundtable Participants ..... 16**

## Executive Summary

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Edmonton is a city bursting with potential. Whyte Avenue in Old Strathcona is the seam straining against a growing young adult population, sewn together with threads of a generation dedicated to preserving the district's history and heritage.

On June 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> almost fifty individuals divided into four roundtable focus groups representing hospitality, safety, development and community perspectives. Heightened by the intensity of the Oilers success in the Stanley Cup finals, there were some common themes heard throughout the four roundtables:

- ◆ Edmonton has experienced dramatic changes in the past four decades due to economic, social, and demographic trends. During the oil crisis of the 1970s, the city flourished as the 'Oil Capital of Canada.' The revenues generated from the oil boom were used to revitalize older parts of the city and to support police services and city maintenance programs, only to be lost during the recession of the 1980's and early 1990's.
- ◆ Old Strathcona's Whyte Avenue has since emerged as a popular destination for shopping, dining, arts, entertainment, nightlife and "people watching." While some might believe this "just happened," it was through a collaborative effort to fight off a freeway extension that historic buildings were preserved and the loan shops, drug dealers and prostitutes were replaced with unique stores, independent live theatres, farmers market and fine dining and entertainment businesses.
- ◆ The ever increasing enrollment of students at the University of Alberta and other colleges in the region, the staff and faculty to serve them, the return of the oil revenues and related employment, an investment in development and capitalization of the real estate market, and Edmonton's reputation for a special quality of life with unique urban experiences associated with the river, forest and "festivals" highlighting the creative talent of residents combine to draw more people to the area.
- ◆ With extended hours at all the City's malls Big Box stores and other shops employing thousands of workers, the global economy and extended work shifts in technology and service businesses, and general lifestyle changes the transition from a 9-to-5 to a 24/7 economy is not matched with a comparable shift in services.
- ◆ As demand for more youth oriented social and entertainment venues grew, the impacts from late night activity began to concern long term residents in Old Strathcona. Faced with frustration from lack of enforcement of by-laws, they organized and achieved success by placing a moratorium on new licensed beverage businesses in the Old Strathcona district, as well as seeking enforcement of development (versus fire) occupancy codes, resulting in strained relations between businesses, city government and residents.
- ◆ The controversy facilitated the formation of the Old Strathcona Hospitality Association, led by business owners sharing similar concerns and desire to preserve the unique character and vibrancy of Whyte Avenue.
- ◆ Although the focus is on public safety risks and impact on quality of life on Whyte Avenue, there are emerging areas of the city with similar challenges, either at present or anticipated in the future.
- ◆ Edmonton is a city with a passion for collaboration, although it was consistently pointed out that there are many "silo" efforts underway, at the upper levels of city government and the lower levels of grassroots, there is not a "mid-level bridge" uniting the efforts.

The successful management of Whyte Avenue requires that planning, development, safety, community services, and problem solving be reframed into one unified system through interagency coordination and citywide cooperation.

Old Strathcona is the bellwether for Edmonton – the challenges it experiences indicate the challenges that must be anticipated in other developing areas of the city. The implementation of successful strategies will serve as a framework for planning, managing, and policing other hospitality zones throughout Edmonton.

# Planning for Development

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The following recommendations define short term goals and other long term goals.

## 1. Formalize a Network that Plans for Development

Hospitality is central to the fabric of community life, not only serving as an important economic engine, but providing the products and services to facilitate other businesses and a general well-being among residents and visitors.

Like many cities, Edmonton has a planning function, a development function, and in between these pillars are safety, enforcement and community services. Operating in isolation contributes to inefficient use of resources, breakdowns in communication and enables system breaches to go unnoticed until crises occur, creating a reactionary system rather than a proactive one.

The Integrated Service Teams are designed to streamline coordination. However, in Old Strathcona, where the street has become an event, current systems do not accommodate the management of a street as a whole. The integrated service teams are not financially enabled to plan and service an area but are forced back into their individual silos to get financing for some component of the street. Some are successful, others are not, disabling any attempt at a comprehensive service delivery.

It is recommended that City Council endorse the creation or development of a task force or Hospitality Resource Panel/Partnership that is represented equally by four alliances or stakeholder groups: Hospitality, Safety, Development and Community. It is further suggested that funding from the council's budget be used to assign a coordinator to manage the Hospitality Resource Panel /task force. The coordinator should be an individual who is perceived as neutral and unbiased and who has adaptability to 'speak the languages' of and negotiate through the four different stakeholder worlds.

The coordinator could work to facilitate the HRP stakeholders in planning for and implementing an action plan that concentrates first on action steps recommended through the Leadership Summit, including the following:

### Recommendation:

- Create a formalized network amongst city and provincial representatives from safety, enforcement, planning and community services to better "plan, manage and police hospitality zones" including Whyte Avenue and other emerging districts.
- Representatives can be appointed or recognized by the city council and serve as an on-going resource to evaluate and/or recommend policy on dining, entertainment, events and implications of mixed use development in all areas of the city.
- The HRP can conduct information gathering "roundtables" in different hospitality zones throughout the city and organize an annual "leadership summit" to develop updates and new action plans as shifts occur in the market.
- Utilize the networks among HRP alliances for information dissemination and feedback.
- *Hospitality Resource Panel/Partnership (HRP)*: The HRP is a framework organized by RHI in 1994 in Monterey, evolving to more than a dozen cities. Though it takes on different structures, the core elements are diversity of perspectives from four stakeholder groups – hospitality, safety, development and community – working toward a common mission of creating safe and vibrant places for people to socialize.
- **Six Month Milestone**: Twenty individuals (five from each of four perspectives) will agree to serve a two year term as part of the HRP leadership and a formal mission with specific responsibilities and reporting process to the city council and other organizations will be defined.

## 2. Recognize Hospitality, Dining and Entertainment as an Integrated Economic Engine

Edmonton has widely been hailed as an arts and culture destination. In recent years, dining and other forms of entertainment have grown to match its impact. The two sectors – arts and hospitality - feed each other, yet they too work in separate silos, sectioning out musical entertainment from theatrical entertainment and cultural events.

Like its U.S. sister cities, Austin and Nashville, Edmonton's entertainment, whether it be live music, DJ's, dining, drinks, dancing, cafes or theatre, is a vital contributor to the local economy, and with most businesses on Whyte independently owned and operated, fueling a more local benefit.

The recognition that dining, entertainment and special events are as much a part of Edmonton's economy as oil, technology and biomedical industries leads to strategic planning, safe management and a commitment to workforce development. Skilled and trained hospitality employees that see themselves as part of a professional sector can elevate safety levels. The following are some recommendations to enhance this role.

Finally, with the current economy and competition for workers, hospitality businesses are confronted with ever increasing challenges to staff their establishments, especially with more qualified individuals.

### Recommendations:

- Expand the concept of Old Strathcona Hospitality Association to include businesses from other areas of the city, and consider a more expansive name – i.e. *Edmonton Hospitality and Event Management Association*.
- Draft a list of best practices and policies to be shared with safety stakeholders and included in a cooperatively drafted safety plan template.
- Mandate a safety plan comprised of these components as a requirement of a business license as needed based on type of program activity in the business (i.e. restaurant, night club with DJ, music, etc.).
- Develop collaborative education and training programs such as door/floor security, responsible beverage service and a management training covering risk management, marketing and community relations.
- Create an economic impact survey that documents contributions of the hospitality sector, including employment and social contributions. Such documentation lays groundwork for funding from other sources. *The Old Strathcona Task Force has made this recommendation and is developing a budget.*
- *Hospitality Business Orientation*: A process developed by RHI and implemented in San Diego and Philadelphia that includes a resource directory with a listing of all relevant agencies and associations and their "top ten list" of priorities and resources available to assist a new business. A three hour seminar reviews the step by step process of opening a business with a panel or agency representatives to answer questions.
- *Careers in Hospitality Alliance*: Conduct an inventory and prepare a directory of all education and training programs specifically oriented to hospitality and event management and staff. Consider a public education campaign like in San Diego to elevate opportunities for careers in hospitality and develop a job fair specific to hospitality businesses.
- **Six Month Milestone**: A formal association will be established, with leadership identified and a budget set for a staffing function to carry-out day-to-day activities. A schedule of educational programs will be set. A meeting with the "code team" will be held to finalize "best practices" for a safety plan.

## 3. A Coordinated Approach to Licensing, Education and Enforcement

Compliance requires an understanding by both those enforcing the by-laws and those required to comply. Inter-agency education and coordination of information and dissemination of that information to businesses and residents is an important first step.

The apparent lack of appropriate policing and management of Whyte Avenue's late night activities is contributing to a deterioration of the quality of life of its long term residents. Various antisocial and disruptive activities take place on Whyte Avenue, such as property damage, public urination, fights, and assaults. Due to limited police presence and limited training of hospitality establishment staff, these activities, as well as underage drinking, is tolerated due to lack of resources. In turn, this lack of enforcement frequently results in noise complaints from local residents, who often awaken to find their street littered with trash, vomit, broken glass, and spit on windows.

Tension and conflict has escalated between the distinct demographic groups that patronize this area, yet solutions have not been found and agreements have not been reached. These challenges serve as a clear indication that the city's existing systems and processes for planning, managing, and policing its hospitality zones are no longer applicable to the current split-use economy and therefore need to be reevaluated.

At one time Edmonton had a task force comprised of several agencies that looked at infractions and made recommendations to the business, or used the information to conduct more focused assessments. This group was disbanded.

A pressing issue that could be best addressed through this collaborative process is a focused evaluation of occupancy by type of business, groups served, and involvement of businesses in practices contributing to the conflicts could assist in planning for the future as well as better coordination of resources.

### **Recommendations:**

- Formalize a "code team" of regulatory and enforcement agencies under the auspices of licensing to centralize communication on calls for service, inspection violations and other incidents. *The EPS has previously recommended this in a report to City Council*
- Collect "last drink data" to identify patterns of where individuals arrested for alcohol related incidents had their last drink and utilize an "Early Assistance Team" with representatives from the code team and business peers to assess and provide strategies for compliance.
- Utilize the business license renewal process as an intervention point for addressing at-risk businesses to come into compliance or lose their license.
- Involve hospitality businesses, insurance and community representatives to define specific criteria for improved business performance, and utilize indicators to conduct early interventions and mentoring when businesses move off course.
- By enforcing violations of basic behavior by-laws that are offensive or threaten safety such as public urination, jay walking, littering, vandalism, reductions in overall crime rates will follow.
- On occasion and during peak periods deploy mobile units to assist with arrest processing.
- Capture some of the successful management strategies used by the University and Mall security and apply them to developing best practices for public spaces.
- Organize regular Hospitality Roundtables with businesses to present recent incidents, develop improved communication.
- *Early Assistance Team:* It is often more efficient and cost effective to guide an "at-risk" business to improve than wait too long and have the only recourse suspension or revocation of the license to operate. By establishing a process for information gathering and focused intervention using peers as a primary point of contact is a promising strategy being implemented in several cities. Often a task force of the HRP, the Early Assistance Team develops a pool of "mentors" among business owners and managers recognized for being responsible and experienced operators. When identified, an at-risk business is provided an option to have a risk assessment with recommendations for improvement, or to face more intensive investigations and possible sanctions. In addition, the EAT, with representatives from the four stakeholder groups, also serves as a mediator in conflicts between businesses and residents.

- **Six Month Milestone:** The code team will be established, with representatives from city agencies, university and college security, and Provincial agencies. The group will define procedures of maintaining a database of incident reports and work with licensing to prepare annual summaries for license renewal. A meeting with the hospitality alliance will be held and an “early assistance” process will be defined, with a group of “mentors” identified.

#### 4. Management of Street as a Venue

As cities grow and revitalize, traditional conceptions of the downtown are beginning to change. Downtowns that were once considered a mere group of businesses are evolving into popular hospitality destinations. As a result, the role of the sidewalk has expanded from a mere pathway for pedestrians to a new and vibrant venue that serves various social and cultural functions. The sidewalk of modern times, the ‘multi-use sidewalk’, offers unique opportunities for dining, entertainment, shopping, and most importantly, people watching. However, the emergence of the sidewalk as an alternative to traditional hospitality venues presents new planning, managing, and policing challenges within a downtown.

A common theme heard throughout the roundtables was the effectiveness of the city police and support services in managing events like the Fringe Festival and the Folk Festival, creating the street life, entertainment, adding extra police, more trash receptacles, portable toilets, etc. Yet on any given Thursday, Friday or Saturday, especially in the summer, Whyte Avenue becomes an event, but without the support.

Though politically challenging to a city with six wards, it is clear that at this time Old Strathcona, requires a different set of resources on a different schedule than other areas of the city. As other areas emerge with vibrant evening and weekend economies, their services will have to be customized to their respective needs.

Among the recommendations for management of the Whyte Avenue and other emerging districts with an active street life are:

##### Recommendations:

- Establish a strategy that manages Friday and Saturday nights like they are an event similar to the Fringe Festival. Deploy the necessary resources to manage crowds and their impacts (trash, noise, public facilities, traffic and pedestrian flow). Apply the same standards and safety plans that are used for event management.
- Consider establishing a “venue management” position for Whyte Avenue with similar resources and authority as an event manager for festivals, coordinating services, staffing and mobilization of what is needed. The Integrated Services Team can be modified to assume this role, but managed by an individual with more authority and access to resources as required.
- Form a collaborative task force among the Arts Council, Old Strathcona Hospitality Association and Old Strathcona Business Association to develop a process to add street entertainment and integrate local talent into hospitality venues, further enhancing Whyte Avenue as an entertainment destination highlighting local talent, not only in the theatres but in the clubs and on the sidewalk.
- Consolidate funds in a line item budget for operating the street as a venue
- Develop a comprehensive egress plan and implement same.
- *Street Entertainment Licensing:* Establish a process for auditing and licensing street entertainers to assure diversity and appeal to various audiences, schedule in specific locations to avoid impediments to pedestrian flow and minimize impacts from sound. Burlington, Vermont provides a good example of this process.
- **Six Month Milestone:** The Integrated Service Team will be vested with the authority and resources and staff to coordinate development of a plan to manage Whyte Avenue as an “event venue” and a working task force established to approve street entertainment.

## 5. Patron Responsibility Campaign

The incident following Canada Day was a wake-up call for changes needed to better manage Whyte Avenue and develop a more coordinated policing process for crowd management. After the incident, a short media campaign was launched to recover the reputation of Old Strathcona. More recently, the Old Strathcona Hospitality Association has launched its own poster, newspaper and radio campaign, especially in response to behavior during the Oilers playoffs.

Resident and retail participants fondly recalled the Whyte Ave of the 70's and 80's that flourished after the oil boom of the 70's. It was more manageable then and the boom saw revenues that afforded maintenance of the area which, at that time operated on a more nine to five basis. But times have changed.

There are 6,000 post secondary students living in the communities of Garneau, Queen Alexandra, Ritchie and Strathcona, and that 57% of Edmonton's population is under 40. More significantly, 32% is between 10 and 30 years old, with this segment of the population showing the greatest growth during the past four years, and expected to continue as the University of Alberta expects to add 10,000 students to its enrollment.

This has driven a market into an economy that serves two demographics: families and boomers before ten o'clock and 18-30 year old visitors, residents, students, shift workers, and oil workers after ten o'clock. Retail and dining and entertainment have shifted to accommodate this market and its hours of consumption.

Incidents impacting public safety (fights, assaults, drunk driving) and quality of life (public urination, trash, litter, vandalism, noise) are of primary concern. While they may be associated with practices of licensed beverage businesses, there may be as many causes from public attitudes and personal responsibility (or lack of).

A thorough examination of current systems, as well as more focused public awareness and education campaigns are needed to shift what is perceived as appropriate versus inappropriate behavior.

### Recommendations:

- Utilize the diverse leadership of the HRP to draft a community covenant/code of conduct for both behaviors in establishments and on the street. Consider involving oil field employers in this process since many of those involved in incidents are non-residents coming from the fields.
- Implement social marketing campaign to educate general public about social norms. Consider partnership between Alberta Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission and Oilers to deliver message to sports fans about post-game behavior.
- Evaluate availability of public facilities and use better signage to direct people to those that are available, or add additional "porta-johns" on busy nights strategically located new parking lots and garages.
- Conduct annual student orientation with local colleges and post the community covenant in first edition of school papers when students return to campus. See Tallahassee's version as an example.
- Expand upon the efforts of OSHA and other's posters "Respect the Streets", etc. Consider New Zealand's model, "We're here to serve drinks, not drunks," to educate patrons about business supported limits (see [www.rhiweb.org/images/video/nz.wmv](http://www.rhiweb.org/images/video/nz.wmv))
- Utilize security cameras in specific "high risk" areas to monitor behavior and establish an awareness of consequences – "This area is monitored by a security camera – think before you act."
- Utilize highly visible mobile processing for enforcement public by-laws, pedestrian crossing, litter, public urination, etc. Encourage add-on sanctions from employers and university for violators.
- *Late-night Integrated Transport System*: Reduction in driving while intoxicated, reducing activity in residential neighborhoods, or lingering of people after hours are all issues that can be address through a coordinated late-night transportation system, including improved taxi service, use of designated

- “Transport Stands” for drop-off and pick-up by taxis, shuttles, limos, and other private services, intervention training for valet and parking lot staff, and better signage and mapping of parking availability.
- **Six Month Milestone:** A formal “community covenant/code of conduct” will be developed and a media advocacy campaign to coordinate public service messages, news stories, posters, hospitality establish menu, tent card, rest room notices about public conduct.

## Conclusion

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The city of Edmonton has worked hard to capitalize on opportunities and its heritage, especially in Old Strathcona. Central to this goal is a sincere recognition of the value of arts, dining, entertainment and events as a core economic engine for all other sectors in the city’s economy and growth.

To enhance this goal participants in the four roundtable focus groups recognized that the elements of planning, managing and policing hospitality zones need to be better coordinated, through a formal process and with a vision of the future rather than management of incidents or circumstances occurring in the past.

There have been many roundtables, forums, task forces and other strategy development processes held in Strathcona, Edmonton and the province of Alberta, just like those held June 5-6, with each creating meaningful action steps. Perhaps now, more than ever is a time to consolidate these efforts.

The following summarizes a barometer for action that relates to the Hospitality Resource Panel/Partnership (HRP) process, though it can be applied to any process. It is a means to check back and see how the process is working.

**Communication:** Often, while a city may have the resources necessary to effectively plan, manage and police dining and entertainment districts, many key stakeholder groups have limited or no interaction, and thus, are unaware of the resources that exist. This may be due to competing interests, past negative experiences, personality conflicts among leadership, or just lack of opportunity or incentive for collaboration. So the first step is to assess the level of communication among the key stakeholder groups, identify gaps, and create the forums to close the gaps.

**Cooperation:** Relationship and trust building are the key outcomes of the process. During the early stages of development, as the various groups begin to interact and gain understanding and insights, there is a greater willingness to set aside past differences and conflicts and agree to “cooperate” on discovery of potential areas of agreement.

**Consensus:** A successful process has both “intra” communication among key stakeholders as well as “inter” communication. As participants become more open and candid, trust is established, and developing an action plan based upon consensus can be achieved.

**Commitment:** Leadership will rise to the top from key stakeholder groups, and commitment to complete the action plan made, with pledge of time, resources or other tools. Organizations will begin to filter through their staff to identify the most appropriate individuals to serve in different roles and more recognition is given to the HRP for positive outcomes.

**Collaboration:** Partnerships form, alliances emerge and many collaborative activities evolve, often outside the framework of the process. Eventually, many of the gaps are filled and strategies become institutionalized into various organizations, changing the role of the process. As central point of contact, the process facilitates a periodic check-in point to monitor emerging issues and evaluate needs for response, rather than being the principle focal point of activity. Such an outcome is achieved when the process is no longer necessary and its role dissolves.

## Summary of Roundtables

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*What follows is a summary of comments and observations provided by individuals participating in the Roundtable discussions. In many instances, the verbatim comments are perceptions or opinions only and this report does not attempt to confirm or disclaim any of those comments.*

### *TRENDS BASED ON PERSONAL OBSERVATIONS*

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*By identifying trends, we can see the arc of a path to the future and have the opportunity to head off challenges and prevent risks to public health and safety. The following are highlights of observations made in the Roundtables.*

- Edmonton has grown to where different areas have different needs.
- 118<sup>th</sup> Avenue, 124<sup>th</sup> street and Jasper East could potentially experience challenges similar to those of Whyte Avenue in the future.
- It's a citywide issue. Other areas of the city were cited to have some of the worst operators.
- Increased numbers of people on Whyte Ave and frequenting businesses is a predictable event that happens every weekend, while Oiler game behavior is an anomaly.
- Polarity of people attending Whyte Avenue. Older people earlier, then the second large wave at 11:30 pm.
- General retail increase. Ten years ago there were 18 bars and about 5 clothing retailers. Today there are 33 bars and 20-30 clothing retailers.
- With moratorium on bar licenses, restaurants are morphing into bars after dinner service ends.
- The street is the party. People come to drive it, walk it, to see and be seen.
- Young people are coming to Whyte Ave from outside and other parts of the city.
- Not all customers are interested in drinking. Many don't care if they go inside bars or not.
- Young male oiler workers and out of town workers that frequent Whyte Ave. don't understand social norms.
- Many of the people who come to Whyte Ave. are "preloading" (drinking before) or bringing their own alcohol with them.
- Community needs are being communicated through media's stories and letters to editors.
- Licensed venues report that customers are ordering up to 40% less beer than they used to, they're drinking spirits now.
- Alberta is experiencing an inflation in workforce wages. Entry level oil workers can make 4 times what they can in hospitality.
- Issues different in winter and summer.
- Transportation, layout and traffic patterns have played a key role in how the Whyte Avenue area has developed.
- Participants reported that there was better street servicing in the 60's when it was a municipal responsibility.

### *ISSUES*

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*This section of the discussion focused on the challenges faced by each perspective (hospitality, safety, development and community). Many issues are complex and intermingled. Such codependent issues require a solution in one area to affect change to the other.*

- While city experiences increase in costs with boom, corresponding revenues lag behind.
- "We keep looking at the same sources for funding: property taxes. Need to get creative."
- Issuing more licenses in other parts of the city without citywide, coordinated plan and clear requirements for businesses.
- Frustration is increasing in safety, community and hospitality sectors from ongoing processing of the problem and little action.

- Whyte Avenue suffers from a perception of it as a bar place when it has many other attributes. Oilers celebration has exacerbated that image.
- Media is perpetuating negative image by only reporting negatives.
- Besides the drinks sold in managed, licensed establishments, patrons are bringing their own, sneaking it into clubs and consuming it in cars, parking lots, alleys, schoolyards and on the street.
- Off sale licenses (liquor stores, package stores) may be contributing to the problem.
- Fraternities located near residents and within walking distance to Whyte Ave host parties where alcohol is consumed.
- Some of the Bus companies that are hired for pub crawls during games and in springtime are not responsible operators. The worst cases are where an individual creates their own “charter,” charges \$50 and allows drinking on the bus.
- Radio station promotions have contributed to the problem by encouraging people to come down to Whyte Ave for Oilers Celebration.
- Oilers celebration is unhosted, unmanaged event with “nothing to do, but high five”. With expectations promoted by radio and no organized activities, celebrants create their own activities.
- Liquor license is inexpensive. Even if license is revoked, it is relatively easy for same operator to start another business.
- Repermitting owners that have been problems in the past.
- Irresponsible drink promotions in a percentage of the licensed venues.
- Competition in other workforce sectors is driving staff shortages in hospitality. Hospitality industry lacks opportunity to hire competent people, which creates business risk.
- Whyte Ave users that come from outside aren’t committed to community ownership.
- Patrons hang around on street after closing time.
- No late night public transportation is a barrier to some wanting to work in the late night businesses.
- Taxis don’t like to deal with intoxicated patrons.
- Quality of life complaints (Broken glass, vomit, spit on the windows) take backseat to pressing safety issues when resources limit staffing. The lack of response fuels community outrage.
- By-law enforcement is complaint driven, reactive.
- Moratorium on new licenses combined with increased numbers of people and demand have driven unintended consequence of restaurants morphing into bars.
- Development department has been rigorous about implementing fairly in all areas of the city.

## **GAPS**

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*When exploring what's working and what's not, entities are sometimes stuck halfway between understanding the problem and resolving it. Identifying the missing elements help to point to solutions that can resolve the challenges.*

### **Hospitality**

- Even if hospitality businesses demand the proposed solution of eliminating glass containers, there may be a barrier with beer bottlers who would have to change equipment and processing.
- Hospitality Association exists for Old Strathcona, (OSHA) but hospitality businesses in other parts of Edmonton don’t have such an organization.
- OSHA needs incentives to entice more licensees to join and assist in being part of the solution.
- Many hospitality businesses are missing opportunities to distinguish themselves from each other and add value to their venue and patron’s social experience.
- Opportunities exist to merge the strong entertainment/arts community with hospitality. Theatre in bars on off-nights was suggested.
- Some businesses lack compliance with by-laws and liquor laws.
- Limited pool of workers skilled in hospitality.

### **Development and Infrastructure**

- Though diverse areas of the city are growing to where each area has different needs, politically the city is not set up to respond to doing things differently in different neighborhoods.
- There is a gap between needs for managing street activity and impacts of users and the time and extent of resource delivery.
- Litter pickup and sidewalk flushing is scheduled Monday through Friday, even though the majority of trash and dirt is generated on Friday and Saturday night
- Whyte Ave needs an ending time that perhaps can be signaled by turning up the street lights.
- Though there is a tool to collect input from other agencies on each business license, there is a breach in communication amongst regulating agencies (including those outside city) in collecting infractions. Although each regulating agency collects and reports infractions within their own system, there is no communication among agencies and especially with City of Edmonton Licensing.
- Little to no late night transportation alternatives to private autos that can assist to facilitate flow out of the district at closing. Tight labor force. Can't recruit bus drivers for the going wage.
- Large parking lots like Farmer's parking are not being used. Could shift trend of patrons parking in neighborhoods and creating disturbances when they return.
- Area redevelopment plan could use a review. When it and by-laws were passed in 1999, it predated the surge in youth demographics.
- OSIST effectiveness is constrained by each member having to work within its own department's budget. Consolidated budgeting to this project would elicit more efficient time and resource expenditure.
- No budget left to finish revitalizing Whyte Avenue.

### Policy

- Street entertainers are unlicensed. A variety of activities could draw more of an age mix, which provides organic social control. Managing the time of day that they operate can provide a street calming strategy and can assist in signaling street closing.
- There is a need to acknowledge the shift in 9-5 economy. Friday/Saturday nights are a predictable weekly influx of users in a concentrated area, yet it is considered overtime city service.
- Hours of city management scheduled out of synch with hours of increased demand shuts down at 4:30 pm.
- Complaint driven by-law enforcement reinforces reactive approach rather than vision-driven approach.
- Moratoriums on new licenses prevent the possibility of replacing a bad business with a good one.
- No by-law preventing irresponsible drink promotions.
- Need to educate judiciary. Police apprehend violators and judges let them go.
- There is a greater need for cabs late at night. May require the city to designate by ordinance the placement of taxi stands or staging areas.

### Safety

- Need a process to manage the people on the street, one that addresses the unique needs of Community Policing in Hospitality Zones.
- Community policing satellite for the area is closed on evenings and weekends.
- Safety agencies lack clearly communicated elements of a safety/security plan that they would like licensed businesses to adhere to.
- Though AGLC posts licensee infractions on website, they do not communicate it directly to local authority.
- Occupational Health and Safety is a partner missing at the table that could assist in providing early indication of businesses operating irresponsibly in other areas.
- Lack of opportunity for safety agencies to have consistent contact with all venues. Venues reported that good operators don't get visits from police or health. Small things could fall through cracks or develop into larger problem.
- There are mandatory server intervention programs in place, but it was reported that they are not enforced.
- Used to have interagency committee that involved Capital Health and Provincial alcohol compliance. They met weekly, identified problem bars and insisted on compliance.

### Community

- Some retailers don't stay open late for concern for their staff's safety. A mix of business types and ages who frequent them can shift social norms from party on the street.
- There is a need for a forum to improve efficiency of communication amongst residents, hospitality and safety can all communicate efficiently.

### Visitors/Patrons

- It is difficult to reach and manage visitors who are patronizing the street and not businesses.
- A tool or mechanism is missing that addresses the behavioral issues of district visitors.

### All Perspectives

- All four perspectives asked for more enforcement and laws that make it harder for repeat offenders to get another license.
- Though Edmonton has diligently explored solutions, it has often been accomplished on separate tracks; there is a need to consolidate the effort.
- The difference between an official special event and Friday/Saturday night is that an event involves a variety of ages, has planned activities, has city-endorsed additional services (like trash, portable washrooms) and participants know what is required and self police.

## ***RESOURCES***

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*One of RHI's tenets is that existing resources should be fully utilized in addressing challenges that districts face. Such resources may be defined as successful strategies, partnerships, practices, products and policies, as well as opportunities. Some of these could easily be adapted without reinventing the wheel and expending valuable time, expense and effort.*

### Hospitality

- Every bar that is a member of Old Strathcona Hospitality Association (OSHA) is using plastic cups during Oilers games.
- Food stands provide distraction and activity after bars close, as well as buy time between drinking and driving.
- OSHA member businesses and others are informally marketing social norms messages like "Respect the Streets".
- Insurance partners have been working with hospitality businesses to create a top ten list of desirable practices to lower risk.
- Edmonton Arts Council is a resource that may provide a connection for collaboration between different forms of entertainment. E.g. theatre in night clubs

### Community

- Community feedback has illuminated some of the gaps in systems.
- Involved community activists opposing freeway bi-pass helped to maintain the history and elevate the vibrancy.
- Insistence on standards raises the bar and helps define a vision.
- University is a committed partner.

### Safety

- Integrated Services Teams provide a system of communication amongst city agencies.
- Oilers and Alberta Drug and Alcohol Abuse Commission (ADAAC) may be good partners to market social norms messages about post-game behavior.
- Violations by licensees are posted on the Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission's (AGLC) website.
- Occupational Health and Safety is an organization that has provided early indicators of irresponsible business practices.
- Before the re-issuance of a license, the AGLC reviews management experience. AGLC has licensee handbook, goes over operating standards and procedures with new licensees.

- Edmonton Police Services provides Server Intervention Training (SIPS)
- Alberta Gaming and Liquor Commission provides Server Intervention Training (ASIPS)
- Special Constables may be able to extend influence onto street, including those off of Whyte Avenue
- Edmonton is looking at bringing sheriffs in to do the arresting and processing.
- Mobile command centers are used for official events.

### Development

- OSIST has improved cooperation and communication amongst city departments.
- In West Edmonton mall, lease agreements provide leverage, requiring that alcohol licensed businesses belong to Bar Watch.
- Old Strathcona Business Association (OSBA) has begun dialogue with cab companies re increasing service at bar closing time to facilitate safer and more efficient clearing of Whyte Ave.
- Current by-law provides for annual review of the business license.
- Hospitality economy has been included in economic impact research as part of tourism sector.
- Transit has successfully supported cultural events because of their predictability.
- Economic Development Council is a willing partner to work data that other organizations have collected.

## **Perceptions**

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*Without a mechanism for safety, residential, development and hospitality to interact, miscommunication and misperceptions continue and mistrust festers. In each of the four groups, the following perceptions were formed about each group.*

### About Community

- Noise and safety are the main complaints
- There's a double standard with response to the Fringe Festival. There's drinking, noise etc, but it's considered "culture".

### About Hospitality

- "If there were venues that had other things to do besides drinking, we could even out the rabble rousers."
- "Bars and nightclubs don't take ownership of the problem."
- "Some clubs help fuel uncontrolled behavior, but most are managed well."
- "118 Avenue has some of the worst operators in the city."
- Many don't have the desire or the expertise to change format to attract another crowd.
- Most of the problems come from security.
- If you're constantly discounting, the only draw you have is that you are saving your customers money.

### About Safety

- "In being reactive or going after the "big crook", the small stuff falls through their fingers."
- "What's developing is a frontier mentality, 'I can jaywalk, spit, urinate and there are no consequences."
- "Talk about unfair disbursement of resources: they're not checking occupancies downtown."
- "Police did a great job of communicating expectations to my business, but it's one on one and dependent on if you talk to the right guy."
- Capital Health is the best example of explaining requirements and expectations clearly and concisely.
- AGLC is not as precise and comprehensive as Capital Health is explaining requirements to licensees. "They have a booklet, but it's that thick."
- "Even the regulators don't know what the rules are."
- "I don't know what's happened to police response. They don't respond to shoplifting calls even in the daytime"

### About Development

- “There are so many expectations and Whyte Avenue is trying to meet them all.”
- Planning department presents the biggest challenge for new businesses. “It’s a mess”. “Planning is a disaster.”
- There is a misperception that the number of seats on Whyte Avenue has increased a lot in the last 5 years.
- “Unless directly aligned with the oil industry, you don’t get the revenues.”
- “We have failed to recognize entertainment as a business, that hospitality is part of entertainment and that an entertainment area requires planning for developing and managing.”

#### **About All**

- “We’ve been doing good work, but working in silos or stovepipes.”
- “There is an underlying attitude that if there’s going to be a riot it’s going to be in Old Strathcona.”

#### **About Policy**

- “City doesn’t take responsibility for Oiler celebrations.”
- “What worked here 10 years ago doesn’t match the market now.”
- “The street is the biggest nightclub you can imagine and it doesn’t have a license, owner or manager.”
- “We lack flexibility. On game nights with 20-30 thousand people in the area, we have 90% of the city’s buses parked in a garage.”
- “Unless political will changes, nothing is going to happen. Neighbors won’t change it. Politicians do what they want to do.”

#### **About district visitors/patrons**

- “Businesses and residents aren’t the problem, it’s the people who come down to the street.”
- “People who are coming from outside have a sense of entitlement.”
- “University security has stopped people coming off the LRT with backpacks full of booze.”
- “There are Oilpatch workers coming into town by the carload with their own alcohol.”
- Customers don’t come out until midnight and leave at 3:30am.
- “Cabs don’t want pick up drunken punks who don’t pay their fare at the end of the ride.”
- “They drink in their cars before they come down to Edmonton.”

## Appendix: Participant and Expectations

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### Community Roundtable

1. Peaceful co-existence for all.
2. Enforce existing laws.
3. Address theft, violence and panhandling.
4. People of all ages enjoying Whyte Avenue
5. Retain history, integrity, center for sociability, energy
6. Safety for pedestrians, residents, patrons, businesses and students
7. Tolerance and respect.
8. More responsive policing.

#### **Attendees**

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| ▪ Jane Batty      | ▪ Justin Kehoe |
| ▪ Joanne Booth    | ▪ Brian Kropf  |
| ▪ Roy Buksa       | ▪ Donna Kwong  |
| ▪ Lyle Carmichael | ▪ Ann Matheson |
| ▪ John de Haan    | ▪ Diane Miller |
| ▪ Dianne Dunne    | ▪ Wayne Moen   |
| ▪ Kathy Kavanaugh |                |

### Development Roundtable

1. Better tools for licensing that have ability to promote more safety.
2. Expand input for better solutions.
3. Achieve an understanding of broader situation.
4. A vision with a strong plan attached to it.
5. Address issues of uncertainty of rules and how to integrate activities on Whyte.
6. Understand trends that are impacting or reactionary response.
7. Establish a plan and don't abandon it.
8. More entertainment for other age groups, more non-drinking types of events and venues.

#### **Attendees**

- |                   |                |
|-------------------|----------------|
| ▪ Ross Boutillier | ▪ Rick Hersack |
| ▪ David Bruch     | ▪ Audra Jones  |
| ▪ Vivian Devoe    | ▪ Shirley Lowe |
| ▪ Don Grimble     | ▪ John Mahon   |
| ▪ Dick Haldane    | ▪ Jeff Price   |

### Safety Roundtable

1. Define issues
2. Get acquainted with partners for better communication
3. Team approach to community solution where everyone holds up their end of the bargain
4. Vision for Whyte Ave.
5. Develop a proactive rather than reactive process for total regulatory community (not just city agencies)
6. Get Whyte Ave patrons, visitors and businesses to take ownership
7. Engage political will to move forward rather than rehash issues
8. Look at occupancy numbers
9. Consider a process that orients new and renewing licenses safety, regulatory responsibilities and community expectations

### **Attendees**

- Dennis Arneson
- Al Belanger
- Gwynne Edwards
- Phil Feron
- Ron Gabruck
- Scott Gorman
- Mark Halik
- Kevin Jarritt
- Mark Logar
- Shirley Lowe
- Joe Marshall
- Gary McCartney
- Jason Pinsch
- Michael Wong

### **Hospitality Roundtable**

1. Better management of the area by the city. Cost/benefit analysis to increasing or not increasing services.
2. Action
3. An inclusive, cooperative approach that hears all perspectives
4. Assure that hospitality industry is represented in a positive light. "We're not all bad."
5. Solutions and resources.
6. How to address renegade businesses and get the bad operators to change.
7. Ways to deal with people partying on the street who don't patronize businesses and give bars bad name.
8. How to deal with occupancy numbers fairly. "I bought business based on fire numbers, based my lease and my business plan projections on that number."

### **Attendees**

- Brendan Cooke
- Luke Horcicia
- Mike Nickels
- Jimmy Shewchuk
- Jim Stakszon
- Kevin Wong

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